

# FINE MOTOR SKILLS

**Strategy:** Pre-Printing Lines

**Audience:** Kindergarten to Grade 4

## What:

- Children learn how to draw lines and shapes in preparation for printing
- It is important to ensure children have developed the ability to produce pre-printing lines before expecting them to produce letters
- The average age a child can draw all the pre-printing shapes is approximately 5 years of age
- Children generally develop their drawing skills in the following order:



## How:

- Shapes should be drawn from top to bottom and left to right, except for left-handed children who may choose to draw from right to left
- To help the child learn how to draw the above shapes, it can be helpful to break the process into achievable steps
- The usual progression is:
  - tracing solid lines
  - connecting dots: e.g., two dots for a straight line, four corner dots for a square
  - imitation: the child watches you draw, then tries it on their own
  - copying: the child looks at a picture, then tries to draw it
  - draw on request: the child draws from memory
- Keep practice fun and engaging by using multi-sensory methods not just pencil and paper

## Materials:

- Make pre-printing shapes using pieces of string, pipe cleaners, playdough, or trace with the index finger
- Fill a large sealable plastic bag with lotion, paint, or hair gel and draw lines and shapes on the surface of the bag with a finger
- Make large shapes in the air with a finger
- Cover an old cookie sheet with finger paint, salt, rice, sand, pudding, shaving cream, etc. Practice drawing shapes with a finger, paintbrush, popsicle stick, or cotton swab
- Draw with shaving cream, soapsuds, or bath crayons in the tub
- Draw on the sidewalk with chalk or a paintbrush and water
- Pre-printing line worksheets for pencil and paper practice

**Example:** click image to play the video



## Inclusive Practices to Consider:

- When using crayons/markers/pencils try to keep writing utensils short
- Broken crayons are best
- A shorter writing utensil encourages a child to use a proper pencil grasp

## Reference and Links:

Basics of Pre-Writing Activities and Skills for Kids

<https://www.growinghandsonkids.com/basics-pre-writing-activities-skills-kids>

Pre-Writing Shapes and Teaching Your Toddler to Draw

<https://otholly.com/pre-writing-shapes/>

Pre-Printing Skills Practice

[https://www.kidzone.ws/preK\\_wrksht/dynamic.htm](https://www.kidzone.ws/preK_wrksht/dynamic.htm)