

Free sample pages from Fantastic Fingers® Fine Motor Skill Builders Introduction to Level 1

Every child should have the best possible opportunities to develop skilled hand function, so essential for all life tasks. Children also use their fine motor skills in order to learn *how* to learn. They spend up to 60% of their class time engaged in fine motor activities. Good fine motor skills are vital, being one of four main predictors of early academic success.

In order to quickly develop skilled hand function for life and literacy, we must use activities that build specific performance components or foundations. In addition, it is important to show children how to do these activities in the most beneficial way. This includes correct positioning, the right techniques, making the activities more challenging and developing skill levels systematically.

This resource therefore, consists of three graded levels. Each level has ten main activities with upgrades and variations to keep children motivated. These ten activities are grouped into five focus areas as follows:

Finger Fun with Play Dough Puppets and Finger Printing

Increases sensory awareness of the thumb and fingers, and develops isolated finger coordination important for activities such as typing

Arm Action with Wrist Resist and Rubbings

Develops an optimal forearm and wrist position needed to stabilise the hand especially for handwriting and typing

Mr Muscles with Bubble Blast and Clothes Pin Games

Builds grip and pinch strength, which is required for independence in everyday fine motor tasks and is linked to handwriting legibility

3 Friends with Marble Moves and Tear & Paste

Enhances precision grip and refined finger movements of thumb index and middle fingers (3 Friends) needed for good pencil control

Prewriting Practice with Snake Cage and Grand Prix

Improves the flow and control of arm movements, develops eye hand coordination, and directionality

To see how the activities in this level build fine motor foundations, refer to the table on the following page. In addition, so that you can best help your child or students, look at the guidelines and materials list.

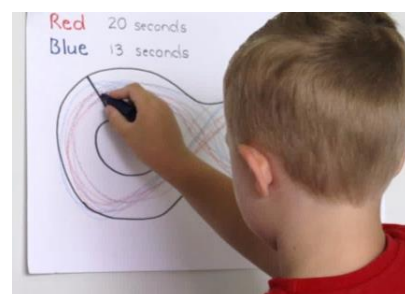
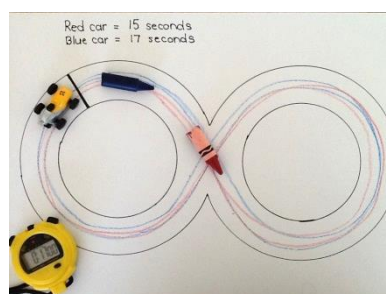
If you would like to learn more about the development of motor control from birth to age six, and essential foundations for fine motor tasks like handwriting, access the information and free video, [Fine Motor 101](#) on the *Watch Videos* page (How to Select Effective Activities) on my website www.myfantasticfingers.com

