

Handwriting: Pencil Grip

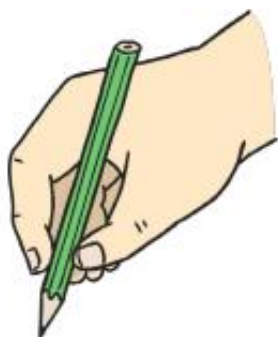


Pencil grip is an important factor in handwriting development. We encourage both right- and left-handed children to develop and use a 'dynamic tripod grip' when holding a pencil. We teach this using the 'Nip, Flip and Grip' method detailed below.

It is important to note, that all children develop at different rates and they may not yet be developmentally ready to use a 'dynamic tripod grip'. There is more information on the next page about the development of pencil grips.

Finally, all children are different and there isn't a 'one size fits all'. Whilst we encourage the use of a 'tripod grip', it may be that another grip style is more natural and comfortable for your child.

Good Pencil Grip



Dynamic Tripod Grasp

- Pencil is held in stable position between the thumb, index and middle finger.
- The ring and little fingers are bent and rest comfortably on the table.
- The index finger and thumb form an open space.
- The wrist is bent back slightly, and the forearm is resting on the table.
- The pencil is held about 1-2cm from the tip.

1 Nip



2 Flip



3 Grip



Early Years Pencil Grip Development

A Guide for Parents

It is important to allow your child to develop a comfortable pencil grip in their own time. There is no need to force your child to hold a pencil in a certain way – their grip should naturally develop and progress as their muscles and posture strengthen and develop.

Palmar Grip

The pencil is held in the whole fist. Usually develops between the ages of one and two.



The elbow, wrist and fingers stay in a fixed position. Movement comes from the shoulder.

Digital Pronate Grip

All fingers are holding the pencil and the palm is facing downwards. Usually develops between the ages of two and four.



The elbow and the wrist stay in a fixed position. Movement comes from the shoulder.

Splayed Four-Finger Grip

Looks similar to how adults would hold a dart, with four fingers opposite the thumb. Usually develops between the ages of two and four.



The hand is in the air, not resting on the table. Movement comes from the elbow and later the wrist. Fingertips and shoulders remain in a fixed position.

Static Tripod and Quadropod Grip

Pencil is held with the first three or four fingers. Usually develops between the ages of three and five.



Movement comes from the wrist. Fingertips, elbow and shoulder remain in a fixed position.

Dynamic Tripod Grip

The pencil is held lightly between the thumb and index finger and middle finger. The ring and little finger curl gently into the palm of the hand. Usually develops before the age of seven.



The hand rests on the table. Movement comes from the fingertips. The wrist, elbow and shoulder remain in a fixed position.