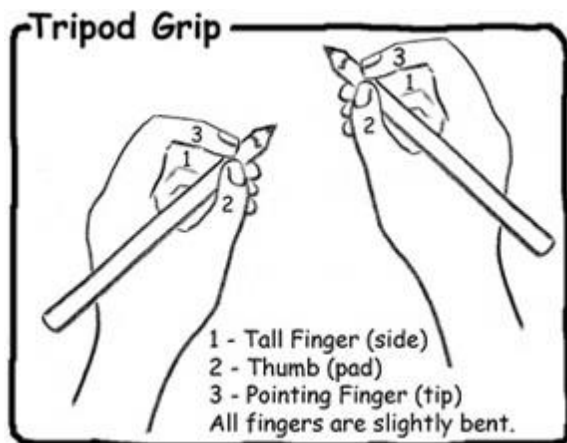


Why do I need a Pencil Grip? A Tink n Stink Guide

The way a child or adult holds a pen or pencil is called the grip or grasp. This is the way that the fingers are positioned when holding a pen or pencil in their hand. Most children develop a mature and efficient grasp around the age of 5-6 years old

The dynamic tripod grasp is considered to be the most efficient grasp for handwriting activities. This refers to the conventional pen or pencil hold using the thumb, index, and middle finger –

- The index finger sits on top of the pencil or pen barrel
- The pen or pencil is held between the pads of the thumb and index finger
- The middle finger offers support underneath



Right-handed writers should hold their pen or pencil 1-3cm from the tip. Left handers should hold the pen or pencil 3cm from the tip so that they can see what they have written. The wrist and the little finger side of the hand should be resting on the table, to allow for control of finger movements.

It is important to remember that not every child will develop the classic tripod grasp, depending on their motor skills. This is particularly true for those with additional needs such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Hypermobility. Some adapted grasp styles can also be effective. This can also apply to an adult later in life, who may be experiencing health challenges such as arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, stroke or neurological illnesses.

Grips are useful aids – they “fix” the exterior of the pen or pencil, allowing correct positioning of the fingers. Grips allow the hand muscles to be trained such that the correct grasp is achieved over time. Good grip will become second nature, but comfortable too. The correct grasp can also reduce pencil pressure and decrease hand fatigue, allowing the user to write for longer.

Pencil grip selection is not an exact science. A child or adult should work alongside their healthcare professional (e.g., Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, teacher, SENCO etc.) to determine the issues with the finger grasp being used at the time, and this will aid pencil grip selection. It is also worth noting that several grips may be used along the journey toward the dynamic tripod grasp, as grip position and style develop. A starter or training set of grips is often a sensible initial dip into the world of pencil grips!

All our pencil grips can be used by left or right-handed users, with the exception of the Write It Left and Right It Right Pencil Grips. For left-handed users, an “L” marks the position for the thumb. For right-handed users, an “R” marks the position of the thumb.

Pencil grips can also be used on other slim instruments, such as paintbrushes and crochet hooks.

Please also see our Troubleshooting information sheet. This identifies common issues with the tripod grasp or grip pressure, and the pencil grip styles which may help to resolve the problem.