

What are button skills?

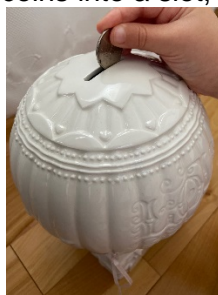
- Buttoning is a dressing skill that usually starts to develop around 3.5 years of age with regular practice.

Why are button skills important?

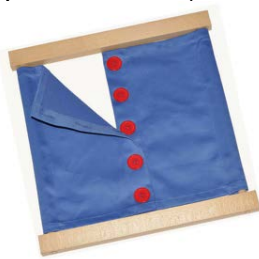
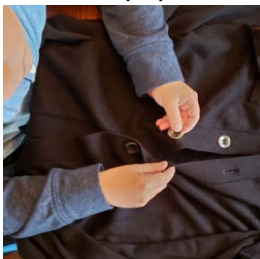
- They promote independence and self-confidence with dressing tasks
- They help develop a pincer grasp, finger strength and control, eye-hand coordination, two-handed skills, problem solving and sequencing skills

Practice the following activities to develop button skills:

- Use both hands together for activities to practice a fingertip pinch and sliding or shifting small items (closing twist ties, lacing beads, sliding coins into a slot, etc.).



- Practice buttoning in many different ways (with a shirt placed on a table top, use of a dressing board or doll, passing a button from one hand to the other hand through a slit in piece of material, paper towel or plastic lid, etc.). Begin with larger buttons and soft, flexible material.



- Try backward chaining: Parents complete all but the last step of buttoning, allowing the child to finish pulling the button through the hole. Once successful, have the child complete the last two steps, by pushing the button into and then through the hole. Gradually add more steps until the child is able to complete the whole buttoning process from the beginning.

