

In this edition:

Fun silk scarf activities to inspire inquisitive babies

Art & craft ideas using paint for toddlers & pre-schoolers

Fabulously fun toys to strengthen your child's fine motor skills

Free scissor skills activity to brighten up your child's room or cubby house

## Welcome...

Thank you for joining me for the first edition of The Hive. The Hive newsletter is brought to you by The Play Hive, an online educational toy store. You can find us at [playhivetoy.com.au](http://playhivetoy.com.au).

The aim of The Hive is very much that of our web site- to bring you lots of great hints, tips, articles and children's activities to help you navigate your way through your child's early years of learning and education. You will also find heaps of fantastically priced educational products, seriously superb sales and glorious giveaways.

As a pre-school teacher, I want play to be a central part of your child's life. It encompasses everything they need to learn, develop, build skills, provoke creativity and inspire imagination. Children engaged in play is also great for parents, it can keep them entertained for hours giving you time to get on with your daily jobs or even put your feet up for a moment or two.

Please enjoy the first edition of The Hive. If you have any suggestions on topics or activities for our next edition, please feel free to contact me at [thehive@playhivetoy.com.au](mailto:thehive@playhivetoy.com.au)

Enjoy,

Emma  
The Play Hive



## Tea Party Fun

Tea parties are a fabulously fun and lovely way to inspire role play. Outside on a sunny day or inside on a rainy one, all your child needs is a little table cloth/rug, some teddies or dolls to invite along and a little imagination. Here's a fun idea for a birthday tea party that will foster physical, language, literacy and social skills:

Encourage your child to gift wrap some small boxes (great for fine motor skills). Invitations can be made with markers and scrap paper (language and literacy skills), then given out to birthday party invitees. If playing alone teddies, dolls, etc can be invited in place of friends or siblings. Along with a tea set these props will inspire imaginative dramatisation. As a special treat, make some real fairy bread to have at the party. Your child may like to butter the bread and sprinkle 100's and 1000's on top (also great for fine motor skills).

We  Djeco  
Birthday Party  
Tea Time Set

Visit The Play Hive to find out more



Lovingly designed in France by Djeco, this beautifully crafted wooden Birthday Party Tea Time Set is the mother of all tea-sets. The superb quality and charm of this set will not be beaten and will last a life time. It features everything your child needs to celebrate a birthday or just have tea with friends. Brightly painted, it includes a serving tray, sugar dish and lid, teapot and lid, 5 slice birthday cake, 5 birthday candles, 2 tea cups, 2 saucers, 2 spoons, 1 cake plate and 2 tea bags. Your child will love it as much as we do!

# Help Your Child Hold their Pencil Properly Using a Tripod Grasp

A pencil grasp is the manner in which one holds a pencil. An effective grasp requires skillful positioning of the fingers, hand and wrist. It allows free and easy pencil movement while drawing and writing. The most efficient pencil grasp for drawing and writing is the tripod grasp.

Most children will develop the tripod grasp between the ages of 4 and 5. However it is not uncommon to appear a little earlier or later, depending on the child's experience with pencils.

It is important that an effective grasp is developed to enable maximum movement of the fingers and increased stability of the hand, wrist and arm. This will ensure that the hand doesn't tire while drawing/writing and will enable intricate and detailed marks to be made.

The tripod grasp involves the **pencil being placed between the thumb and index finger. The side of the middle finger gently supports the pencil. The ring and little finger lightly curl towards the palm.** The shape that the thumb and index finger make when grasping the pencil is somewhat like a tear drop. The pencil should be held lightly with the **pressure being applied to the index finger.**

The movement of the pencil comes from the fingers with the hand, wrist and arm maintaining stabilisation. If the wrist is in midair, encourage the wrist to lean on the surface being used.

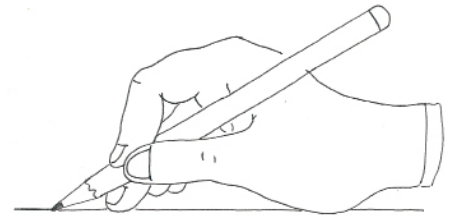
When sitting at a table it is important that **good posture** is maintained whilst drawing and writing. The trunk needs to be upright to enable the hand and arm to be positioned in a comfortable and supported position. Both feet should be placed on the floor with the legs bent at a 90 degree angle at all times. Sitting on one leg, slouching, kneeling or wrapping legs around the legs of the chair will hinder good posture.

