



SCISSOR SKILLS

IDEAS FOR DEVELOPING CUTTING SKILLS



SCISSORS

There are many different types of scissors, e.g. left-handed. There are also a variety of adapted scissors, e.g. dual scissors, easigrip, long loop.

SEATING

Children need to feel comfortable in order to work efficiently, good posture helps to support this aim.

- A child needs to sit on a chair at an appropriate height table
- Both feet should be flat on the floor
- Ideally joints are at right angles, e.g. elbows, hips, knees and ankles
- The back needs to be pressed straight against the chair
- The head should be in a central position.

PREPARATION

Cutting exercises should have a creative purpose, e.g. making a collage. It is easier to cut card, e.g. old birthday cards then progress to paper.

- Identify the point of cutting with a mark, e.g. an arrow or ✂
- Mark the position of the supporting hand thumb, e.g. thumb print
- Warm up the hands by flexing and wiggling the fingers and joints.

HAND POSITION

It is easier to cut when the wrist of the cutting hand is stabilised on the table:

- Put a layer of paint on the wrist so that it prints when fixed
- Use pretend glue to 'stick' the wrist to the table
- Try tickling the side of the wrist to emphasise the correct position.

GUIDELINES

- Initially an adult will need to support the child by holding the card or paper, which s/he is to cut
- Encourage the child to develop a motor plan for cutting by saying "Open wide, Paper inside, Snip!" i.e. "OPEN the scissors wide, put the PAPER inside the blades, then SNIP the scissors closed"
- Scissors should be pointed away from the body
- Show the child how to use their hand to support the paper, with the thumb on top and fingers underneath, close to the scissor's entry point
- When cutting out a shape, adults can help by turning the paper.

PRE-CUTTING EXERCISES

Children can develop thumb and finger co-ordination by practising an open and close squeeze action using familiar items:



- BBQ tongs - picking up and moving small objects, e.g. bobbins, cubes
- Bubble wrap – using a finger and thumb to ‘pop’ the bubbles
- Bull dog clips – holding together cards or papers
- Hair clips – placing in a doll’s hair
- Hole punch – making confetti
- Ice cream scoop – making castles using wet sand
- Paper clips – holding papers together or indicating part of the page
- Pegs – pegging out washing, making fun plates, fencing an animal
- Peg boards – lining up colours, copying a continuing pattern
- Play dough – making hedgehog spikes, rabbit ears, elephant’s trunk
- Plastic milk containers – squeezing to blow feathers or a ping-pong ball
- Salad tongs– picking up and placing items in a container, e.g. beads
- Sponge balls – gripping, pinching or squeezing the ball
- Tea bag squeezers – picking up and placing pasta in a container
- Tweezers – picking up small items; split peas, rice

Activities, which require no additional equipment:

- Finger crawlies – making a spider with your fingers, racing across the table
- Finger drumming – making a drumming sound using one or all fingers
- Finger lifts – with hand flat on the table raise an indicated finger
- Finger rhymes – ‘Two little dickey birds’, ‘Tommy thumb’, ‘1, 2, 3, 4, 5’



SCISSOR SKILLS

DEVELOPING CUTTING



1 Cutting between two thick lines



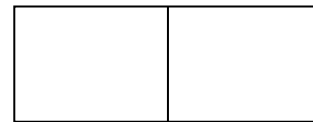
2 Cutting between thin lines



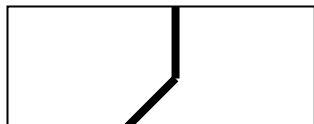
3 Cutting along a thick line



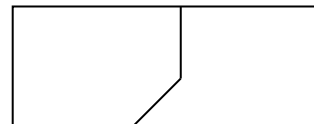
4 Cutting along a thin line



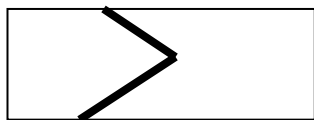
5 Cutting along an angled line



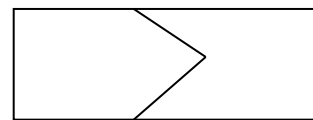
6 Cutting along a thin angle



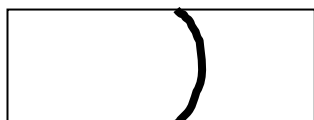
7 Cutting along an arrow shape



8 Cutting along a thin arrow



9 Cutting along a curved line



10 Cutting along a thin curve



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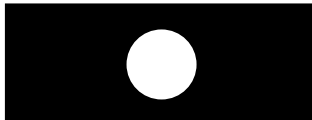
1 Cutting out a triangle



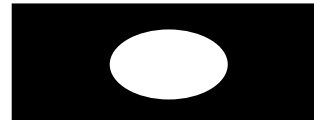
2 Cutting out a square



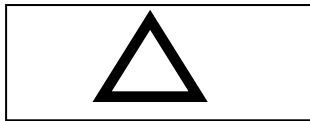
3 Cutting out a circle



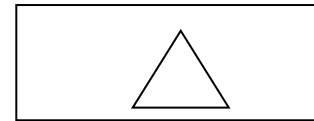
4 Cutting out an oval shape



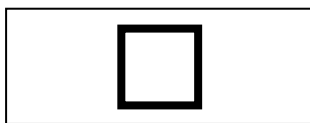
5 Cutting out a triangle (thick lines)



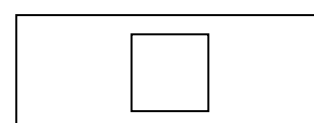
6 Cutting out a thin triangle



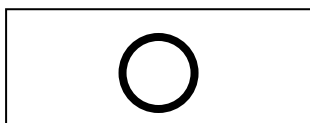
7 Cutting out a square (thick lines)



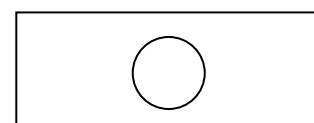
8 Cutting out a thin square



9 Cutting out a circle (thick line)



10 Cutting out a thin circle



The next stage is cutting out irregular shapes: use thick outlines then thin lines.