

HealthPoint

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Two Hands work better than ONE!!

As you have been spending more and more time at home with your kiddos during this “stay at home” order, you may be wondering what FUN activities could your child or children be doing to help increase his or her fine motor skills that you are not already doing! Well today, I’m going to share with you some activities you may have or haven’t done yet, focusing specifically on bilateral coordination skills. You may be asking why are these skills important or why they matter? These are important skills for one’s development as they get older, especially for completing life skills. Bilateral coordination involves using both hands and both sides of our brain together at the same time when completing a task, which for some children can be extremely difficult, or for others come more natural and easier to do! Without bilateral coordination, some children may appear more clumsy, favor using one hand to complete tasks, or switch hands during tasks that may involve a helper hand and a dominant hand. I’m going to share a variety of activities below with you, ranging from easy to more challenging and these activities are good for ALL ages of children to complete!!

- CLAP YOUR HANDS- start with hand over hand assistance and reduce your assistance for child to try and do on his/her own for increased challenge
- PUT ITEMS TOGETHER/PULL APART- start with larger items, such as pop toots and progress to using small items, such as chain links for increased challenge
- PUT OBJECTS IN A CONTAINER- use different objects such as toys, blocks, coins, etc, starting with a larger opening progressing to a small, more narrow opening for increased challenge
- CRUMPLE PAPER- start with half a sheet of paper and progress to a full sheet of paper for increased challenge
- TEAR PAPER- start with tearing pieces of paper pre-cut progressing to tearing pieces of paper without cuts made in them for increased challenge
- LACING TASKS- start with a reinforced string (tape on end of string) or use of a pipe cleaner to using a regular string for increased challenge
- OPEN/CLOSE A LID ON A CONTAINER- start with a Rubbermaid container and progress to a smaller container with a twist lid for increased challenge

- OPEN/CLOSE A ZIPLOCK BAGGIE- start with a slide ziplock baggie and progress to a regular ziplock baggie for increased challenge
- PLAY WITH PLAY DOUGH USING TOOLS- start with just tearing pieces with two hands to rolling playdough with two hands progressing to using different tools such as rolling pin, cutting tools, or cut out's for increased challenge



- CUT WITH SCISSORS- start with snipping and progress to cutting straight lines before trying to cut out different shapes, and cut different things, such as straws, thick paper, newspaper, etc
- GLUING- start with using a glue stick progressing to using squeeze glue for increased challenge
- FASTENING/UNFASTENING BUTTONS- start with larger buttons and progress to smaller buttons for increased challenge
- FASTENING/UNFASTENING ZIPPER- start with unzipping first and progress to zipping, and try to keep article of clothing on table to practice engaging the zipper into the zipper foot first, and mastering that before progressing to zipping when piece of clothing is on you (ie: open faced sweater or coat)
- FOLDING PAPER – start with folding paper in half progressing to folding in quarters, and for increased challenge you could try and fold a paper plane
- SIMPLE BAKING- help your parent/grandparent follow a simple recipe taking turns to gather items needed, making sure to take turns with mixing, stirring and scooping for increased challenge.
- HANDWRITING- start with tracing activities of simple lines and progress to copying activities with shapes, and for increased challenge you could try writing letters/numbers
- USING STENCILS- start with using simple shapes progressing to more complex shapes for increased challenge
- PAINTING- start with using your fingers to paint progressing to using a paintbrush to paint, and for increased challenge you could use a q tip to paint



Below are some links that you can refer to for more fun bilateral coordination tasks in case you would like to print them and try at home too.... Kids always will work harder when PLAY is involved!! 😊

<https://therapyfunzone.net/blog/ot/fine-motor-skills/bilateral-integration/>

<https://www.ot-mom-learning-activities.com/bilateral-integration.html>

<https://www.storey.com/article/baking-kids-guide-kitchen-skills/>