

Getting Ready to Write: Ages 4-5

Practicing skills that use children's hands and fingers helps to:

- Strengthen their muscles for all activities
- Get ready for writing in school
- Teach perseverance when tasks are difficult



Ideas to try with your child:

- Write or draw with pencils, markers, or chalk
- Fold & cut paper: children should be able to open and close scissors and cut a straight line
- Practice independence in using zippers and buttons while dressing
- String cereal like Fruit Loops or beads on yarn or a clean shoelace

If your child is struggling:

- Roll some playdough into tiny balls, snakes and other shapes. Little fingers need practice.
- Keep a close eye on how your child holds a pencil. Remind them to use only 3 fingers to hold the pencil and tuck the other two under.

Going further:

- Practice putting together locks and keys
- Put together and take apart nuts and bolts
- Buckle seatbelts
- Play with smaller Legos together

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children's best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children ages 4-5** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: "Show increasing skill with small materials" Touching, Seeing, Hearing, and Moving Around, Ages 4-5, pg. 74