

Occupational Therapy Home Activities

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School isn't in session? Then let's work on fine motor, visual motor, sensory, self-help and many more skills at home!

The following activities are quick activities that each work on a variety of important skills!

Each activity should take between 5-20 minutes each.

****Parent supervision is needed for all activities.****

Stringing beads

1. Find household items such as beads, tube-shaped pasta (rigatoni, penne, etc.), or snip straws into pieces
2. Find string (If you don't have any sort of string, shoelace, pipecleaner, or even use a long spaghetti noodle)
3. Have child hold “string” with non-dominant hand and thread the “bead” with the dominant hand.
4. Tip: tie together and make a necklace or bracelet!



Crossing midline- Rainbow Arch

1. Place a large piece of paper (or regular pieces of paper taped together) on the floor.
2. Ask your child to sit on or below the paper.
3. Give the child crayons and ask them to draw an arch from one side to the other side.
4. You can grade this activity to meet their needs by:
 - a. Providing a visual demonstration
 - b. Cues as needed
 - c. Starting and ending dots on each side
 - d. If unable to hold a crayon, parent draw a “road,” and have child drive a car on the road.



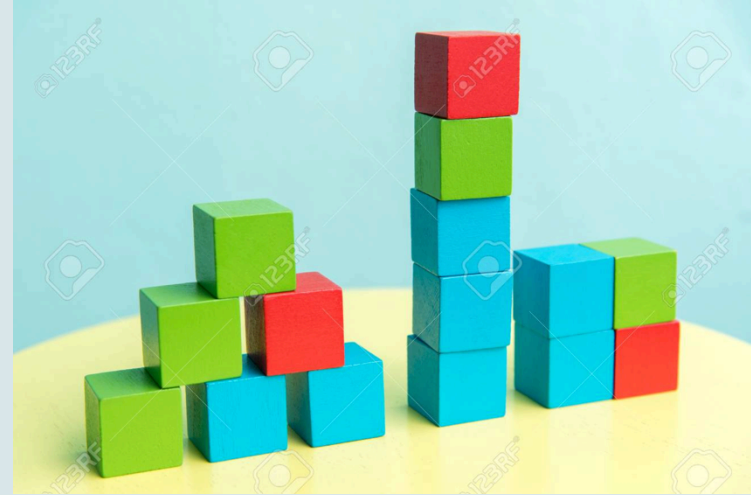
DIY Sensory Bins

1. Find a medium sized container or shoebox
2. Find items in your house they can be used for a sensory bin (uncooked beans, uncooked rice, uncooked pasta, etc.)
3. Ask your child to help you fill the box halfway (you can draw a line and have them fill it to the line for an extra challenge!)
4. Hide items in the box, such as puzzle pieces and toys.
5. Have your child find items and then place them on the gameboard or puzzle.



Building with Blocks

1. Use blocks or other household items to stack and create designs with blocks
2. Make a design for your child and have them imitate the design, if they can.



Motor warm up- Build an Obstacle Course

1. Use household items and furniture to build an obstacle course!
2. Use couch cushions, blankets, and chairs to make tunnels and “stepping stones”
3. Place puzzle pieces on one side and a puzzle on the other
4. Have your child go through the obstacle course and place the pieces on the puzzle



Play Outside!

1. Draw/color/write with chalk
2. Collect and sort rocks, leaves, and sticks
3. Use sticks and stones to form letters or shapes
4. Blowing and popping bubbles (works on isolating fingers!)
5. Go to the park or play in your backyard
 - a. At this time, it is not recommended to play on playground equipment unless it is in your backyard and not touched by other children
 - b. However, riding bikes, walking, running, skipping, jumping, hopping, completing jumping jacks and other non physical contact activities are all excellent activities to complete at the park



Floor Time

1. Laying belly down on the floor is another great way to strengthen the upper body/core muscles and is also a great way to encourage proper wrist positioning for writing activities.
2. Most activities can be done on the floor:
 - a. Drawing/coloring
 - b. Games
 - c. Puzzles
 - d. Fine motor activities
 - e. Sorting laundry with mom and dad
 - f. Playing with toys



Fine motor strengthening & pincer development- Tongue Twister!

