

Occupational Therapy

# **Handwriting - Shoulder strength for control**

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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 – Vertical drawing

- Stand in front of your chosen surface to write on.
  - This could be a white board, chalk board or a big piece of paper taped to a wall.
- Try really hard not to stop to let your arm rest until you absolutely have to.
- You could also vertically draw some writing patterns.
- Try with your other hand too - it's tricky, isn't it?
- As you get better, try using both hands together doing vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines. Try to keep the speed and movement the same with both hands.



## Activity 2 – Wall push ups

- This is a really good exercise to get those shoulder muscles strong.
- Stand in front of a wall and place your hands on the wall.
- Your hands need to be shoulder height and yours palms placed on the wall opposite your shoulders.
- Push as hard as you can against the wall for as long as you can - see if you can push the wall over!
- You can try this again with your hands closer together and further apart to give different muscles a chance to work.



## Activity 3 – Wheelbarrow walk

- This is another fun way to get our shoulders stronger.
- Kneel down with your hands on the floor.
- Ask an adult to stand behind you and hold onto your thighs and then lift your legs up.
- You will then walk, on your hands, from the start to a finish spot.
- To make it more fun you could have some sofa cushions or a bean bag to crash onto at the end.
- As you get stronger, ask the adult to hold you at your knees, your shins and then your ankles.



# Accommodations and alternatives

- If it is hard to stand and work on a vertical surface, you can try sitting or kneeling as you do so.
- If wall push ups are hard, try doing these in high kneeling until you get better.
- For wheelbarrow walks, decrease the distance you have to go until you feel more confident and stronger.

