

Letter-join 

A Guide to

Getting Ready for Handwriting

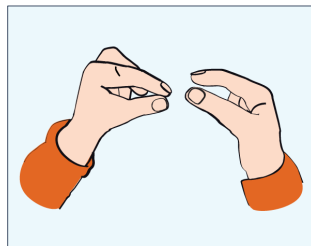
**Fine and gross motor skills, pencil grip,
sitting comfortably**

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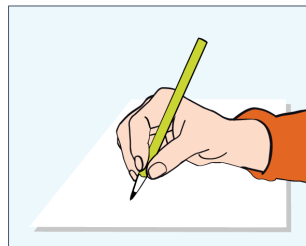
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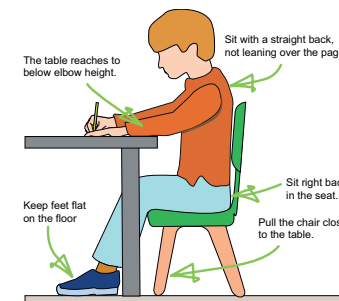
Gross motor skills exercises.



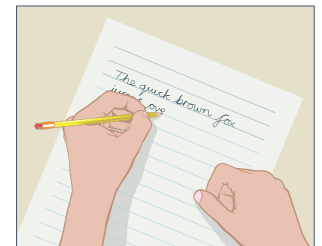
Fine motor skills exercises.



Tripod pencil grip.



Sitting position.



Left-handed provision/

Getting Ready for Handwriting

Handwriting Warm-up Exercises

Letter-join has developed some fun, warm-up exercises to help stimulate children ready for handwriting.

Gross and fine motor skills exercises used at the beginning of each lesson will help to loosen up the fingers and the body in readiness for handwriting. Please choose from the selection of warm-up exercises featured on pages 6 and 7.

These can be found in the Resources section of the Letter-join website.

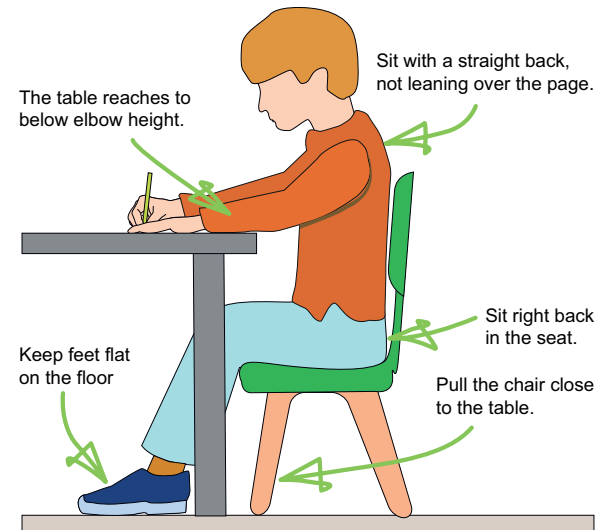


See page 6 for a selection of gross motor skills exercises.

Handwriting Posture and Pencil Grip

It is important that children sit comfortably and hold a pencil correctly for handwriting from the start; some children may need repeated intervention to achieve this.

Letter-join's guide for sitting properly and holding a pencil correctly for handwriting is featured on pages 8 and 9. This will help children be more comfortable, enabling them to write for sustained periods.



See page 9 for comfortable sitting position.

Gross Motor Skills (GMS)

Animal Actions

The following fun gross motor activities can help improve your pupils' core strength, control and endurance in preparation for handwriting.

