



Hand and Finger Skills: 2 Year Olds

At age two, your child will be able to manipulate small objects with ease. He'll turn the pages of a book, build a tower six blocks high, pull off his shoes, and unzip a large zipper. He'll also coordinate the movements of his wrist, fingers, and palm so well that he can turn a doorknob, unscrew a jar lid, use a cup with one hand, and unwrap paper from a candy.

One of his major accomplishments this year will be learning to "draw." Hand him a crayon and watch what happens: He'll place his thumb on one side of it and his fingers on the other, then awkwardly try to extend his index or middle finger toward the point. Clumsy as this grip may seem, it will give him enough control to create his first artistic masterpieces, using sweeping vertical and circular strokes.



Fortunately, your child's quiet play at this age will be much more focused than it was at eighteen months, when he was into everything. His attention span is longer, and now that he can turn pages, he'll be an active participant as you look at books or magazines together. He'll also be interested in activities such as drawing, building, or manipulating objects, so blocks and interlocking construction sets may keep him entertained for long periods. And if you let him loose with a box of crayons or a set of fingerpaints, his creative impulses will flourish.

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