



kids therapy made simple

Development of Pencil Grasp

Does it really matter how I hold my pencil?

The short and sweet answer here is yes and no. Ultimately, if you are academically functional and appropriate in the rest of your development, then you most likely don't need to change the way you hold your pencil.

However, pencil grasp does not only have to do with the strength of your hands and fingers. Each stage of grasp development is actually dependent upon the strength and development of the larger muscles in the arm (i.e. shoulder muscled, upper arm muscles, forearm).

Due to gross motor activities such as tummy time, crawling and climbing, these large muscles develop before the smaller muscles in the hand. As the arms become stronger and more stable, your child's pencil grasp will change and mature.

Stages of Pencil Grasp

<p>Palmar Supinate</p>	 <p>12-18 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole hand wraps around the pencil • Movements come from the shoulder; the arm and the hand move as a unit
<p>Digital Pronate</p>	 <p>2 years - 3 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pencil is held across all fingers with palm facing down • Movements come from elbow; the forearm and hand move as a unit
<p>Static Tripod/ Quadropod</p>	 <p>3 years - 4 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fingers are held on the pencil opposite the thumb • Movements come from the wrist; the hand and fingers move as a unit, with the fingers remaining static
<p>Dynamic Tripod/ Quadropod</p>	 <p>4 years - 6 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The thumb, index and middle fingers work together as a unit to precisely control the pencil • The ring and little finger act as support • Movement occurs at the fingers for precision and at the wrist, elbow and shoulder to move horizontally across the page

The ideal and most efficient way to hold a pencil is with a tripod grasp. This allows for the greatest amount of finger movement and ultimately control over the pencil. Due to the increased use of the smaller finger muscles, this grasp is also the least fatiguing.