The pencil needs to be **grasped about 2-3 cms** away from the tip to gain sufficient control. If the pencil is held higher then control will be difficult to achieve resulting in wobbly, unsteady marks on paper.

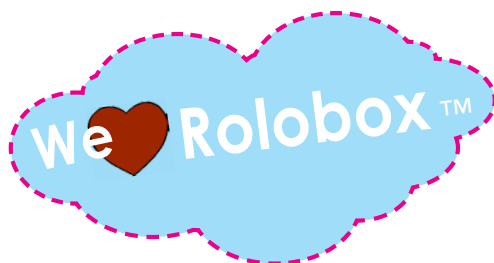
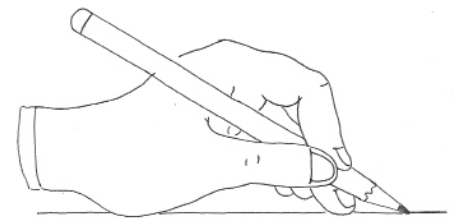
Once all of these conditions have been achieved, children should be in the most effective position to learn how to hold a pencil.

Please remember children may need assistance to position the pencil in their hand while they adjust to this new grasp. It will take practice, persistence and patience.

## Right Hand



## Left Hand



Rolobox™, the innovative product set to make the ordinary box even better! Rolobox™ is a reusable set of wheels and brackets that can be fitted to any cardboard box with the chunky nuts and bolts provided. An ideal

toy for children as they can use their imagination to create anything with wheels: a bus, car, train, pram and more. Simply add the wheels to any box and you're ready to roll! Rolobox™ can then be removed from the box for the next cardboard masterpiece. With Rolobox™ any cardboard box becomes a pull along toy. Endless creations are possible! Unleash your child's creative genius with Rolobox™.

Each Rolobox™ pack contains: 4 reusable plastic wheels, 4 wheel attachment brackets, 8 nuts, 8 bolts and pull-along cord with attachment.

**SPECIAL**  
~~\$19.20~~  
\$11.20

Visit  
The Play Hive to  
find out more



Your child's box creation  
can be as simple or  
complex as they like.



# Silk Scarf Games for Babies

Got a load of old silk scarves in your draw? Pull them out and place them in a basket for you and your baby to play games with.

Silk scarves are perfect for baby play. They are soft, silky, enliven your baby's senses and move beautifully in the air for visual stimulation. They can also be used for peek-a-boo games and discovery games.

The following games with scarves promote physical development, cognition, language learning and emotional bonding between you and your baby. To keep your baby safe, be sure to pack the scarves away when finished. Age 6 months+

## Peek a Boo

Explore object permanence with your baby. Object permanence is the comprehension that an object still exists even when it cannot be seen, heard, or touched. Infants around the age of 8-9 months acquire this understanding.

Babies under this age will enjoy Peek A Boo games as the phrase "out of sight, out of mind" applies in this case. If you cover baby's eyes with a scarf for a few seconds and then remove it, they will delight in your magical reappearance.

Playing 'Hide the Toy' with a baby under this age will have to be played through demonstration. Hide a toy under a scarf and say "Where is the toy?". Then uncover it and say "There it is, we found it".

A child who already understands object permanence can play Hide the Toy with you. They can playfully find the toy you have hidden by pulling the scarf away. Give lots of reinforcement when they find it. This is great for language development, grasping, developing a pulling motion and development of their intellectual skills.

Play hide the baby. Drape the scarf over your baby's head. See how long it takes for them to pull it off.

## Music and Movement

Turn some music on and wave the scarf about as you move your body. If your baby is walking, they might like to imitate you by flicking a scarf around. If they are sitting you can make them part of the dance by draping the scarf over their head or dragging it across their limbs as you dance.

## Rest and Relaxation

While your baby is laying on their back, hold a large scarf by two corners and drape it flat over their body from head to toe so they are covered. Then slowly drag it down their body until they are uncovered. The sensation of the soft fabric dragging over their body is a pleasant sensory experience.

Lay on your back with your baby laying on their back on top of you. Both of you should be facing the ceiling. Now

hold a scarf up so that it is dangling down towards baby. This will encourage your baby to reach and play with the scarf.

