

DEVELOPMENTAL SKILLS: D IS FOR DEXTERITY

By

Dexterity is the ability to use your hands skillfully, fluently, quickly, and easily. Why does your child need to master a skill that seems so complicated?

This fine motor skill helps kids [hold a pencil correctly](#) and, perhaps even more importantly, helps them control that pencil to produce legible writing on a piece of paper!

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Babies are working on dexterity right from the very beginning as their primitive [Darwinian Reflex](#) has them grasping your finger when you place it in their palm.

Eventually, that tiny baby begins to grasp other objects too. Her grip strength improves, her ability to pick up small objects (think Cheerios!) improves, her ability to move objects within her hand improves, and she can even begin to transfer objects from one hand to the other.

As your baby enters toddlerhood, she gains even more experience with toys and begins to manipulate objects with different size, weight and shapes. She learns to manipulate

these objects without dropping them and can purposefully put them into their place (such as in a [shape sorter](#) or [puzzle](#)). She can isolate one finger to point and to push buttons on toys – or the remote control!

Preschoolers begin to show the power of those [Super Fingers](#) as they develop a tripod grasp. For this age, dexterity comes into play as children [learn to cut with scissors](#), become more independent with [clothing fasteners](#), and learn to trace and copy lines and shapes.

You will begin to notice that children this age show less movement in their arms, wrists, and hands during fine motor activities and smaller, more fine tuned movements within the hand.

There are so many complex elements of dexterity, but the good news is that there lots of creative and playful ways to work on these skills. If you notice that your child fatigues quickly during fine motor activities or writing or if your child struggles with fine motor skills like cutting with scissors or manipulating small objects, check out some of these great activities for improving dexterity!

[Hand Strength: 35 Fun Activities for Kids](#)

[Super Easy Fine Motor Skills Activity](#)

[Fine Motor Skills: 20 Creative Activities for Kids](#)

[Fine Motor Skills: Activities for Preschoolers](#)

[Fine Motor Skills: Activities for 2 and 3-Year-Olds](#)

[Fine Motor Skills: 10 Activities for Toddlers](#)

At The Inspired Treehouse, we believe that information about developmental skills and [child development](#) should be accessible to everyone, not just medical professionals.

You won't find a lot of complicated lingo here – we prefer breaking things down into terms that are a little less intimidating. That's why we're bringing you this awesome series: [The ABCs of Child Development!](#)

Over the next few months, we'll be making our way through the alphabet, assigning the letters to different developmental skills. From [gross motor](#) to [fine motor](#) to [sensory](#) and more...when it comes to developmental terminology (and easy-to-understand definitions), you'll find everything you're looking for all in one place!

Lauren Drobnyak is co-author of The Inspired Treehouse blog and a pediatric physical therapist who currently practices in the educational environment. She has been a physical therapist for 18 years, with 17 of those years specifically in pediatrics. Her drive to make a difference in the lives of kids has led her entrepreneurial spirit in the direction of creating opportunities for play-based wellness

and child development. She is a busy mama of 3 who thrives on chaos. To come down from the stress, Lauren enjoys exercising like she's still 20, yoga, chocolate, a great book, browsing Pinterest, and anything crafty!