

A guide on how to help your child with scissors



Scissor Skills

Children's Occupational Therapy Cutting skills take time for children to develop. Children usually have the skills to use small scissors by three years of age, but the skills to use scissors to cut out a shape neatly are not fully developed until 6 years of age

Choosing Scissors for your Child

Scissors with tiny oval handles are easiest for children to use. Short blades will give the cutter the most success. The scissors also need to be sharp enough to cut the material on hand or it will be a frustrating experience. Children will need supervision for sharp scissors. Make sure that scissors have rounded rather than pointy ends for safety. Always provide left handed scissors for left handed children.



How to Hold Scissors

Teach your child how to hold them by putting the index finger in front helps to give good scissor control. This grip also strengthens the same muscles that children need for drawing and writing.



Incorrect scissor grasp



Correct scissor grasp



Activity Ideas for Correct Grasp

When holding a pair of scissors for the first time reinforce your child's hand position by getting them to do the 'thumbs up' sign. Remind your child each time the correct way to hold the scissors, reinforce the 'thumbs up' and give them plenty opportunities to practice.

Scissor Activity Ideas

Ask your child to snip a playdough sausage into pieces with their scissors. This is a good activity to start with, especially if you do not want your child to use sharp scissors, as plastic scissors will work on playdough.



Try getting your child to cut a plastic drinking straw into pieces to make 'beads'. They can then lace them together to practice their threading skills.



Get your child to snip along a piece of thick card (as this is more rigid for a child to hold). Then get them to try snipping different textures before moving onto paper.

