

Pencil Grip

It is suggested that it is much easier to introduce and reinforce the proper way to hold a pencil than to try and change an inefficient one later in school life where the child has grown accustomed to using it for several years. It is felt that handwriting difficulties could be avoided in later years if there is an early emphasis on strong fine motor skills, learning how to hold a pencil and regular practice on how to use it.

The goal of a proper pencil grip is that it is stable, comfortable and is able to be moved with the smaller muscles of the fingers rather than the whole hand. One important feature of this type of grip is an open and rounded web space, the space formed by the thumb and index finger. It is much harder to move a pencil with finger movements if that is closed.

There are a number of ways to encourage the right grip. One idea is as follows:

Make ok sign with fingers. Place pencil between thumb and index fingers then drop the middle ring and little fingers under the pencil. The last joint of the middle finger sits next to the index finger so that it can support the underside of the pencil.

Children can be reminded to hold their pencil with their 'ok' fingers.

Alternatively the pinch action of the index finger and thumb, with the middle, ring and little fingers tucked into the palm mimics the action of a bird's pecking beak. Children can be reminded to make the bird's beak and hold their pencil.

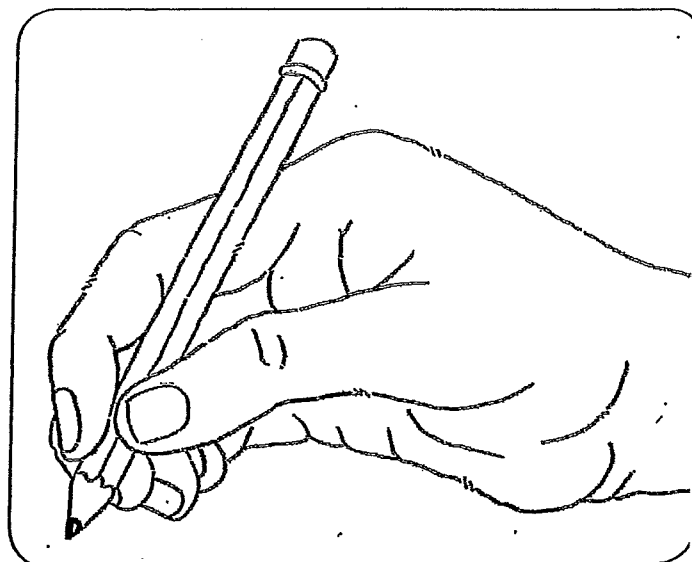
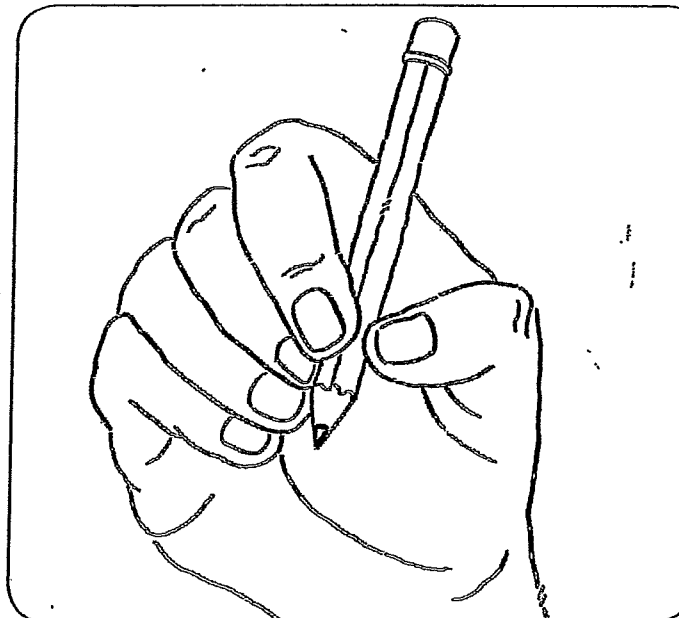
Sometimes children find it hard to keep their middle, ring or little fingers tucked into their palm, often they climb onto the pencil shaft too. Children can try holding a small marble or wishing stone in the palm of their hand as they write to help them maintain the right grip. There are also a large number of commercially available pencil grips that help children hold their pencils correctly as they begin to write.

