



The fingers, hands and shoulders require hours and hours of practicing different skills to get ready for the actual job of picking up a pencil and making marks, lines, shapes and letters on paper. Prewriting skills include the ability to write straight lines, curved lines, zig-zags and shapes. These skills are building blocks for letter formation during handwriting tasks. Here is a list of 10 fun activities to get children ready for prewriting skills:

1. Play Dough – Using [play dough](#) helps strengthen the muscles in the fingers, hands and shoulders which are essential for legible handwriting.
2. Playing in prone – By laying down on the floor on their bellies propping up on their elbows, the shoulders, arms and hands receive proprioceptive and tactile input to help children learn where their body is in space. In addition, this position helps to strengthen the head and neck muscles.
3. Animal Walks – [Children can practice moving like different animals](#) particularly ones where their hands are on the floor such as bear walks, seal walks and donkey kicks.
4. Sensory Trays – Practice making marks in different sensory materials such as shaving cream, sand or flour.
5. [Lacing Activities](#) – Lace beads onto pipe cleaners. Try lacing shoelaces on lacing cards. These types of activities help to fine tune the intricate fine motor skills needed for handwriting.
6. Make shapes and letters with your body – Form the lines, shapes and letters using your body. Check out [Alphabet Movement Cards for easy visuals](#) to get started.
7. [Move in different directions](#) – Perform locomotor skills in straight lines, curved lines and zig zags. Move in a circle. This helps children develop visual spatial skills which is necessary for spacing and sizing of letters.
8. Building blocks – Using Lego or Duplo blocks help children improve fine motor skills, muscle strength in the hands and fingers and visual spatial skills. [Brick Activities for Home and School](#) provides patterns to create numbers, alphabet and seasonal objects using LEGO® style 2x2 and 2x4 size blocks.
9. Finger paint – Let children explore making marks with their fingers. It is easy and fun. If the child dislikes the sensation of finger painting, offer different objects to paint with instead such as toy cars or plastic toy animal feet.
10. Moving or placing objects along a path – The teacher can draw different lines or shapes on paper or put painter's tape on the floor. If it is on paper, children can try putting stickers along the lines or rocks. If is painter's tape on the floor, children can try driving toy cars along the lines. Draw with sidewalk chalk outdoors and children can practice riding a tricycle along the path.