KEVIN THE KANGAROO SAYS: "JUMP UP AND DOWN."  Two-footed standing jump with waving arms.	COLIN THE CRAB SAYS: "WALK SIDEWAYS."  Take side steps one way, then the other.	FRAN THE FLAMINGO SAYS: "STAND ON ONE LEG AND NOW THE OTHER LEG."  Balance on left foot, then balance on right foot.	CHARLIE THE CAT SAYS: "STRETCH UP AS FAR AS YOU CAN."  Stretch up and try and touch the ceiling.	CORA THE COW SAYS: "MILK A COW."  Move arms up and down in milking action.	SACHA THE SNAKE SAYS: "SLITHER ALONG THE FLOOR."  Lie down and wriggle along the floor.	BORIS THE BEAR SAYS: "WALK ON ALL FOURS."  Move around on hands and feet.
HANS THE HORSE SAYS: "TROT AROUND THE ROOM. NOW GALLOP."  Jog, lifting knees high then run faster.	OLGA THE OSTRICH SAYS: "TAKE GREAT BIG STEPS."  Take long strides around the room.	ENOCH THE ELEPHANT SAYS: "LIFT ME UP."  Pretend to lift up a heavy object.	FATIMA THE FROG SAYS: "HOP UP AS HIGH AS YOU CAN."  Hop on one leg, then on the other leg.	PEDRO THE PUPPY SAYS: "CHASE YOUR TAIL ROUND AND ROUND."  Spin around on the spot.	PIPPA THE PENGUIN SAYS: "WADDLE FROM SIDE TO SIDE."  Stand straight and tilt from left to right.	BILLY THE BLACKBIRD SAYS: "FLAP YOUR ARMS UP AND DOWN."  Raise arms up and down, palms facing down.

Fine Motor Skills (FMS)

A selection of fine motor skills activities to use before each handwriting lesson.

Finger and Hand Exercises

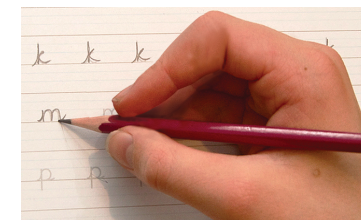
Here are some fun warm up exercises to wake up your fingers and hand muscles before you start to write.

Action	Description
Finger Stretches	Put the tips of your fingers together and straighten your fingers by pushing your fingertips against each other. Repeat 5 times.
Play the Piano	Touch the table with one finger at a time from each hand like you are playing the piano. Start slowly and get faster.
Fishing Hooks	Put your elbows on the table, keep your hands apart, squeeze your fingers together and point them to the sky. Keep your knuckles straight and make a hook with your fingers. Hold, then straighten five times.
Take a Bow	Bend your knuckles but keep your fingers straight so your fingers bow to each other. Repeat 5 times.
Fireworks	Make a fist with both hands and hold them tight. Then let your fingers go like exploding fireworks! Repeat five times.

Pencil Activities

Practise holding your pencil correctly by using our tripod grip rhyme (see page 8).

*Point away the pencil,
Pinch it near the tip,
Lift it off the table,
Spin it round and grip.*

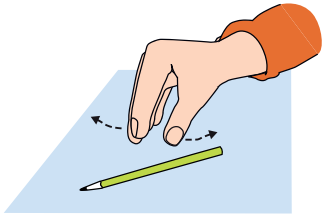


Action	Description
Quack, Quack Fingers	Start your warm up by making a beak with your thumb and first finger on both hands. Make them quack twice, then do the same with your other fingers.
Roly-poly Pencil	Lay your pencil flat across your fingers. Use your thumb to roll it backwards and forwards. Now try it with your other hand.
Crawling Caterpillar	Hold your pencil ready to write. Move the pencil through your three fingers to the top like a crawling caterpillar. When you get to the top, make your caterpillar crawl back down again!
Helicopter Twirls	Hold your pencil in the middle with your three correct fingers. Make a twirling helicopter by moving your fingers one at a time from one side of the pencil to the other.
<i>Now you are ready for handwriting!</i>	

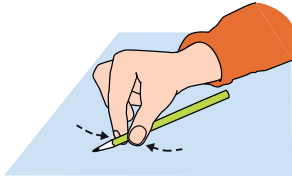
Tripod Pencil Grip

How to hold a pencil correctly for handwriting.