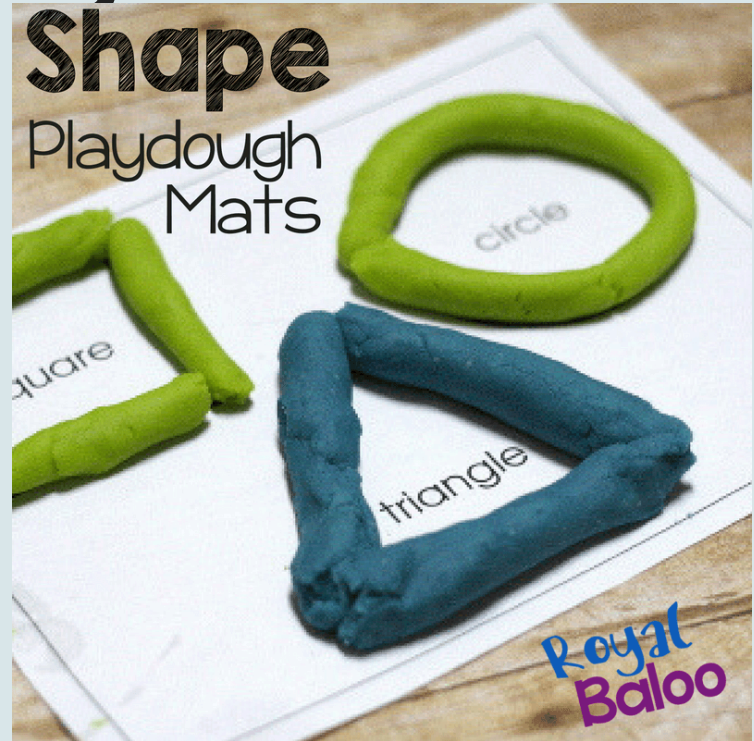
1. Find household items that can be picked up with tongs or tweezers... or just their fingers!
 - a. Items such as: pom poms, cotton balls, pasta, beans, small toys, small food items, etc.
2. Use tongs/tweezers to sort the items (can sort into water bottles, cupcake tins, etc),
3. Play “feed the animal”- use tongs and tweezers to “feed” food to animals (decorate water bottles or cups)

TIP: You can also use clothespins as an alternative to tongs/tweezers.



Fine motor strengthening & pincer development -Tactile Play

1. Play with playdoh, putty, or clay for hand strengthening activities:
 - a. Hide coins/small toys in putty and have your child find them
 - b. Roll logs, flatten pancakes
 - c. Make letters or shapes
 - d. Have your child hide coins for YOU to find :)



Fine motor strengthening & pincer development- Q-Tip Painting

1. Use q-tips or cotton balls (or paint brushes) to paint pictures
2. If you have access to a computer and printer, you can find q-tip painting pages online
3. If you don't have access to a computer or printer, you can draw a picture of your child to paint on or have them create their own



Fine motor strengthening -Munchie Ball



1. Cut a slit in a tennis ball and decorate tennis ball with facial features, hair, etc.
2. Encourage child to place their thumb on one of the balls “cheeks” and their index finger on the other “cheek” and squeeze until the “mouth” opens
3. With other hand, child picks up small objects (coins, beads, small erasers) and places it into the Munchie’s mouth
4. Some tennis balls are softer than others, you can make activity easier this way. You can find smaller tennis balls at the pet supply store for smaller hands.
5. This activity works on hand strengthening, bilateral coordination, pincer grasp

Cutting

1. Roll play-doh “spaghetti” and have your child snip smaller pieces
 2. Collect your child’s favorite color paint chips and practice cutting on the line.
 3. Draw curves/angles/shapes on index cards and have your child ‘cut on the road’.
- Because computer paper is flacid, construction paper, index cards, and card stock are easier to manipulate and cut.



visual perception

Figure ground at home:

- Play games to find objects in a cluttered area such as finding socks in a messy drawer or finding a specific item in the refrigerator
- Use hidden picture books such as I spy

Visual Discrimination at home:

- Have child “correct” a paper with letters formed incorrectly
- Make flashcards with the correct and incorrectly formed letters

visual perception Cont.

Visual memory at home:

- Playing the game “ Memory”
- Place several objects on a tray, have the child look at the objects and then cover them after a few seconds- have the child repeat to you what he/she saw originally on the tray.

Visual Closure at home:

- Use puzzles as a play activity to strengthen their weakness

Form Constancy at home:

- Ask the child to point out the different objects in the home that are specific shapes (a clock is a circle, a table is a rectangle...)
- Pantry/refrigerator I Spy- have the child to find a given letter or shape within the pantry or refrigerator.

