

Teaching Crayon Grip

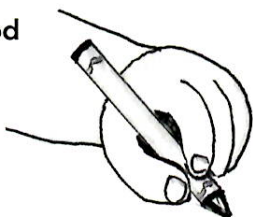
Close to 50 percent of three-year-olds have the fine motor ability to hold a small crayon correctly (Schneck & Henderson 1990). But the correct grip has to be taught. You can end awkward or even fisted pencil grips with direct teaching of specific strategies. Young children are pliable and can learn good habits. Here are strategies to teach correct crayon grip.

Demonstrate Grip - Standard or Alternate

The standard grip, also called the “tripod grip,” uses three fingers to hold the crayon or pencil. The thumb is bent, the index finger points to the tip of the crayon, and the crayon rests on the side of the middle finger. The last two fingers are curled in the palm and give the hand stability.

An alternative grip called the “quadropod grip” (four fingers) is another way children may hold the crayon. The thumb is bent, the index and middle finger point to the tip of the crayon, and the crayon rests on the ring finger. This grip is efficient and does not need to be corrected.

Left Tripod

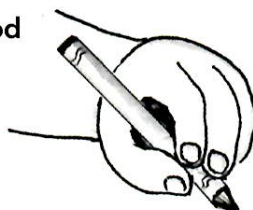


Standard Grip

Right Tripod

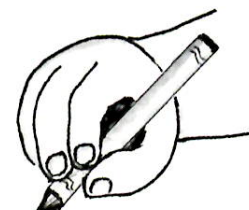


Left Quadropod



Alternative Grip

Right Quadropod



Little Crayons/Little Pencils

The best tool for Pre-K children is the crayon. Crayons create a natural resistance and build strength in the hand. They prepare the hand for using a good pencil grip. Our Flip Crayons® are ideal for little hands. They are designed with dual colors and dual tips to encourage fine motor development: when children flip the crayons, they use in-hand manipulation skills, which lead to improved coordination. If you do move a child to pencils, use a golf-size pencil. Avoid fat primary pencils because those are too heavy and long for little hands. Children will do better with a short pencil that's in proportion to their hands. You can use markers in moderation.



Pencil Grips

Avoid using pencil grips or any other type of adaptive writing device for Pre-K children. Pencil grips are for older children who find them helpful. Young children are motivated to learn new skills. If they are holding a crayon or small pencil incorrectly, demonstrate the proper grip and try the techniques described above or on page 29.