

1. FINGER ISOLATION

This is the ability to use one finger separately from the others, particularly the index or pointing finger.

- Pointing songs or games – ‘twinkle, twinkle little star’, ‘two little dickie birds sitting on a wall’ or make up songs about ‘two little birds’ and use index finger and thumbs as the beaks of the birds singing.
- Popping bubbles with pointed finger.
- Using fingers like ‘tweezers’ to pick up objects, such as cotton wool, small blocks, pasta pieces, raisins, frozen peas, berries.
- Play with toys that have holes that need poking or probing.
- Play with telephones, dialling with auditory feedback, using the index finger when ‘dialing’
- Finger painting – encourage the child to use each finger but one at a time.
- Encourage the child to point to things in books / pictures e.g. ‘find the...’
- Encourage the child to turn the page in the book, by using his fingers rather than his whole hand.
- Finger puppets – move each finger independently.

2. PINCER GRIP

Pincer grip is the ability to grasp small objects with thumb and forefinger. It is an important part of the child's fine motor development, and necessary for holding and manipulating a pencil.

- Encourage the child to pick up small objects (toys, sweets etc.) with their thumb and first finger rather than her whole hand, or thumb and middle finger.
- Encourage the child to form these fingers into a 'beak' and pretend they are a bird picking up seed to encourage and promote the idea of tucking her other fingers away.
- Clothes pegs opened with the thumb and index finger help to strengthen pincer grip e.g. pegging out paintings to dry.
- Making play dough into small shapes, pinching a play dough sausage with thumb and first finger and flattening play dough balls into pancakes.
- Pick small items e.g. buttons beads out of play dough with the thumb and index finger.
- Pop popping plastic with index finger and thumb.
- While doing pincer grip activities place a small object (e.g. pencil grip / piece of play dough/ a rubber) in the child's palm to be held in place by the middle, index and little finger. This will help with pincer isolation i.e. only using thumb and first finger.