Table-top activities to enhance visual perception

• Mazes

- Hidden picture worksheets
- Dot to dot worksheets
- Word searches
- Puzzles
- iSpy
- Where's Waldo
- What's different worksheets
- Connect Four
- Tic-tac-toe

Best toys for visual perception

Best Toys for Visual Perceptual Skills



Using your eyes and your brain to interpret and understand visual information in your environment

- I-Spy Books and Games
- Interlocking Puzzles
- Memory match games
- Play Pattern Puzzles
- Pixio Design Series
- Highlights Hidden Pictures



- Splitting Image
- Perfection
- Bugzzle
- Crankity
- Acuity
- Connect Four

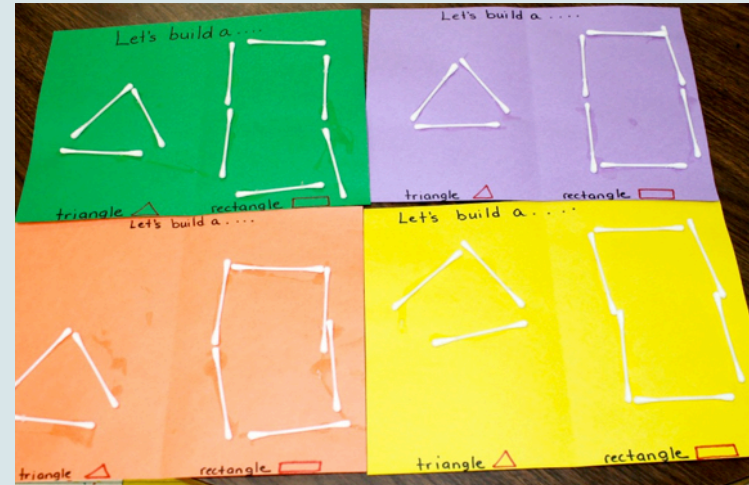
- Rush Hour
- Mental Blox
- Hidden Picture Worksheets (highlights)
- Match the letter/number activities
- Pixy Cubes
- Spot It
- Tangrams
- Paint/ Color by Number
- Copying block designs
- Word search Books
- BINGO
- Legos
- Pancake Pile Up Game
- AnimaLogic



- SmartGames IQ Puzzler Pro
- Battle Ship
- Osmo Genius for Ipad
- How to Draw Books
- Aquadoodle
- Magnadoodle
- SET - Visual Perceptual Game
- Pattern Play Mosaic Pictures
- Q-Bits Jr.
- Dr. Microbe Science Game
- Thinkfun Swish
- Tetris Tangrams
- Shape by Shape
- Ladybug's Garden Memory Game
- Go Go Gears
- GeoMagic Mosaics

Pre-Writing Shapes/S

1. Find household items with straight sides such as popsicle sticks, Q-tips, pieces of spaghetti
2. Draw shapes with straight sides on the piece of paper (vertical line, horizontal line, triangle, square, rectangle, etc.)
3. Have your child use the items to “trace” the shapes



Pre-writing

Strengthening the hands, arches of the hands (palms) and fingers, are all super important. The entire strength of the tummy (core), shoulders, neck muscles all contribute in part for writing:) Some strengthening ideas include:

1. **Crawling games: Play CRANK!** This is basically hands and knees soccer while tapping a soft indoor ball with the palm of your hand to score on the other player! Super fun and all ages can play:)
2. **Rolling games: Play Taco!** Roll up in a blanket spread out on the floor. Offer your child deep massage rubs down there back and then have them un-roll. Make sure their face is exposed.

Pre-Writing and Hand strengthening Continued

1. Palm strengthening/finger strengthening: It may be fun to add an indoor clothes line with the old fashioned clothes pins. You could suggest that your child hang up their shirts grouped by colors or other feature, pants etc. The squeezing of the clothespins is excellent for strengthening the arches of the hand.
2. You could make “Prayer flags” of all different styles depending on the age and then hang those flags on the line with clothespins.
3. Pinching clips of any kind is excellent as well as rubber band activities i.e. making those rubber band linked bracelets or stretching colored bands around tubes or nail boards.

Handwriting practice

1. Practice forming letters in various tactile mediums such as shaving cream, sand, etc.
2. Have your child write a letter to a friend or family member
3. Write with chalk outside
4. Remember handwriting rules:
 - Form letters top to bottom and left to right
 - Leave space between words
 - Keep “tall” letters tall, “small” letters small, and encourage “fall” letters to fall (j,g,p,q,y)



Vocational Skills for Kids

1. Have your child participate in household chores with you when they are home!
 - a. Folding towels/clothes
 - b. Sweeping and using the vacuum
 - c. Wiping down tables
 - d. Cleaning windows
 - e. Putting their clothes and toys away
 - f. Putting clothes in the washer
 - g. Cleaning dishes
 - h. Cooking simple meals or snacks



Helpful Websites

- <https://www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com>
- <https://cornerstoneautismcenter.com/about-autism/ot-sensory-ideas-home/>
- **Pinterest**
- <http://therapystreetforkids.com>
- **Shoe tying** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJVR8hHBQyM>
- **Typing.com or Typingclub.com**