## Tissue Box Magician

Ever experienced a magician pull an unusually long scarf from his hat or sleeve? Yes, this is an extremely old and predictable trick but is an excellent activity for your baby to develop their pulling motion which in turn develops balance, strength and coordination.

Tie a few scarves together, maybe five or six to make a long length. Find an old tissue box and push the length into it with just enough of the scarf sticking out of the box for baby to grasp. Encourage them to pull the scarf out of the box. If the box is light you may have to hold it or weigh it down so that when they are pulling, it doesn't move around.

If you don't have a spare tissue box around, you can always push the scarf up your sleeve for baby to pull out.

## Tug of War

If your baby is able to grasp the scarf with strength, play a quick tug of war game with them. This will develop their grasp, strength and balance.

## Scarves Everywhere

Grab as many scarves as you can and throw them all up in the air at the same time. Watch you baby's delighted reaction. If they are walking, encourage them to collect them so the trick can be done again. They may even try to throw a scarf in the air themselves.

## More Infant Learning

We ❤️ Infant Stim Mobile

The Wimmer-Ferguson Infant Stim Mobile by Manhattan Toys features 19 interchangeable colour and bold black-and-white images specifically made to stimulate early visual activity and pre-reaching movement in babies. Newborns are only capable of focusing 8 to 10 inches from their face. They prefer black and white, high contrast images to color graphics. With this in mind use the high contrast black, white and red images on your mobile for the first few months. As your baby grows, rotate the pictures so that the colourful pictures are in view. How simple is that and just what the baby experts recommend!



Mobile & changeable images \$51.20 at The Play Hive



# Painting Ideas for Toddlers to Pre-Schoolers

**Printing**– use cotton reels, corks, lego, stamps, etc.

**Marble Painting**– Drop a paint covered marble onto a piece of paper in a tray and roll around

**Wet Chalk Painting**– Soak chalk in water for a few minutes and draw

**Feather Painting**

**Deodorant Bottle Painting**

**Water Painting**– Outside, fill a bucket with water, add a brush. Paint footpath, fence, brick work, etc

**Peg and Sponge Painting**– Cut up a sponge, pinch between a peg and paint

**Cotton Ball in Tweezer's Painting**

**Fly Swat Painting**

**Cotton Bud Painting**

**Spray Painting**– Fill a spray bottle with food colour and water. Spray onto a large piece of paper outside

**Butterfly Painting**– Place blobs of paint on one half of a piece of paper. Fold paper in half, open to reveal a butterfly wing pattern

**Blow Painting**– Drop some food colour in water onto a piece of paper. Move paint along the paper by blowing it through a straw

**Wax Resist Painting**- Draw a picture with a candle. Use food dye and water to paint over the top. Watch the wax resist the dye.

**Eye Dropper Painting**

**Mop Painting**– with water on the footpath or paint on a giant piece of paper

**String Painting**– Dip string in paint then gently lay it onto paper to make a swirly string print.

**Finger Painting**

## Fabulously Fun Products to Strengthen Your Child's Fine Motor Skills

The Play Hive has your child's fine motor development covered.

*'Fine Motor' defined: The use and coordination of small muscles groups. In this case the fingers, hands and wrists.*

### 🌿Hammering

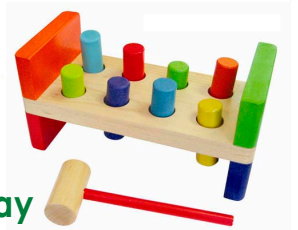
Children practice:

- Gaining sensory feedback from the vibration of the hammering and using this to control the force employed
- Arm and wrist strength that support fine motor activity
- Eye hand coordination
- Bilateral Integration (the ability to use and coordinate two hands together) will be employed if tacks or nails are being used



Fun Factory Tap Tap Hammering Set \$26.95

Wooden Peg Hammering Bench \$19.90



### 🌿Moulding Dough/Clay

Children practice:

- Strengthening their hands by squeezing, breaking, moulding, pounding
- Control of the small muscles in the hands
- Finger coordination and the ability to isolate the movement of each finger
- Strengthening their arms and shoulder stability (important for all fine motor activity)
- Twisting movements of the wrist when moulding or breaking play dough/clay



