

# Scissors Skills

Scissor skills are important because they help:

- develop the muscles in children's hands to support other daily activities such as self-care skills and pencil grasp. Scissor skills helps develop thumb strength, hand strength, eye-hand coordination, bilateral coordination (using two hands together to do a task) and developing skills and stability in both sides of the hand (thumb side and pinky side).
- increase a child's confidence and participation in cutting activities and projects.

## Scissor Grasp:

1. Thumb in the little loop
2. Fingers in the big loop (index finger can stabilize just outside the big loop)
3. Use the "paper hand" or "helper hand" to turn the paper.

## Other Cues:

- Hold the paper with the "thumb up" (thumb on top)
- Chicken wings in (elbows at your side, not out)
- Cut away from your body (not across your body with the elbows out)



## Four tips for developing scissors skills

1. Help children learn the open/close motion needed for scissors by giving opportunities for them use tongs (eg. salad tongs), turkey basters, and spray bottles. Another interesting activity is cutting a slit in a tennis ball and drawing a face on the ball with the slit being the mouth. Have your child squeeze the tennis ball to "feed" Mr. Mouth interesting objects.
2. Buy good scissors. Look for scissors that...
  - fit your child's hand
  - have a blunt tip
  - have blades that are sharp enough for cutting, as dull scissors can fold and tear paper which is frustrating for children
  - are for your child's dominant hand. Left-handed children need left-handed scissors so that they can see the line that they are cutting.
3. Allow children to explore with scissors by setting by a cutting bin with a variety of textures and materials eg. cards, magazines, tissue paper, straws, thick paper, styrofoam egg cartons, play dough.
4. Stiff paper is easier to cut than thin paper and straight lines should be practiced before expecting curved lines.

