

IN-HAND MANIPULATION EXERCISES

AIM – HAND MANIPULATION EXERCISES

The following exercises are designed to help you use and build up the intrinsic (small muscles) within the hand.

INSTRUCTIONS

Try to complete some or all of these exercises for approx 10-15 minutes a day. To help you achieve start slowly and build up speed once you have mastered the movements.

1. Walk fingers and thumbs up and down the pen from tip to top of pen.
2. Rotate pen or pencil around and around.
3. Rotate a dice around in the tips of fingers and thumb so that each number on the dice can be viewed.
4. Hide small objects in a piece of clay or playdough. Retrieve small objects from the clay using fingers to tear at the dough.
5. Scissor Skills - Use a scissors to cut simple different thickness of paper/card.
6. Manipulate coins in one-hand. Place 2 – 3 coins in the palm of the hand. Trying not to drop any. Work your fingers and thumb to manoeuvre one coin up to be held between the pad of your thumb and index finger (pincer grip). Post calls into moneybox, wallet or purse.
7. Screw nuts onto a bolt.
8. Screw caps onto bottles or jars. Varying the diameter of bottle or Jar will work different muscles e.g. to strengthen muscles to turn a key in a lock or hold a spoon.
9. Baking – Especially recipes requiring rubbing butter or lard into flour e.g. making pastry.
10. Kneading dough, clay or pastry.
11. Playing with construction toys e.g. Knex, Lego, Mechano.
12. Rolling tissue paper into small balls for use on a collage.

13. Oppose all fingers press pad of your thumb to the pad of each finger tip in turn. Go slowly to start then speed up once you have achieved a good contact with each finger. Go from index then little finger then back up from. Little Finger to Index. Repeat 10 times.
14. Scrunch up a crepe bandage using a caterpillar type motion with your hand. Your wrist must remain in contact with the table until the whole length has been gathered. Different textures and lengths can be used to vary degree of difficulty.
15. Doodling – Rest little finger side of hand on tabletop, keep a light grasp on pen and doodle within a small circular boundary.
16. Using a small hard ball that will fit into thumb web space. Place in the web space and make a letter “o” around it with your index finger and thumb, squeeze and relax ten times. This activity is good preparation for grasp (e.g. pincer grasp).
17. Using a soft squeeze ball, squeeze and move a soft ball in your hand. Repeat 5 or 10 times.
18. Holding the ball in your hands, flatten between your palms. Once you have learnt this, also try squeezing a flannel for washing, making dough, peeling potatoes.
19. Using 2 small balls (range of movement activity), rotate the 2 balls in the palm of the hand and towards the thumb for 2 to 5 minutes.