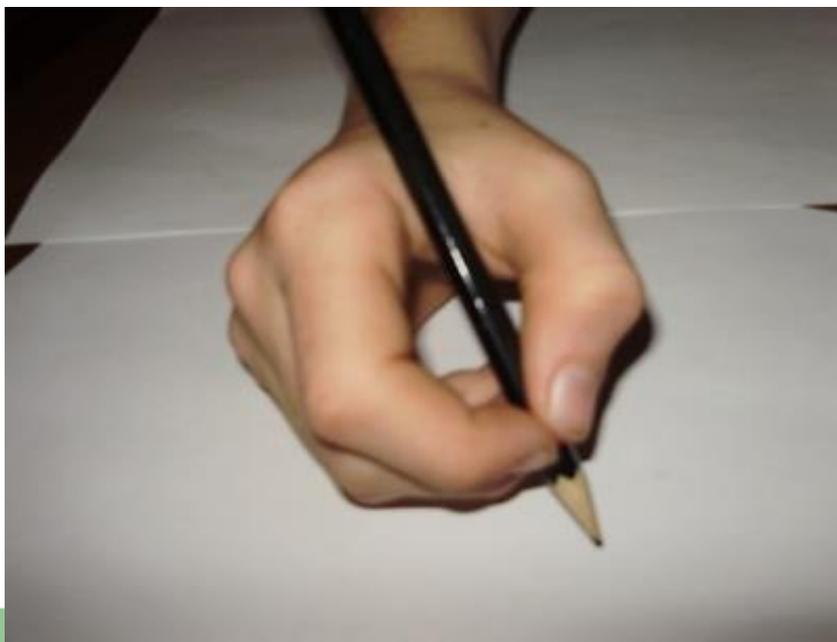


# Correct fine motor skill coordination - How?



**Sundhedstjenesten**  
(The Health Service)

**Egedal**  
Kommune

## **Activities, which encourage correct fine motor skill coordination for children in pre-preparatory classes:**

Some children in pre-preparatory classes have spent a lot of time since kindergarten drawing, cutting and pasting, thus practicing their fine motor skills. They have most likely also taken an interest in being self-sufficient e.g. dressing themselves for years. Other children have not taken the same interest and as a result they do not have the same practice. The lack of interest could have been influenced by slightly elongated ligaments around the phalanges making it harder to strengthen the muscles through drawing and ordinary daily tasks. Your child could be hypermobile. Others may "just" lack fine motor skill experience.

This leaflet is meant as inspiration for improving and strengthening your child's fine motor skills. The exercises are not just for children with problems holding a pencil or writing. All children may benefit from the exercises as they strengthen the muscles of the fingers and help coordinate their moving ability.

The below suggestion is only effective if the activities are systematised and performed regularly. Try doing one particular activity each day before the child goes to sleep or each day after supper, but in a way that gives the child an actual possibility of strengthening its coordination. It is a good idea to vary between activities over e.g. a month.

However, it is a condition that your child is motivated and that you are both attentive during the games. Support the child verbally and recognise that the exercises may require your child's full concentration.

## **Gross and fine motor skill exercises:**

Massage all fingers regularly by steady, but firm movements starting at the base of the finger ending at the tip. Finish with slight pressure at the tip. A finger consists of three phalanges, massage all muscles between the phalanges, avoid massaging the phalanges themselves. The thumb only has two phalanges, start by massaging the larger muscles between the heel of the hand and the thumb. Also stretch the muscle by gently pulling it away from the hand.



Let the child wheelbarrow walk, thus strengthening the shoulder joints and wrists.

Play with balloons. Use the hands, fly-swatters or various rackets or rolled up newspapers.

Put paper clips on for instance a large circle of cardboard to make it look like a sun, a wheel and the like. Take them off again later. Use only the thumb and index finger.

Tug-of-war using a thick rope and firm surface.

Place a medium broad rubber band around all fingers. Stretch the fingers to make it tight. Make sure that all fingers are bend inward.



Draw and write with thick and possibly triangular coloured pencils in for instance pre-school books from the bookshop: From dot to dot, mazes, etc. Make sure that you child is sitting comfortable with both feet on the floor or on a cross-bar. Your child's shoulders must be lowered and relaxed. Both arms must be supported by the table and the fingers relaxed.

Play "Mancala" ("Kalaha"). Do not hold the seeds in the palm.

Let the child shell eggs, peel clementines, oranges, etc.

Try moving sticks in a "peg-board-game" using a clothes peg or isolation pliers.

Pick up five coins from the table. Use only one hand. Keep them in the palm and hand over one at a time.

Let the child help sprinkle spices, cinnamon, sugar, etc.

Play "tiddlywinks" with buttons.

Who can push the button the furthest using the thumb and index finger?



Stand facing the wall. Place the fingertips at the wall at the same width as the shoulders making sure they are slightly bend inward. Do press-ups while rining, counting, calculating, etc.



Play the “finger-hook-game” two and two. Sit opposite each other: Form a hook with the index finger. Whose finger is the strongest? Do not use the other arm for help! Repeat the game with the other fingers.



Open jam jars with the fingers. Do not hold the jar in your palm. Remember to lower the shoulders.

Cut out funny figures that interest the child from e.g. a magazine. Make sure that you child is sitting comfortable with both feet on the floor or on a cross-bar. Your child’s shoulders must be lowered and relaxed. Both arms must be supported by the table and the fingers relaxed.

Place both hands flat on the table. Close them while they remain on the table.

Open and stretch the fingers several times. First slowly, then faster without losing focus.

Now open one hand while the other remain closed. Start again slowly, then faster without losing focus.

Let the child draw part of the shopping list.

Make a fist with one hand on the table. WITHOUT lifting the hand drag

- the index finger out then in again
- the middle finger out and in
- the ring and the little finger.

Repeat with the other hand.

Let the child make a single dribble with a large ball / soccer ball that bounces well.

In general, playing with balls strengthens the development of the fine motor skills!

**Have fun!**

[www.sundhedstjenesten-egedal.dk](http://www.sundhedstjenesten-egedal.dk)



Egedal Kommune  
Dronning Dagmars Vej 200  
3650 Ølstykke