

Fine Motor

Activities to Help Your Toddler Grow and Learn



Your toddler's eyes and hands are working together well. He enjoys taking apart and putting together small things. He loves using any kind of writing or drawing tool. Provide scrap paper, washable crayons, or markers. You can also try puzzles, blocks, and other safe small toys. Talk and enjoy the time together. When writing or drawing, set up clear rules: "We draw *only on the paper*, and *only on the table*. I will help you remember."

Flipping Pancakes

Trim the corners from a simple sponge to form a "pancake." Give your child a small frying pan and a spatula. Show him how to flip the pancake.

Macaroni String

String a necklace out of dried pasta with big holes. Tube-shaped pasta, such as rigatoni, works really well. Your child can paint the pasta before or after stringing it. Make sure she has a string with a stiff tip, such as a shoelace. You can also tape the ends of a piece of yarn so that it is easy to string.

Homemade Orange Juice

Make orange juice or lemonade with your toddler. Have him help squeeze the fruit using a handheld juicer. Show him how to twist the fruit back and forth to get the juice out. To make lemonade, you will need to add some sugar and water. Let him help you stir it all up. Cheers!

Draw What I Draw

Have your child copy a line that you draw, up and down and side to side. You take a turn. Then your child takes a turn. Try zigzag patterns and spirals. Use a crayon and paper, a stick in the sand, markers on newspaper, or your fingers on a steamy bathroom mirror.

Bath-Time Fun

At bath time, let your toddler play with things to squeeze, such as a sponge, a washcloth, or a squeeze toy. Squeezing really helps strengthen the muscles in her hands and fingers. Plus it makes bath time more fun!

My Favorite Things

Your child can make a book about all of his favorite things. Clip or staple a few pieces of paper together for him. He can choose his favorite color. Let him show you what pictures to cut from magazines. He may even try cutting all by himself. Glue pictures on the pages. Your child can use markers or crayons to decorate pages. Stickers can be fun, too. You can write down what he says about each page. Let him "write" his own name. It may only be a mark, but that's a start!

Sorting Objects

Find an egg carton or muffin pan. Put some common objects such as nuts, shells, or cotton balls into a plastic bowl. Let your toddler use a little spoon or tongs to pick up the objects and put them in different sections of the egg carton. Give her a little hug when she has success!

Notes:



Don't Forget! Activities should be supervised at all times by an adult. Any material, food, or toy given to a young child should be reviewed for safety. Always watch your toddler during mealtime and bath time. Make sure she doesn't put the sorting objects in her mouth.

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