

Solgrid

The Solihull grid for learning



Helping your child at home: 'Mark Making and Writing' Part 2

Writing is a complex skill for young children, they are processing what they would like to write, control and coordinate their bodies from core and shoulder strength to the muscles in their hands and wrists, not to mention the how and where to place letters or numbers on a page...

Writing is part of the literacy and physical development goals that children are expected to achieve by the end of the Early Years curriculum. Being a 'writer' and a 'mark maker' provides opportunities for children to express themselves and engage with those around them further supporting their language, social and artistic development.

- Please also read [Helping your child at home: 'Writing and Mark Making' Part 1](#) to understand the physical skills and experiences that will benefit your child becoming writer and how you can help your Nursery and Reception child at home.

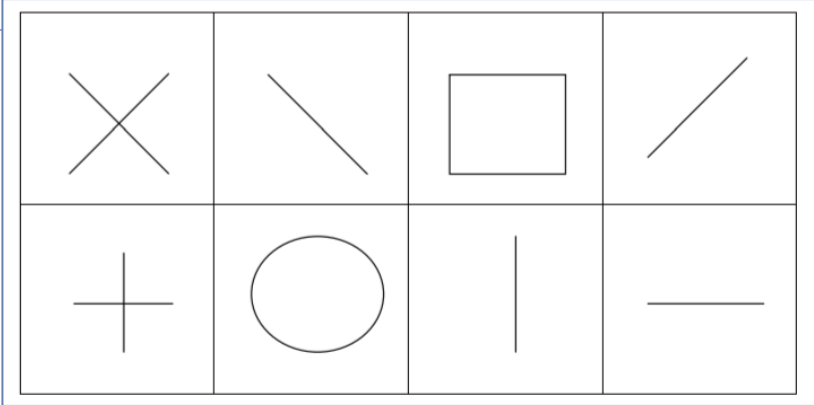
What will help my Reception and Year 1 child at home?

Make writing fun and give lots of praise and encouragement. Young children can be reluctant to write when they begin to realise it doesn't look like an adults writing. They need to believe they are writers and have lots of opportunities to mark make and write to continue developing their skills.

- Check if your child's school follow a handwriting scheme - they may have resources they can share with you such as rhymes to remember how to write the letters and numerals, handwriting scheme and parent guides.
- If your school doesn't have a particular handwriting scheme, a common practice for teaching handwriting is letter family patterns
 - Anti-clockwise letters (a, c, d, e, g, o, q)
 - Clockwise letters (b, h, k, m, n, p, r)
 - Straight letters (i, j, l, t)
 - Under arch letters (u, y)
 - Diagonal letters (v, w, x, z)
 - Curvy letters (f, s)
- Write letters and words in sand, flour or shaving foam.
- Rainbow writing: use different coloured pens, pencils or felt tips.
- Large letters: chalk on the floor, paintbrushes with water on outside walls and floors.
- Air writing - writing the letter shape in the air.
- Magic finger - writing the letter on their palm or different textured surfaces such as a carpet or table cloth.
- Support correcting mistakes with letter formation and pencil grasp early.
- Letter formation apps.
- Tracing and copying letters.

Researchers, (Beery, 1997) believe if a child is ready for formal handwriting instruction they can make the marks below with precision. Support your child when they are mark making with opportunities to copy, trace and make these marks independently.

A good tip when modelling these shapes to your child is to remember, we write from left to right, generally top to bottom and anticlockwise.



How should my child hold their pencil?

Alongside having good fine and gross motor skills, children will need to use the correct pressure for writing comfortably and overtime their pencil grasp will develop.

1-1½ years	2-3 years	3½-4 years	4½-6 years
Palmar Supinate Grasp	Digital Pronate Grasp	Static Tripod Grasp	Dynamic Tripod Grasp

(Erhardt, 1994)

Further information

- This document What to expect, when? Explains what your child should be demonstrating at each age and stage of development.
- Supporting your child with their listening skills and vocabulary will support their ability to understand letter sounds for writing.
- National handwriting Association - Handwriting help for parents
- Oxford Owl Handwriting Parent Guidance
- Wordsforlife.org.uk

How should my child sit?

As children become older / develop as writers it is important to have the right posture for writing as demonstrated in the pictures below if children are sitting at a table to write.

Young children often write while standing up, lying down on their front, this will contribute to them developing control and coordination over their bodies. **Paper Position for Right-Handers** **Paper Position for Left-Handers**

