

MOVING ON TO SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

Scissors

Children will need to use scissors when they start primary school. This is a complex skill that needs practice. Children will improve using scissors if they practice at home. The information below should help increase your confidence in supporting your child to learn and practice these skills. Children should always be supervised when learning to use scissors. Consider safety scissors if you are worried.



Holding Scissors/Different Types of Scissors

This is how you should teach your child you hold their scissors. Always start with child-sized scissors. If you child is left handed, make sure they are using left-handed scissors.



Sometimes children respond from a visual prompt for where to put their thumb. For example use a sticker, coloured tape or nail varnish. Children often benefit from putting their hands in a thumbs up position to help them to remember where to put their thumb. Remind your child when using scissors to keep their thumbs on top. The phrase “thumbs to the sun” can be helpful.



Loop Scissors or Spring Loaded Scissors



Loop
Scissors



Spring
Loaded
Scissors

These scissors can be helpful if your child is having difficulties holding standard children's scissors or learning to open and close the scissors. Starting with these types of scissors may keep them interested and allow them to succeed with cutting tasks.

Pre-Scissor Activities

It is always helpful to make sure your child has the skills they need to use scissors before you start. Activities that work on developing pincer grasp and using both hands together and opening/closing their hand are helpful in preparing your child for using scissors.

Some activities you could try include:



Using tongs/tweezers to
move items



Tearing and scrunching
paper



Threading

Snipping

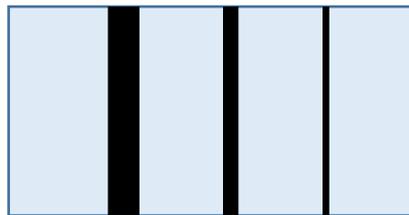
Always start by teaching your child to use scissors to make single snips. Using a variety of different materials to do this, helps to keep it fun. Try using strips of card, straws, playdoh, spaghetti. Then make it fun by using the snipped bits to make something e.g. threading straws onto necklace, making a collage. You can get extra-long straws which helps keep their hands a safe distance from the scissors. A child will find cutting thin card (e.g. a cereal box) easier than paper initially because it isn't as bendy. As your child improves, you can move onto snipping paper, to make it harder.



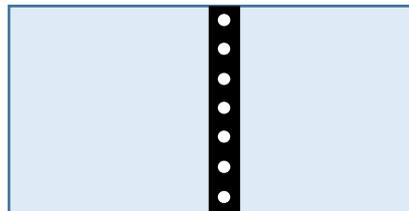
Cutting along a Line

Once your child is able to make one snip with the scissors, move on to practicing cutting along a line, using several snips one after the other. Again, start by using thin card and then you can move onto paper. Once they have got this, you can start to help increase their accuracy with cutting along lines through activities such as these:

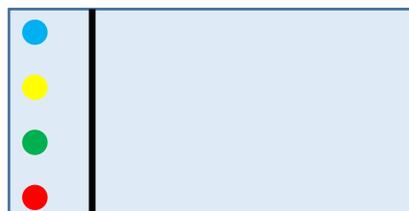
Different thickness of lines - start with thicker lines and move onto thinner lines as your child skills improve.



Hole punching lines - punch holes along a line, this will help your child stay on the line as they cut.



Stickers along the edge of page - children often find it difficult to move their holding hand along the paper as they cut. Using stickers to prompt them to move their thumb up the paper can be helpful.



Once your child has achieved success with cutting along straight lines, you can encourage them to start cutting along shapes. It is often easier to start with shapes with straight sides and then move on to curves.