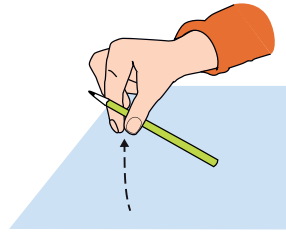
Right handed grip



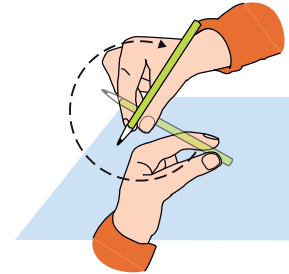
1. Point away the pencil,



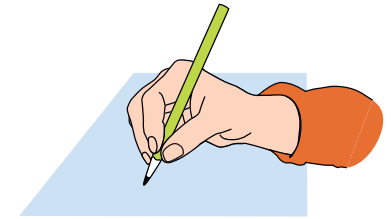
2. Pinch it near the tip,



3. Lift it off the table,

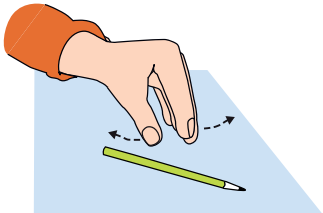


4. Spin it round...

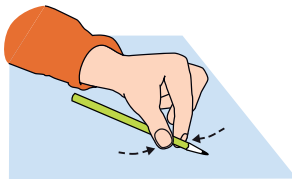


5. ...and grip.

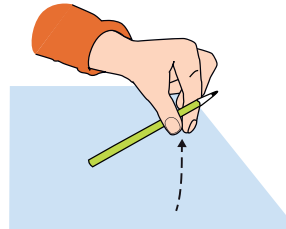
Left handed grip



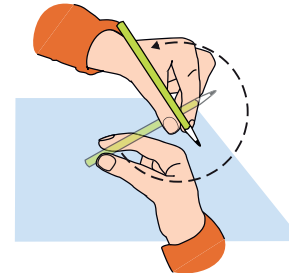
1. Point away the pencil,



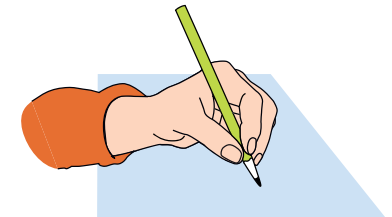
2. Pinch it near the tip,



3. Lift it off the table,



4. Spin it round...

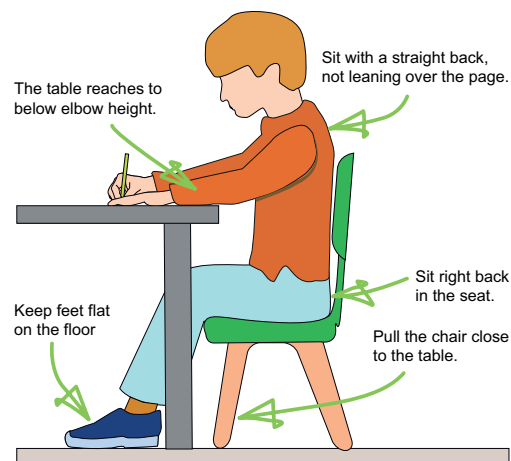


5. ...and grip.

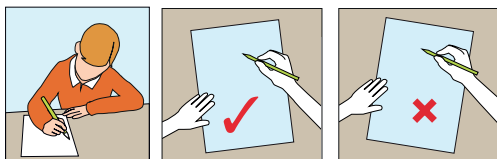
Comfortable Sitting Position and Correct Paper Position

Right handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.

