



Teaching Scissor Skills

Many skills are involved in using scissors. When cutting, a child needs to be able to hold and guide the paper with one hand whilst the other glides and snips paper. Both hands and arms also need to be kept steady while doing this, which can be very tricky!

Cutting with scissors requires sequencing, bilateral integration, motor planning, grading pressure and speed as well as problem solving. If a child has difficulty with any of these skills, scissors will be challenging.

Pre-cutting scissor skills:

1. Show your child how to give the 'thumbs up' sign.
 2. Show your child how to hold the scissors with their thumb in the top ring of the handle, and two or three fingers in the bottom ring. The scissors should face away from their body.
 3. Play a game of 'open and shut' to show your child how to open and close the scissors properly.
- Encourage thumbs on top by drawing a little person or sticking a sticker on the thumb and explain "They always need to be on top to see where you are cutting". If your child has their thumb down you can ask, "Where has your little person/ sticker gone?"
 - Posture - keep elbows close to body, no chicken wings, and hold paper with other hand close to where they are cutting.

Activities:

- Try snipping first, progress to cutting straight lines, then progress to cutting curved lines and finally more complex shapes.
- Thicker paper or straws may be good to start with and progress to thinner paper.
- Snipping activities-snip different coloured paper and make a collage, snip long pieces of grass and stick onto paper, snip pieces of wool or string and glue on for hair, snip pieces of straw into small pieces and thread on a string for a necklace, snip the edges of a paper plate to make a lions mane.
- Cut long strips of paper leaving them attached at one end to make a Hula Skirt or hat.