Another useful activity to practise the right grip is too use extremely short pencils to encourage the child to use finger tips rather than the whole hand.

The shaft of the pencil should rest gently in the webspace. Children can check to see if their pencil is 'lying back on its pillow'

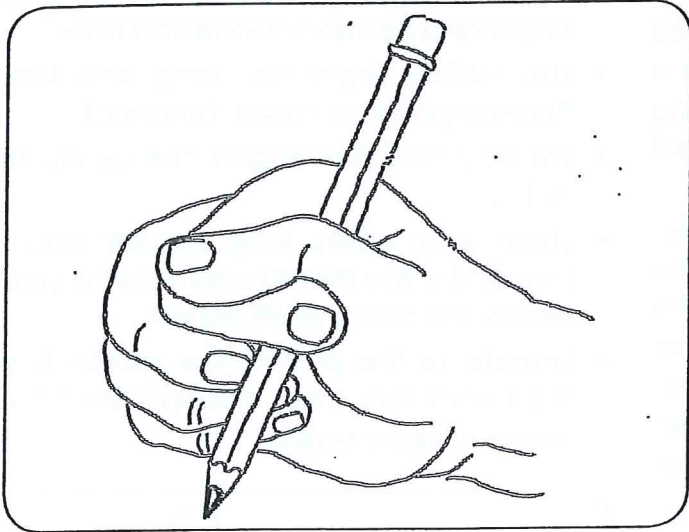
What Is A Good Pencil Grip?

- The pencil shaft is held between pads of index finger and thumb of dominant hand.
- The middle finger sits along side the index finger supporting under the pencil.
- The ring and little fingers curl gently into the palm.
- There is an open, fairly circular web space formed by the thumb and index finger. This where the pencil shaft will rest.
- Sometimes the pad of the middle finger can touch the pencil too, this is acceptable if the web space remains open.

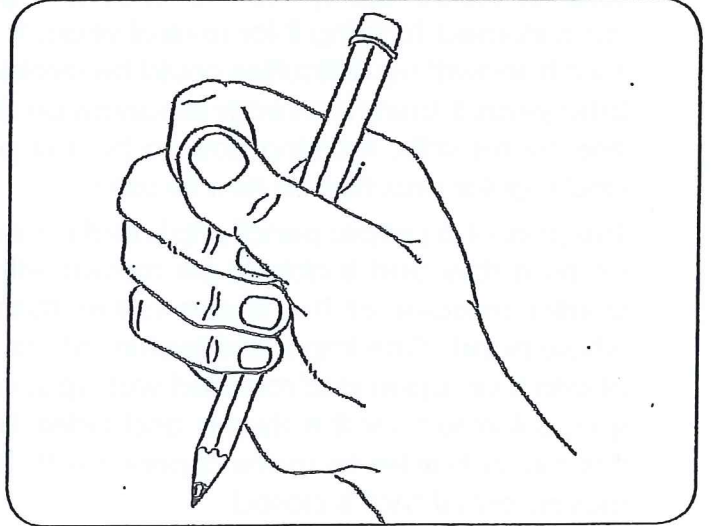


Pencil Grip (continued)

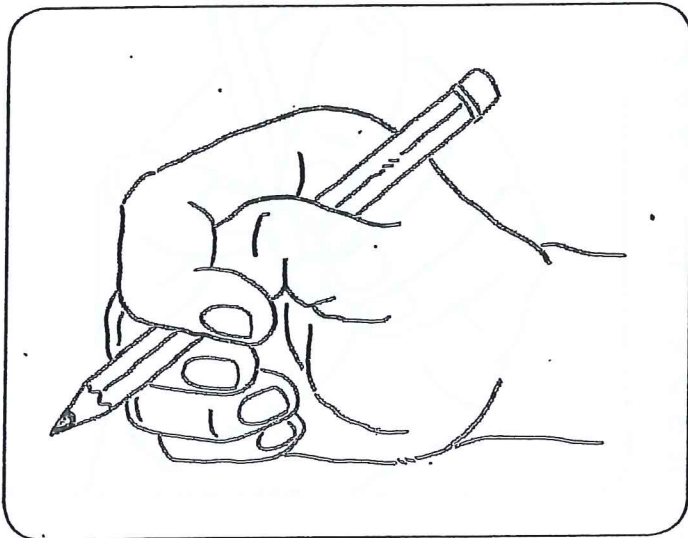
What Is NOT A Good Pencil Grip? (Pencil Grip continued)



