

The Difference Between GROSS & FINE MOTOR *skills*



Motor skills are essential for a child's physical strength and movement. Strong motor skills help children explore the world around them, which is a crucial part of development.

Motor skills are separated into two categories: gross motor skills and fine motor skills. While the two skill sets go hand in hand, it is important to understand their differences so you can best support your child.

Gross Motor Skills



Fine Motor Skills

Objects vs. No Objects

The majority of gross motor skills are locomotor - moving from one place to another - such as crawling, rolling, and walking. These do not require any objects.

Fine motor skills are predominantly centered around using objects. For example, picking up beads, brushing teeth, or cutting with scissors.

Amount of Space

Gross motor skills are all about big movements. These movements often need a lot of space, which gives your child the freedom to move how they wish.

Fine motor skills are focused on small movements within the hands and fingers. These are typically more successful if practiced in smaller areas.

Parts of Body Used

- LEGS - for running, jumping, hopping, swimming
- ARMS - for throwing, pulling, pushing
- CORE - for balancing, stabilizing, and having good posture
- FEET - for standing, kicking, running

- WRISTS - for bending or stretching the hand, rotating arms
- HANDS - for squeezing, holding, picking up objects
- FINGERS - for playing with small toys, threading objects, tearing paper

Types of Play to Support Growth

- Riding bikes or scooters
- Playing hopscotch
- Crawling over a pile of pillows and blankets

- Building with blocks or LEGOS
- Squeezing Play-Doh
- Threading objects onto a string

As your children are practicing their motor skills, be sure to keep their safety in mind! They will be most successful when you are nearby for support and help if they need it.