

Hand warm-up routines

Before engaging in handwriting or fine motor tasks, it is important that children have the opportunity to warm up their hands. Hand exercises help the brain increase awareness of where the hands are, improve coordination, prepare the body for controlled movements and furthermore aid precision.

Hand exercises

Choose four of these exercises for the start of each lesson – try to include a variety each week. Watch the ‘Hand exercises’ videos on the Little Wandle website to see how to do the exercises.

1. Rub hands together

Rub hands together until they feel warm. Move them up and down, or in circular motions to stimulate blood flow.

2. Push palms together

Push the palms firmly together and hold for five seconds. Repeat a few times.

3. Finger stretches

Open hands wide, stretching fingers as far apart as you can. Then make a tight fist, hiding fingers away inside the palm.

4. Drumming fingers

Drum fingers on the table, one finger at a time. This can be extended to tapping a rhythm.

5. Squeeze forearms and hands

Use the left hand to squeeze the right forearm and hand firmly, applying gentle pressure to stimulate the muscles and increase awareness. Swap hands.

6. Pulling fingers (like taking off a glove)

With one hand, grasp each finger of the other hand in turn and gently pull downward, as if taking off a glove. Repeat for the other hand.

7. Oppose thumb to each fingertip

Touch the thumb to each fingertip of the same hand in turn. For more challenge, this can be done with both hands at the same time, or with your eyes closed.

8. Finger circle tug

Form a circle with the thumb and index finger. Then form another circle with the other hand, within that circle, and try to pull them apart.