

# Early Years Progression for Fine Motor Skill Development



Skill	Steps to success	Optimum Learning Point
Working with one handed tools and fine manipulation including pencils, pens, scissors and paint brushes	Shows a preference for a dominant hand	3-4 years
	Picks up and arranges a variety of loose parts with some control	
	Builds a tower of around nine small blocks.	
	Uses large paint brushes to make purposeful marks, leading to	
	Uses small paint brushes to add details to pictures.	
	Makes snips in paper with scissors, leading to...	
	Cuts across a piece of paper, leading to...	
	Starts to cut along a straight line.	
	Beginning to use a comfortable pencil grip (not a fist hold) leading to...	
	When prompted, can independently adopt a tripod grip	
	Uses a hammer or mallet to hit large targets such as tent pegs or boundary flags.	
	Turns single pages of a book.	
	Uses a paint brush with one hand and can create detail	4-5 years
	Uses scissors effectively with one hand	
	Developing the consistent use of a tripod grip, leading to...	
Consistently using a comfortable and effective tripod grip for all mark making tools		
Manipulates and arranges a range of loose parts with precision and control		
Uses a hammer to hit small targets such as nails into wood.		
<p><b>End of Reception Checkpoint:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can use a pencil effectively (tripod grip) in preparation for fluent writing</li> <li>• Can use paint brushes, crayons, pens and scissors with control</li> </ul>		

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Skill	Steps to success	Optimum Learning Point
Mark making	Beginning to use dominant hand.	3-4 years
	Draws a circle shape freehand.	
	Copies a cross (+)	
	Draws a person with 2-4 body parts, leading to...	
	Can draw a person with at least six body parts.	
	Starts to draw a range of pictures with some recognisable elements	
	Begins to form some letters - particularly those within own name	
	Draws circles by using clockwise and anti-clockwise movements.	4-5 years
	Draws a cross (+) freehand.	
	Copies a square	
	Begins to draw diagonal lines like a triangle, leading to...	
	Draws some simple shapes and patterns free hand	
	Starts to colour inside the lines of a picture.	
	Draws pictures that are recognisable.	
	Can draw closed shapes with continuous lines and use these to represent objects.	
	Beginning to draw with increasing complexity and adding details to pictures.	
	Can draw with increased control with accuracy and care.	
	Begins to form lower case letters correctly, leading to...	
	Starts to learn to print some capital letters, leading to...	
	Writes own name accurately	
Forms lower case letters with accuracy when writing simple words and phrases		
Writes numbers 1-10.		
<b>End of Reception check point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Draws with accuracy and care</b></li> <li>• <b>Forms upper and lower case letters with accuracy</b></li> </ul>		

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Skill	Steps to success	Optimum Learning Point
Managing own needs	Eats without assistance.	3-4 years
	Uses fingers to unfasten buttons.	
	Pulls up a zip after an adult has started it, leading to...	
	Pulls up own zip	
	Uses a fork to pick up food and eat it.	
	Begins to use a knife to cut up food	
	Uses fingers to fasten buttons on clothes.	4-5 years
	Fastens a zip independently.	
	Uses a knife and fork together to cut up and eat food.	
	Puts on most items of clothing by themselves	
<b>End of Reception Check point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can fasten a zip with independence</li> <li>● Can fasten buttons with independence</li> </ul>		