

Squeeze It

Using Droppers with Tiny Hands

Turkey basters and eye droppers are perfect tools for practicing fine motor skills. They are also great for learning to focus and look closely at something.

Note: Supplies that are underlined can be found in your kit. Supplies in *italics* you might have in your home or you can use something similar.

Tool Tips

Turkey basters and eye droppers push out air or water when they are squeezed, so make a rule that the tip of the tool should not be pointed at anyone's eyes or ears. Set rules for using these tools with water (like no squirting towards a person). For all water activities, make sure you supervise your child and empty the water when you're done.

Things to Try with 2 to 3-Year Olds

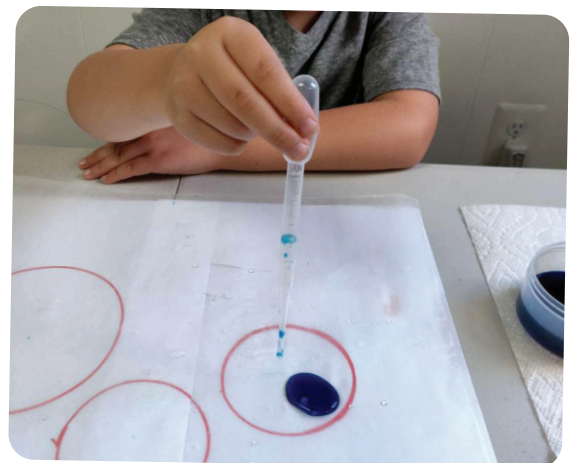
- **Moving along.** Crumple a half sheet of paper into a ball and place it on the floor or table. Have your child point the tip of the turkey baster at the ball, then squeeze the bulb. The air from the turkey baster should make the ball move!
- **In and Out.** Fill a *bowl* with some water. Encourage your child to pick up water with the turkey baster and squeeze it back into the bowl. Put out a *second empty bowl*. Invite your child to transfer the water from one bowl to the other.
- **Drops on a circle.** Help your child draw a small circle or put a dot sticker on a piece of paper. Encourage your child to use the eye dropper to put one or two drops of water onto the circle or dot. Add more circles or dots for more practice.



The Basics

Help your child learn to use these tools. Consider starting with the turkey baster. Then, try the eye dropper. Use a *bowl* of water and show them how to:

- Insert the tip of the tool below the surface of the water.
- Use their hand or fingers to squeeze the bulb (watch for bubbles!).
- Release the bulb lightly—water should move up into the tube.
- Lift the tip of the tool above the water.
- Release water one drop at a time or quickly to make a squirt.



More!

Things to Try with 3 to 5-Year Olds

- **Air power.** Use tape to make a starting line and finish line on the floor. Crumple a half sheet of paper into a ball and place it at the starting line. Challenge your child to use the turkey baster to move the ball to the finish line. Try again with the mini beach ball. Which one moves faster?
- **This versus that.** Fill a bowl with water. Put out two empty cups. Ask your child to use the turkey baster to pick up as much water as they can and drop it into one of the cups. Then, try the same thing with the eye dropper. Which tool can hold more water?
- **Wiggly water.** Tape a piece of wax paper flat on a table (or use a plate). Invite your child to use the eye dropper to pick up some water from a bowl and drop it onto the wax paper one drop at a time. They can use a straw to gently blow on the water drops to see what happens. (Add food coloring to the water to make it even more fun!)



Things to Say

“What do you think will happen if we...?”

Asking this question can encourage exploration. If things don't work the way your child thought they would, it's okay. Together, you may learn something!

“It's okay, let's clean it up.”

Some spills and messes should be expected when playing with water. Just be prepared to clean up together.

“Wow! I can see that you're trying hard to use that turkey baster.”

Applaud the effort. Even if your child does something other than what you expected, celebrate their willingness to try.