

SCHOOL-AGED UTENSIL USE

Occupational Therapy

Purpose

To assist a student in holding eating utensils correctly. The same grasp is used on eating utensils as on writing tools. Practicing a correct grasp during meal time offers a great way to reinforce a grasp pattern that is applicable to writing.

Equipment: Spoon, fork, table knife

Procedure: Spoon and Fork Grasp

1. Pick up the utensil in your preferred/dominant hand holding it by the handle.
2. The hand is thumb on top with the utensil resting on the pointer (index) and middle finger. The thumb is on top forming a triangle with the three fingers. The ring and little fingers are curled up.
3. The arm moves to scoop up the food in a thumb down (pronation) then thumbs up (supination) pattern.



Procedure: How to Cut with a Fork

1. To use the side of the fork to cut food, you change to a different grasp.
2. The fork is angled on its side.
3. The pointer (index) finger is straight along the side of the fork.
4. The thumb and middle finger pinch together to hold the fork.
5. The pointer (index) finger presses the fork down through the food to cut.



Procedure: Cutting with a Fork and Knife

1. The preferred/dominant hand holds the knife in a thumb down (pronated) grasp.
2. The pointer (index) finger is straight along the side of the knife handle with the sharp side of the knife pointing down.
3. The thumb and middle finger pinch together to hold the knife.
4. The helper/non-dominant hand holds the fork in a thumb down (pronated) grasp.
5. The pointer (index) finger is straight along the back of the fork handle with the fork tip pointing down.
6. The thumb and middle finger pinch together to hold the fork.
7. To cut, the fork holds the food still while the knife moves in a back and forth motion to cut the food.

