

Occupational Therapy

Handwriting - Shoulder control for speed

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Basic Hand Warm-Ups

Try and do each warm-up ten times.

If it's tricky to do one warm-up with both hands at the same time, then just do the warm-up activity one hand at a time.

1. Hands open and closed
2. Interlocking finger squeezes
3. Finger pulls
4. Finger taps on table
5. Finger taps on thumbs
6. Finger and thumb pulls and squeezes
7. Finger separations



Activity 1 – Fluency patterns

- As we work across a page we have to do lots of quick little shoulder adjustments.
- Place your large piece of paper on the table in front of you.
- Take a pen or pencil and draw a fluency pattern all the way across without stopping.
- Try to keep the pattern as straight and even as you can.
- Your fluency patterns might be: loops, waves, zig-zag mountains, round hills.
- Try not to move your body as you work, just move your arm at your shoulder.
- For a challenge, do the same pattern in the same, or opposite directions, or with both hands at the same time.



Activity 2 – Tennis ball bounces

- **Option 1:**

- Take a tennis ball and a tennis racket and find some clear space.
- Hit the tennis ball up in the air as many times as you can using the racket.
- You do not want to hit the ball too hard otherwise it could fly away and you will have to start again.

- **Option 2:**

- You could also try hitting the tennis ball downwards so it bounces back up off the floor for you to hit again.
- As you get better at this, try using your hand instead of a tennis racket to hit the ball repeatedly.



Accommodations and alternatives

- If you do not have large paper, you can use standard paper, but place it horizontally so your arm has to move more.
- Try simpler fluency patterns or shapes as you go across the page until you get better so you can try the more complicated ones.
- If hitting a tennis ball is hard, try a larger, but light, ball. Balloons are good to practise with as they move much more slowly.