Fantastic Fingers® Fine Motor Skill Builders Foundations for Success for Level 1

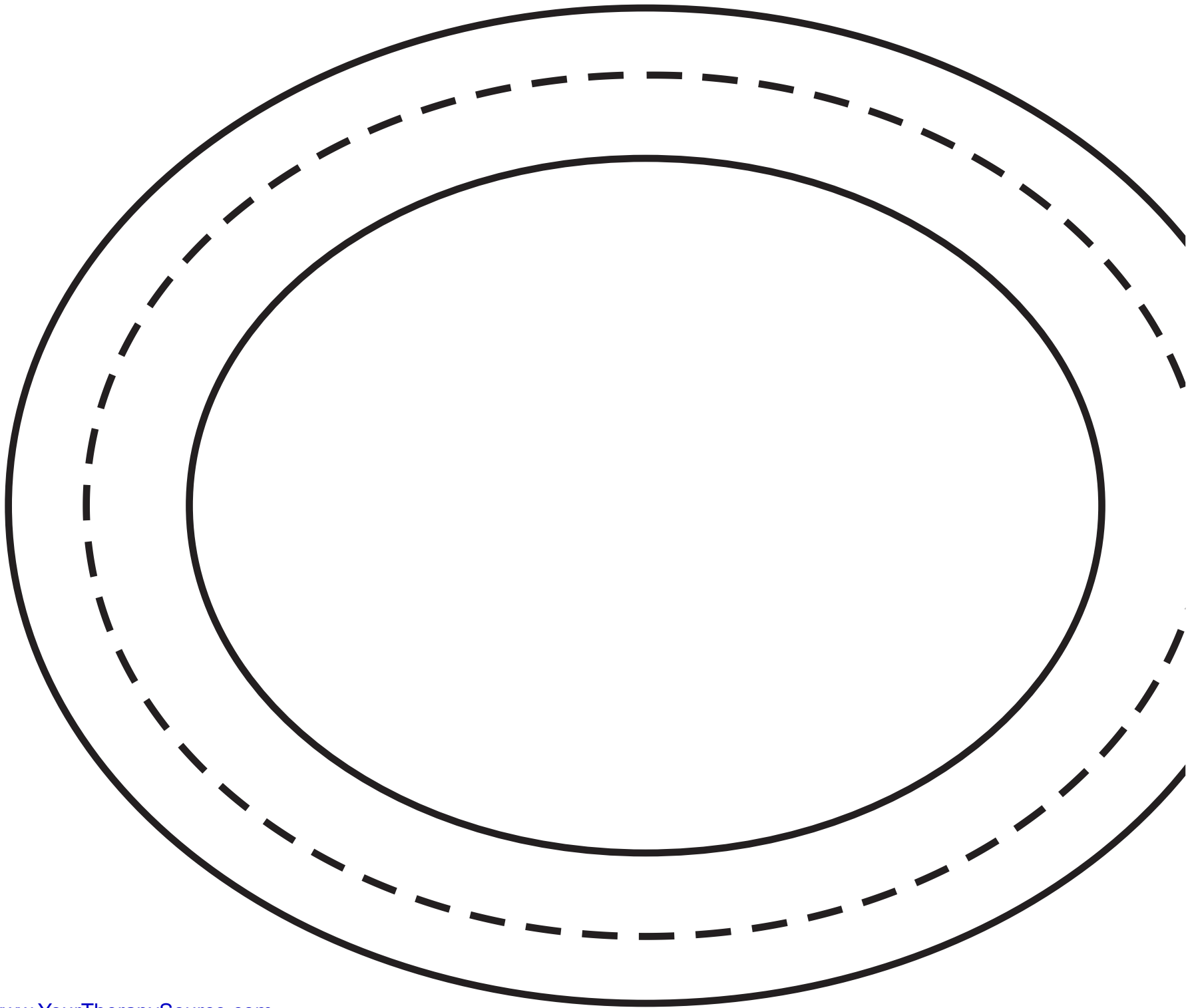
These activities, when done correctly, will help to develop in the areas below. Other benefits include improving motor planning, attention and self-esteem.	Play Dough Puppets	Wrist Resist	Bubble Blast	Marble Moves	Snake Cage	Finger Printing	Rubbings	Clothes Pin Games	Tear & Paste	Grand Prix
Shoulder stability &/or control of arm movements for hand placement & stability			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Forearm pronation (palm down with bent elbow) optimal position for writing		●		●			●		●	
Wrist extension (wrist held up and back) for hand stability & supporting a dynamic pencil grasp		●			●		●	●	●	●
Hand & finger strength for control & endurance	●		●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Tripod grasp (3 Friends) thumb, index and middle fingers work as a unit, part of the mobile skill side of hand			●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Kinaesthesia & tactile awareness in hand assists in optimal pencil pressure	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Isolated finger movements to support typing etc.	●					●				
Refined finger movements or small joint movements of first three fingers, leads to dynamic pencil grasp, helps with faster, tidier handwriting										
In-hand manipulation skilful movement & positioning of object/s within the hand				●						
Eye-hand coordination			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Directionality working from top to bottom & left to right					●					●
Prewriting & early printing skills e.g. shapes, lines					●					●

Prewriting Practice Level 1 - Fantastic Fingers® Fine Motor Skill Builders Grand Prix

- Purpose** To improve arm control and flow with appropriate pressure, eye-hand coordination, midline crossing, and drawing diagonal lines
- Materials** Several large sheets of paper
Blu Tack (or similar to secure paper to vertical surface)
Felt marker
Thick crayon pieces about 2 inches (4.5 cm) long
Timer
- Activity** The child sits on a suitable chair with their feet flat on the ground, and knees just touching a smooth vertical surface e.g. indoor wall. Secure the paper sideways in line with their middle and at face height. Draw for the child a large doubled lined, lazy eight racing track with a start/finish line across the top left side. Using your index fingers, take turns going from the start line around the track, crossing over the middle to make diagonal lines, and back. Once the child can do this motion (use arrows to help if needed), both choose crayon pieces which will represent your racing cars. Take turns drawing laps with the crayon 'cars' held in your preferred hands in the tips of your 3 Friends (thumb, index and middle fingers). When you are ready, have a race where you time and record how long it takes for each crayon car to do a certain number of laps e.g. 5. Aim to not stop while drawing the lazy eight patterns, and don't press too hard or too softly.
- Upgrades** Use other colours, and take turns racing several cars around the track. Let the child draw the initial lazy eight track.
- Variations** Just for fun, also drive little toy cars around the track. Instead of calling it a racing track, make it a butterfly, and use many colours to make rainbow coloured wings, draw in a head and body. This shape could be turned into goggle eyes with a mask or glasses. Use chalk pieces on a large chalkboard instead.



Lazy eight track with starting line and crayon cars showing direction
Secure track against a vertical surface, in the midline, at face height



Fold and glue to page one to create the Figure 8 track.

