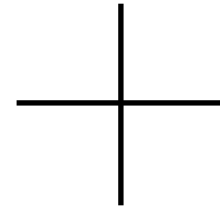
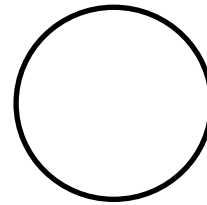
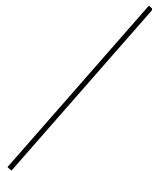


Pre-writing shapes

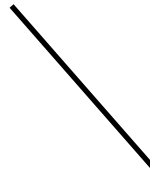
Children should be able to independently and correctly form these 9 shapes before being asked to write letters or numbers.



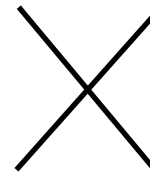
By 4 years



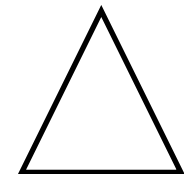
By school age



By school age



By school age



By school age

Children who can draw the oblique cross can form and copy a significantly higher number of letters than little ones who cannot.

- When your child is happy and ready to hold a writing tool to trace lines they're not just practicing one pre-writing skill, they're actually practicing lots!
- **Hand and finger strength:** Holding the writing tool.
- **Crossing the midline:** IF your child reaches across their body to get to either end of the tracing strip rather than moving the strip across so they don't have to move the position of their hand.
- **Correct pencil grasp:** Yes, IF they are being (or have been) taught the correct grip in the process.
- **Hand eye coordination:** Yes, by starting on the arrow and by following the lines.
- **Bilateral Integration:** Yes, by holding their writing tool in one hand and steadying the tracing strip with the other.
- **Upper body strength:** Not so much, but it is some help!
- **Object manipulation:** Yes, using a writing tool is complex.
- **Visual perception:** Yes, by being able to follow the implied directions by distinguishing between the lines, graphics and arrows and understanding why they're on the page.
- **Hand dominance:** Yes, by using writing tools over time, a child determines which hand they prefer.
- **Hand division:** Yes, if children are holding their tool correctly. If they're using an earlier-type grip, it's still great practice till they're able to use their individual fingers more precisely.