

The ability to successfully cut lines and shapes involves eye hand co-ordination, hand strength, manual dexterity, and bilateral coordination. Cutting is different from snipping (open and fully closing the scissors with a single action). Cutting is a continuous open and squeeze motion – partially closing and pushing the scissors along the paper edge. Students may have difficulty acquiring cutting skills if they have not had an opportunity to develop their fine motor skills or to use scissors before entering school.

Promoting Success:

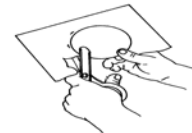
- Buy the correct size of student scissors. Scissors should have *small loop handles* to prevent the fingers from sliding through to the knuckles and must be *sharp* enough to cut.
- Always make sure students hold the scissors functionally:

Place the scissors in the student's *preferred* hand and show him or her how to place the thumb and fingers:

Hold scissors with the **thumb** in the **top loop**



- If there is one small loop and one large loop, the larger loop goes on the bottom
 - Position fingers in the lower loop
 - The index finger may be in or outside of the loop, below the scissor blade
 - Point scissors away from the body with the wrist straight or bent back slightly
 - Keep thumbs 'up' while cutting.
 - Keep elbows tucked against sides
 - Keep scissors and work below the shoulders
- Be sure that the hand holding the paper does most of the turning and moving.
 - **Right-handed** students should cut around a shape in a **counter clockwise** direction.
 - **Left-handed** students should cut in a **clockwise** direction.
 - Position student on their tummy, propped on elbows to encourage a thumbs up grasp pattern.
 - **Paper Choice:** Start with heavier paper as it is easier to use because it can be held more easily (e.g. index cards, construction paper, paper plates, cardstock, etc.). Progress to regular paper.



- **Complexity:** Start with no lines, cutting towards a target (sticker or picture). Then introduce thick lines and gradually decrease thickness of the line. Start with straight lines and shapes with no curves (e.g. squares and triangles). Gradually increase the complexity of the shape by adding more curves.
- Use visual cues such as green and red dots to help the student remember when to start and stop cutting before turning the paper.
- Cut a small design out roughly from the large piece of paper and then cut the smaller design more precisely.
- Cut slightly beyond the corner before turning or cut off the scrap and then start at the edge again.
- Encourage students to 'squeeze and slide' the scissors forward while cutting.