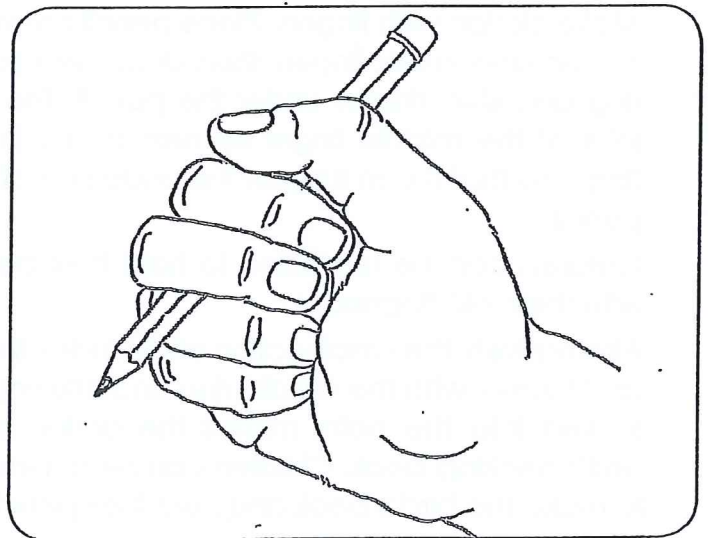
Thumb Wrap



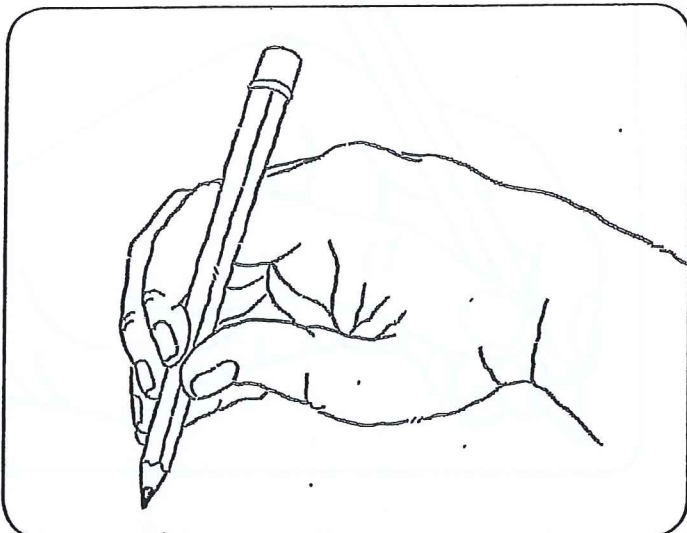
Transpalmar



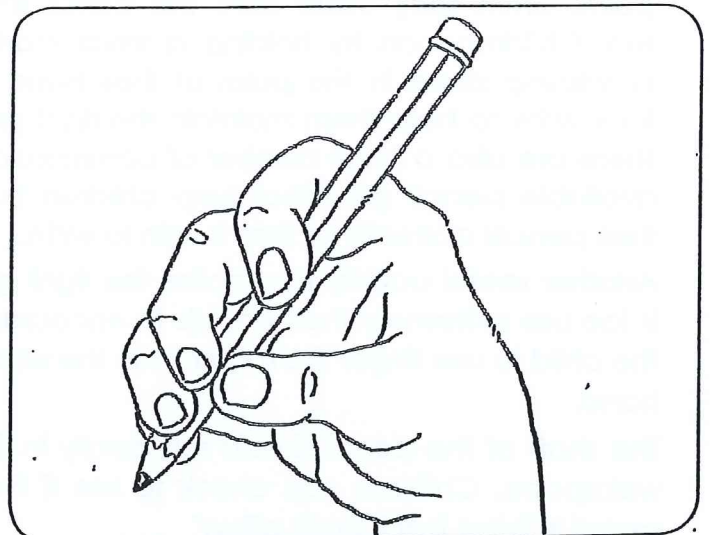
Thumb Tuck



Interdigital Brace



Supinate



Index Grip