

What are fine motor skills?

Fine motor skills are movements that we do with our fingers and hands. Fine motor skills:

- Are signs that your baby or toddler is developing skills with their fingers and hands.
- Follow certain patterns and stages for most children.
- May happen at different times for each child.

What fine motor skills should my child have?

Some fine motor skills that are usual for babies and toddlers are listed in the chart below. Talk with your child's doctor if you are concerned about your child's fine motor skills. You may also call the Occupational Therapy (OT) department at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

Child's age	Usual fine motor skills
2 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opens hands for a very short time• Watches faces for several seconds• Moves arms and legs
4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brings hands to mouth• Holds toy when placed in hand• Bats or swipes at toys with arms• Pushes up onto forearms (part of arm from the elbow to the hand) when on tummy
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reaches for objects with both hands and 1 hand• Holds and shakes toys• Keeps hands open most of the time• Pushes up with straight arms when on tummy• Bangs object like a toy on table
9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Begins to "rake" smaller objects with fingers• Bangs objects together• Moves objects from 1 hand to the other• Takes objects out of container
12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Puts objects in a container• Holds small items between their thumb and pointer finger• Marks paper with crayon
15 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stacks 2 to 3 blocks• Uses fingers to feed some foods• Points with pointer finger

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Fine motor skills, continued

Child's age	Usual fine motor skills
18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds a tower with 3 to 4 blocks • Turns pages of a board book • Scribbles with a crayon • Tries to use a spoon • Feeds self with fingers
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scribbles in circles when drawing • Begins to fold paper • Builds a tower with 6 blocks • Snips with scissors • Eats with a spoon
30 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses hands to twist things like doorknobs • Turns pages of a book 1 at a time • Copies lines when drawing
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eats with a fork • Begins to copy circles when drawing • Strings large beads • Builds a tower with 10 blocks
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds crayons or pencils between thumb and pointer finger • Opens and closes large buttons • Draws circles, squares and plus signs • Begins to trace and copy letters • Cuts simple shapes with scissors

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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