

## Helping with Hand Strength- How to be a Better Writer

These hand exercises for children may help your child develop strength and coordination of the hand muscles.

### Paper Crumpling

Have your child **crumple up** sheets of newspaper or scrap paper into the **smallest, tightest ball** they can manage.

As their hand strength increases, so the ball will get tighter.

Make it harder by asking your child to crumple the paper with **just one hand** at a time.



### Squeezing Sponges

This sponge is a small one that was being used for sponge painting, but you can also let your child **squeeze bath sponges**, washing up sponges, or sponge balls. Use one or two hands depending on the size of the sponge.



A lovely **bath-time activity!**

### Spray Bottles



These give hours of endless fun while strengthening hand muscles.

Have your child **water the plants**, spray an outside wall, or add a spray bottle to **bath time fun!**

### Scissor Cutting

If your child is able to handle a pair of scissors, give your child lots of opportunities to practice **scissor cutting**. Although scissor cutting primarily works the tripod fingers, the **whole hand** can get stronger with scissor cutting.



Start with **cutting on straight lines** before progressing to shapes and pictures.

# Playdough Hand Exercises

Playdough is a great medium for strengthening little hands!

## 1. Squeezing and Oozing

Place a ball of playdough in the palm of your hand and squeeze as hard as possible. Make the playdough ooze out between your fingers.



## 2. Pushing it Flat



## 3. Roll a Snake

Make a snake on the table, roll the playdough into a snake keeping your fingers straight.



#### 4. Pinching

Pinch the snake all the way along, from head to tail.



#### 5. Make a Bowl

Place a ball of playdough on the table. Place your thumb in the middle and pinch all the way around to make a bowl.



#### 6. Hide and Seek



Shape the playdough into a ball. Place your hand and forearm on the table and grasp the playdough with your thumb pointing up. Bend your thumb and press it deeply into the playdough, then pull it out again. Try it with different fingers, then make all of them disappear!

If you go to YouTube and type dough disco. you will get lots of fun playdough activities to do like the one below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrBsNhwxyzgc>

## Gross Motor Activities

Any gross motor activity which requires the hands to grasp and hold tight, can help to strengthen hand muscles. The grasp and release movements used for climbing and pulling are easier than long periods of



You could take your child to a park, and encourage lots of safe climbing



This show the development of a typical pencil grip. Doing the exercises above will make it easier for your child to move to a controlled tripod grip

