

Touch, Point, and Turn Using Books with Tiny Hands

Books get minds and fingers moving. Holding a book, turning a page, pointing to a picture, and tracing a shape with a finger are all good ways of practicing fine motor coordination and control. They also help your child develop important pre-reading skills.

The Basics

Learning how to handle a book takes practice. And even just holding a book can be tricky for little hands. Let your child “read” a book by themselves—it’s okay if they hold it upside down to start. Invite them to turn the pages. Point to pictures together and name them. Use your fingers to help tell the story.

Books to Explore Together

Interactive Books. Flaps, tabs, and things to pull give children a chance to practice small movements with their fingers and hands. Use fingers to explore pictures, textures, and stories by tapping, rubbing, and poking.

Book suggestions:

- *Tap the Magic Tree* by Christie Matheson
- *My Magical Unicorn* by Yujin Shin
- *Mon Petit Busy Day* by Annette Tamarkin
- *Play This Book* by Jessica Young

Pointing Books. Pointing requires careful finger control and lots of focus. Trace letters or shapes, count objects, and find hidden details.

Book suggestions:

- *Underground Subway Systems Around the World* by Uijung Kim
- *The Odd One Out: A Spotting Book* by Britta Teckentrup
- *I Spy: A Book of Picture Riddles* by Walter Wick



Looking for books?

Visit your local library to find many of these books. Ask your librarian for more suggestions!



More! 

Counting Books. Counting is a great way to get fingers involved. Use fingers to count together (and maybe add some toes). Or find small objects to pick up and use for counting.



Book suggestions:

- *Grandma’s Tiny House* by JaNay Brown-Wood
- *Ten Black Dots* by Donald Crews
- *Ten Little Fingers, Two Small Hands* by Kristy Dempsey
- *One Is a Piñata* by Roseanne Greenfield Thong

Books about all the ways to use fingers and hands.

From clapping and waving to cooking and building, there are so many things people do with their fingers and hands. Notice all the things hands can do in a book—and then try some together.

Book suggestions:

- *Busy Fingers* by C.W. Bowie
- *Hands Can* by Cheryl Willis Hudson
- *More-igami* by Dori Kleber
- *Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao* by Kat Zhang



Bonus!



Fingerplays and Action Songs. There are lots of short songs or rhymes with hand, finger, and wrist motions, like the *Itsy Bitsy Spider* or the *Wheels on the Bus*. Children learn from the rhythm and language, as well as the motions. Add some fingerplays and action songs to your day—while waiting for the bus, standing in line, or before bedtime. What fingerplays and action songs do you remember from your childhood?

Things to Say

“Can you find the red circle on this page?”

Challenge your child to find something specific in a picture and point to it. Then, give them something else to look for.

“Let’s count together with our fingers.”

Use your fingers and count with your child. Give them time to watch you and copy your movements.

“Look what they’re doing in the story, we can do that too!”

Encourage your child to act out motions with their fingers and hands as you read. When you finish the story, try doing something similar to the characters in the book—you might build a tower, bake a cake, or draw a picture.