Sculpting Set– Kidz Studios \$21.95

An air drying putty that bounces like rubber

## 🌿 Threading/Lacing

Children practice:

- Eye hand coordination
- Finger control and dexterity
- Pincer grasp to hold string and small beads (using index finger and thumb to pick up or hold objects). This grasp assists with the development of an efficient pencil grasp- the tripod grasp.
- Bilateral Integration- using both hands together to coordinate the string and bead (threading) or the card and thread (lacing)



Wooden Lacing  
Numbers 1-10  
\$13.95



Wooden  
Lacing  
Cheese  
(with mouse)  
\$11.95



Fun Factory Wooden  
Threading & Lacing  
Beads 90p \$19.10

## 🌿 Construction Sets

Children practice:

- Manipulating small objects to snap together, pull apart, screw/twist
- Strengthening fingers
- Eye-hand coordination
- Bilateral integration



Fun Factory  
Wooden Nuts and  
Bolts Set \$24.80



Bornimago  
Magnetic Balls and Rods  
Construction Set \$48.80

## 🌿 Art/Craft

Children practice:

- Motor planning- having to plan movements mentally to achieve an outcome. For instance, during collage- picking up paste brush, applying paste to back of collage piece, turning the piece over, finding best place to stick it, pressing it down onto the paper, etc.

- Eye- hand coordination and bilateral integration
- Mastery of art and craft tools such as pencils, paint brush, paste, scissors, sticky tape, hole punch ruler, stickers, etc. Using such tools will challenge and enhance the strength, control, coordination and dexterity of the hands and fingers.

Djeco Pirate  
Stickers -160  
Princess &  
Knights also  
available  
\$5.30



Djeco Colour Cakes  
Paint Pallet 12 paints  
\$7.00



Djeco Mosaics Lion & Whale  
\$21.95



Djeco Collages  
for Little Ones \$31.90



## 🌿 Puzzles & Jigsaws

Children practice:

- Manipulating pieces to fit into holes- twisting, flipping, turning
- Finger coordination and the ability to isolate the movement of each finger to join interlocking pieces
- Eye-hand coordination.



Djeco Princess Barbara  
Giant Silhouette Puzzle  
42 pieces \$33.95



Blue Ribbon  
Geo Nesting Board  
Wooden Puzzle  
\$39.30



Melissa and Doug  
Geometric Stacker  
Wooden \$39.50

## 🌿 Gardening

Children practice:

- Using tools and hands to dig, scrape, bury, push, pull screw, twist, etc.
- Building strength in hands, fingers and arms
- Eye-hand coordination
- Bilateral integration



Melissa and Doug Happy  
Giddy Cultivator \$9.50



Melissa and Doug Happy  
Giddy Trowel \$9.50

Melissa and Doug  
Gripping Gloves  
\$10.95



Melissa and Doug  
Happy Giddy Bug  
House \$25.30

# Free Play & Learn Activity

## Make Your Own Paper Bunting Flags for Your Room or Cubby



Bunting flags are so cute! Here are some really great printable bunting flags for your child to make themselves.

This is a great activity for children who are learning to cut with scissors or who love decorating their room or cubby house.

### What You'll Need

Printer & paper  
Scissors  
Glue  
String

### Learning and Development

Fine Motor Skills:  
Using scissors to cut on straight lines (easy for beginners)  
Bilateral Integration—Using both hands at once to control the paper and scissors at the same time  
Using and applying glue  
Folding paper  
Motor processing (sequencing physical movements to achieve task)  
Following a sequence of instruction

### Age Suitability

3+



**Assist your child with these steps where required...**

### Step 1.

Print the following sheets. The more you print, the more flags you'll have.

### Step 2.

Cut a length of string to fit as many flags as you want. Leave some string at either end so you can hang it up.

### Step 3.

Fold the printed sheets in half on the solid line and open back up again.

### Step 4.

Cut down each dotted line and fold each flag in half again on the solid line.

### Step 5.

With the paper folded cut around each flag so that the white paper falls away.

### Step 6.

When all of the flags have been cut out place each flag over the string so that the string fits into the fold.

### Step 7.

Apply some glue to the inside of each flag and allow to dry.

### Step 8.

Viola! A long strip of bunting flags. Now hang them in a place that needs some jazzing up.

