



PRE-PRINTING SKILLS

Why are pre-printing skills important?

Before children are successful at writing letters or numbers, children need to be able to copy the basic strokes for drawing.

What are the pre-printing strokes?

Horizontal line	Vertical line	Circle	Cross	Diagonal line	Square	“X”	Triangle	Diamond
—		○	+	/	□	X	△	◇

How can I help my child work on pre-printing skills?

- Start with imitating horizontal and vertical strokes and follow progression above
- Start with having your child imitate (your child watches how you draw it)
- Once child is able to imitate the stroke have your child copy it (show your child a picture of the stroke)

Activity Suggestions:

- Finger Paint. Let your child’s fingers to the walking, reducing the confusion of how to hold a crayon.
- Draw in Sand. Use a stick or fingers to trace race car paths and winding roads. Then have races with toy cars but be sure to stay on the track! Let your child copy your pattern and then you copy theirs!
- Trace Stencils. Buy or make your own designs in cardboard. Let your children trace on paper or the blackboard, and then colour in their designs! Letter stencils can be used to start printing their own name.
- Chalk on the Sidewalk. Let the sidewalk or driveway be the paper. Use those big fat pieces of chalk for small kids while bigger kids can use the skinny pieces.
- Combine the basic strokes to make ladders or railroad tracks, fences, cages around animals.
- Have your child add details to drawings. For example, add the eyes, nose, mouth, hair to a circle to make a face; add circles to a car or truck for wheels; add vertical lines to flowers for stems

Helpful Hints:

- Consistently start strokes top to bottom and left to right
- Use consistent words to describe the stroke. (i.e. “zoom” for horizontal lines and “zip” for vertical lines)
- Trace the strokes with their finger before using a crayon

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For more information please visit www.earlyintervention.simcoe.ca