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220 South Orange Ave. Suite 300

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Motor Activity Ideas for Home or Classroom

Fine Motor Skills: refers to the control of the small muscles of the hand and fingers. Fine motor skills are an essential part of a child's day from buttoning and zipping to writing, coloring and cutting. Here are some fun activities to work on strengthening those intrinsic muscles of the hand.

- **Use tongs or tweezers to pick up small game pieces, pegs, cotton balls, knobby puzzles, or even food. There are all kinds of tongs out there, some heavier and harder to squeeze or others that require more control when using.**
- **Roll small pieces of putty or play dough into small ball or snake. You can pinch the ball to squish it**
- **Use clothespins, squeezing to put on a clothesline, paper plate or even a popsicle stick**
- **Spinning toys or twist toys**
- **Water plants with squirt bottles**
- **Squeeze squirts or water squeeze toys, either use with water or just squeeze air to move cotton balls**
- **Popping packaging bubbles**
- **Sorting coins or buttons and placing in bank**
- **Stringing Cheerios, Fruit Loops, and pasta. Can also use pipe cleaners instead of string**
- **Squeeze sponge to fill up a cup of water**
- **Use hole puncher to punch holes in old holiday cards or magazines**
- **Help with cooking activities; stirring, pouring, mixing**
- **Construction toys such as Legos and tinker toys**
- **Use a vertical surface to write, coloring, or paint. Tape paper to a wall or door. Or use the bathtub wall to practice writing with shaving cream for easy clean up.**
- **Practice cutting; cut old magazines, wrapping paper or newspaper.**
- **Turning key in lock**
- **Finger painting**
- **Use small broken crayons to help promote tripod grasp**



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Fine and Visual Motor Games you can find at Target, Walmart, Kmart, etc.

- **Bed bugs, Ants in the Pants, Don't Spill the Beans, Sneaky Squirrel, Barrel of Monkeys, Dominoes, Don't Break the Ice, Who Shook Hook, Mr. Potato Head, Etch a Sketch, Checkers, Disney's Eye Found It, I Spy Scramble, Spot it**

Visual Motor Skills: Refers to the ability to control hand movement guided by vision (eye hand coordination). Here are some activities to work on visual motor skills.

- **Ball toss into a basket or garbage can, use rolled up socks or crumpled up balls of paper.**
- **Mazes, crossword puzzles, hidden pictures, and dot to dot activities**
- **Catch and pop bubbles**
- **Cutting activities**
- **Playing catch – Indoor catch with a rolled sock and bowl or pan for target**
- **Tracing shapes, draw with a highlighter and have your child trace over**
- **Form shapes with toothpicks, popsicles, or Wikki Stix**
- **Light Bright**
- **Peg board or geoboard**
- **Scan the newspaper or old magazines for certain letters or numbers**
- **Building block design copy**
- **Flashlight tag: shine a flashlight on a spot, your child has to run and “catch it” then move to another spot**
- **Hokey Pokey or Simon Says: emphasize spatial directions such as in, out, on, off, right, left**

Gross Motor Skills: Refers to the control of large muscles of the body to complete tasks such as walking, running, and jumping. Here are activities to work on gross motor control.

- **Complete tasks lying on stomach (reading, watching TV, playing board game)**
- **Play charades or Simon Says**



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- **Wheelbarrow or animal walk: walk like a bear, crawl like a crab, jump like a frog, slither like a snake**
- **Balloon toss or balloon volleyball**
- **Jump Rope or play limbo**
- **Monkey in the Middle**
- **Pillow case race: put legs in pillow case and jump to the finish line**
- **Play in half kneel**

- **Use playground equipment**
- **Obstacle Courses; At home use pillows to jump over, tables to crawl under, or chairs to walk around**
- **Hopscotch**
- **Bowling; bowl at home with empty soda or water bottles and a soft ball**
- **Kids yoga**

Sensory Play: There are many areas of sensory processing; the following is a short list of "sensory" play activities that are easy to do!

- **Play with shaving cream- on a cookie sheet or the table. Spray on bathtub wall and write letters, numbers, draw shapes or pictures for easiest clean up**
- **Place pudding in a zip lock bag, seal it and practice writing**
- **Salt or sugar writing; spread salt or sugar on the bottom of a tray, write your letters, numbers, words**
- **Trace over sand paper**
- **Rice and bean buckets; hide small toys, beads, or puzzle pieces in a bucket filled with uncooked rice or beans**
- **Easy play dough recipes (attached)**
- **Make ooblick- mix cornstarch and water**
- **Play with food (pudding, Jell-O, cool whip), place on a tray, write and draw**



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Resources

Pocket Full of Therapy www.pfot.com

Learn Play Imagine www.learnplayimagine.com

Hands on as We Grow www.handsonaswegrow.com

Pinterest- search fine motor, gross motor, messy play, or sensory motor

The Out of Sync Child and The Out of Sync Child Has Fun Both by Carol Kranowitz