

PRE-PRINTING SKILLS

It is important to provide lots of opportunity for your child to colour and draw. Drawing and colouring will help your child develop and improve their pencil control. Activities like simple dot-to-dot or maze activities also help develop pencil control. Developing the ability to direct a pencil on paper in preprinting activities prepares a child for learning to print.

When working on colouring within the lines, you will see your child progress from using large arm movements across the page to using the small joints of the hand. Drawing will stimulate a child's expression of thoughts on paper, combining different strokes or shapes to represent objects. These are the pre-requisite skills to forming letters to express thoughts in words. Your child will also develop an understanding of the concept of a starting point and ending point. Mastery of the precursor shapes is important in order to have success with printing.

Pre-Printing Progression:

- Mouthing/sensory play
- Bangs crayon
- Scribbles randomly
- Scribbles in a:
 - vertical direction
 - horizontal direction
 - circular direction
- Traces
- Imitates lines and shapes in the following order:
 - Vertical line (typically a 2-year skill)
 - Horizontal line (typically a 2.5-year skill)
 - Circle (typically a 2-year + 9-month skill)
 - cross (+)
 - right to left diagonal (/)
 - square
 - left to right diagonal (\)
 - X
 - triangle
- Copies lines and shapes in the following order:
 - Vertical line (typically a 2-year + 10-month skill)
 - Horizontal line (typically a 3-year skill)
 - Circle (typically a 3-year skill)
 - cross (+) (typically a 4-year + 1-month skill)
 - right to left diagonal (/) (typically a 4-year + 4-months skill)
 - square (typically a 4.5-year skill)
 - left to right diagonal (\) (typically a 4-year + 7 months skill)
 - X (typically a 4-year + 11-months skill)
 - Triangle (typically a 5-year + 3-months skill)
 - Diamond

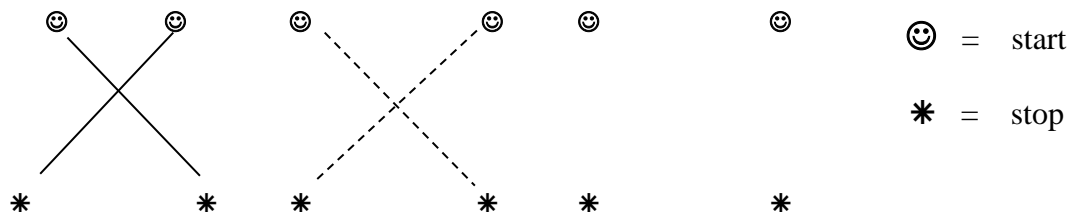
Teaching Techniques

As needed during practice, provide modelling and hand over hand assistance to demonstrate movement.

When teaching your child to draw a shape, the following order is recommended:

Tracing → imitation → copying

- Tracing: When tracing, the child makes the strokes directly over the model. Progress from a solid line, to a dotted line or thick highlighted path. Use stickers or images as start/stop points when practicing.



- Imitation: Once your child demonstrates ability to trace the shape, they are ready to attempt imitation. By watching you, your child learns how the shape is formed, learns how to break it down into its separate parts, and notices the starting point and stopping point. It may also be helpful to describe what you are doing while drawing the shape.
- Copying: In copying, the model is there for the child to see, but they must remember how to make it, by breaking down the letter into its parts and putting them together. Please note that it is more difficult for a child to copy from the blackboard than from a sample directly beside him.

Suggested Activities

When practicing pre-printing skills, use a variety of sensory materials. For example:

- On a tray with sand or rice
- Pudding
- Shaving or whipped cream
- Paint (finger or with a brush)
- Chalkboard/Dry Erase board
- iPad apps (Writing Wizard (J'écrit en script'), Finger Paint, Letters and Numbers for me,)
- Play dough
- Scented markers
- Gel or paint crayons
- Spray bottle with food colouring and water in snow
- Magnetic boards/Doodle Board
- Aqua Doodle
- Boogie Board (LCD)

Other pre-printing activity ideas:

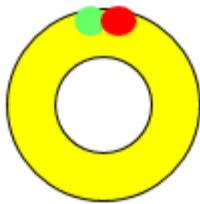
- Drawing a line to connect two matching images on either side of the page (in vertical, horizontal or diagonals paths).
- Worksheets that encourage circling or crossing out the answer.

When practicing **vertical and horizontal** lines:

- Use cue word "zip" for vertical lines. Make sure they are starting the line at the top.
- Use cue word "ZOOM" for horizontal lines. Make sure they draw the line from left to right.

When practicing drawing a **circle**:

- Ensure correct formation when creating circles, start at the top and move in *counter-clockwise* direction for children that are right-handed, and *clockwise* if the child is left-handed.
- Provide verbal cues (using words like "*Around and stop!*") so that the child stops making a circular scribble and forms a single circle.
- Practice making circles, to create happy faces, flowers or suns to make it more fun.
- Provide visual cues (ex: sticker or red dot) to show when to stop his circle at the top:



When practicing drawing a **cross/plus-sign (+)**:

- Ensure to practice crosses using correct formation (top/down, left to right) to help establish good habits for printing skills later on.
- Provide verbal cues for vertical "zip" and horizontal "zoom" strokes.
- Provide hand over hand assistance to show them how to intersect the lines.
- Provide visual cues to show where to start and stop lines (ex: green and red dots):