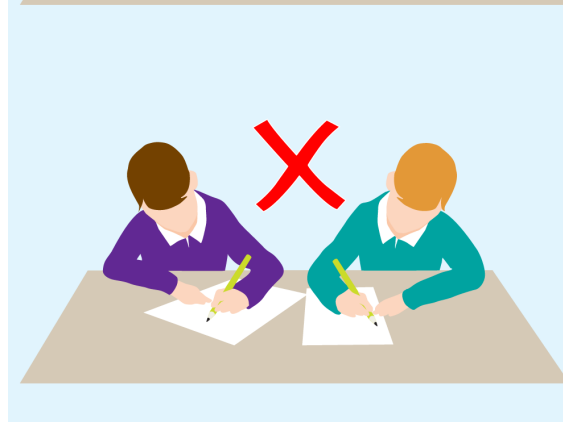


How to hold and position the paper.



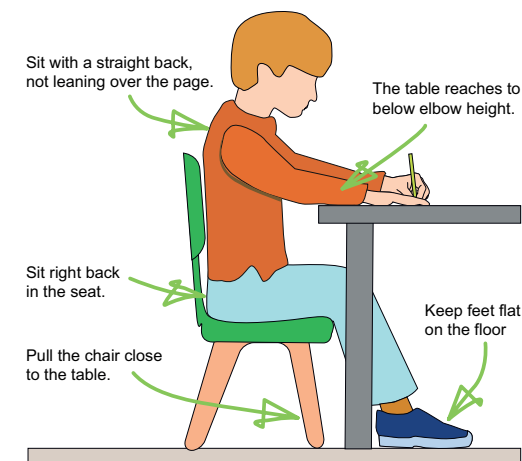
Sitting position

Sit left-handed children to the left of their partner so they have plenty of room to write.

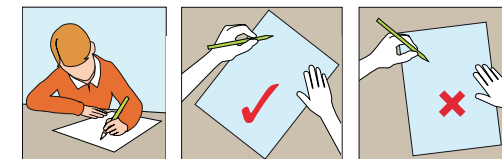


Left handed children

How to sit correctly to be comfortable for handwriting.



How to hold and position the paper.



Left-handed learners

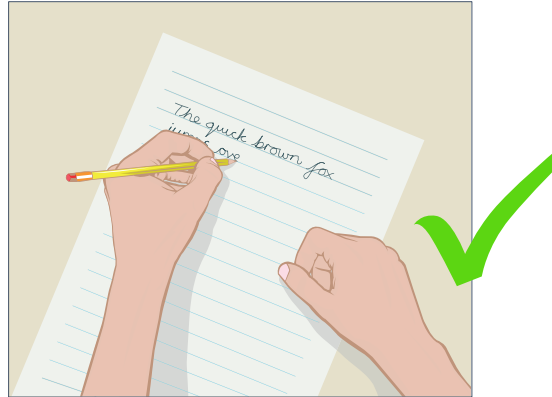
Recognising the needs of left-handed pupils

Teachers should be aware of the specific needs of left-handed writers and make appropriate provision. Some practical help right from the start can make a huge difference to the learning outcomes of left-handed children.

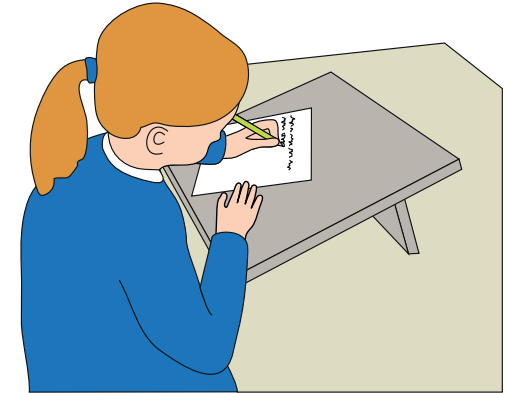
Here are a few pointers but please see Letter-join's Guide to Provision for Left-handed writers for a more detailed guide.



Model left-handed writing.



Ensure correct pencil grip and paper positioning



Use accessories if necessary.



Sit left-handed children to the left of their partner.