

### What are shoelace tying skills?

Tying shoelaces is a dressing skill that usually starts to develop around 6 years of age with regular practice.

### Why are shoelace tying skills important?

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

### Practice the following activities to develop shoelace tying skills:

- Use both hands together for activities to practice a fingertip pinch and sliding or shifting small items (lacing beads, closing nuts and bolts, closing twist ties, using pipe cleaners, tying and untying knots on a rope, etc.).



(handsonaswegrow.com)

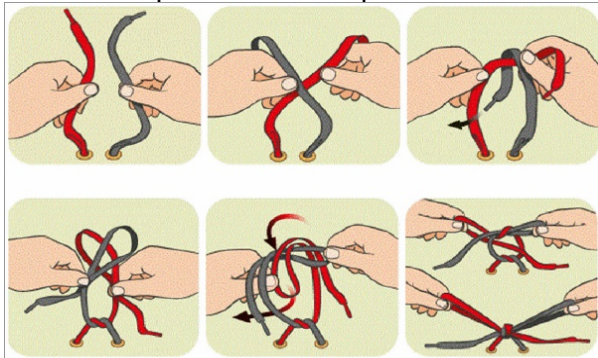
- Practice tying laces in many ways (placing a shoe on the table, lace-up dressing boards, etc.). Recite a song or poem about tying laces to help remember the steps of tying shoes. Using different coloured laces may also be helpful.



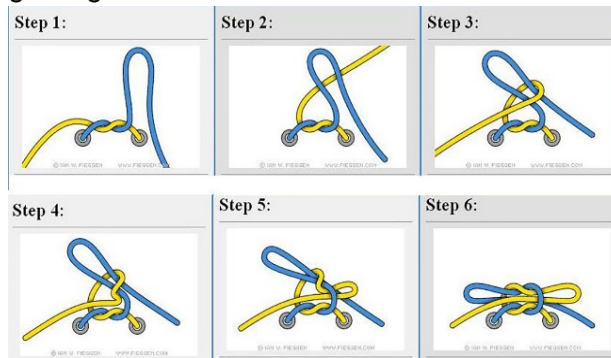
(thettoolbox.com)



- Backward chaining: Parents complete all but the last step of tying, allowing the child to finish pulling the laces tight. Once successful, have the child complete the last two steps, by pulling the loop through and then pulling the laces tight. Gradually add more steps until the child is able to complete the whole process from the beginning.



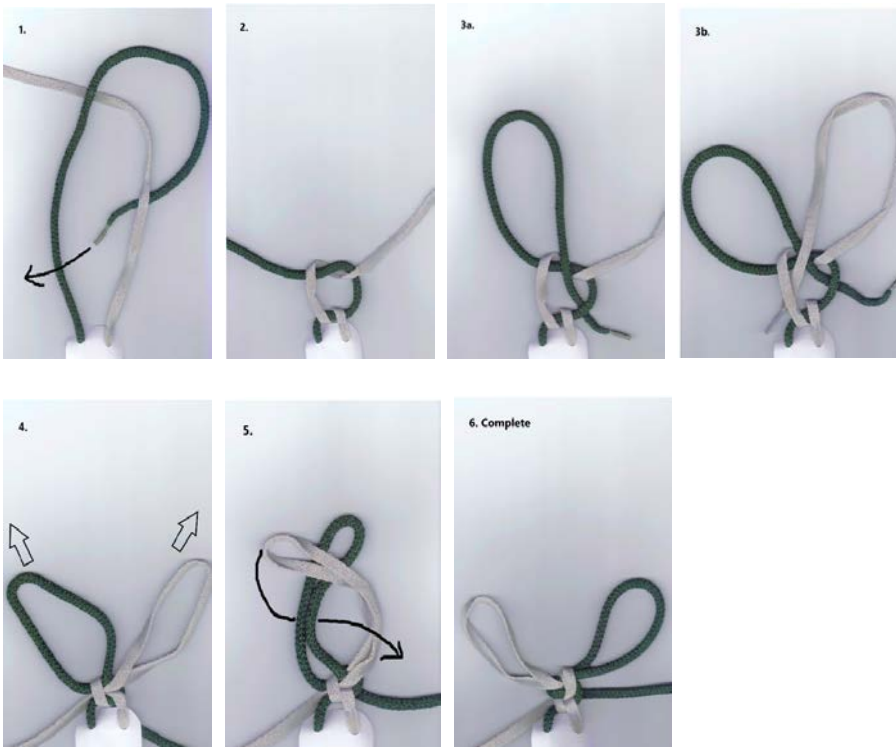
(therapyfocus.org.au) 'bunny ear' method



(therapyfocus.org.au) traditional method

Alternative method: Two Loop Method

1. Start with the usual "first knot" - cross the laces, tuck the top lace under and pull.
2. Do another knot - again cross the laces, tuck the top lace under and pull, but this time don't pull too tight. Leave enough room to stick a finger through the hole.
3. a) Into this finger space, take the tip of one shoelace (the very end) and put it in the hole. Push the tip through to form a "bunny ear" leaving a long "tail".  
b) Next, take the other tip and put it through the hole to form the second "bunny ear". The bunny ears do not need to be held or stabilized while the child is doing this.
4. Pinch each bunny ear closed and pull.
5. Make a final knot- make an X with the bunny ears, tuck the top bunny ear under and pull tight.



Note: When undoing this type of knot, it may be best to only pull one end and untie, otherwise the child may end up with a knot.

Source: [http://www.brighttots.com/Autism/Self\\_help\\_skills](http://www.brighttots.com/Autism/Self_help_skills)