

Scissor Skill Development

Let's take a look at each stage of scissor skill development.

✓ Holds Scissors

Between the ages of 1.5 to 2 years old, a child learns to hold scissors, often using both hands to open and close the blades.



✓ Open/Closes Scissors

At ages 2-2.5 years old, a child learns how to open and close the scissors. They are NOT ready to use them with paper. This is a great time to practice with play dough, modeling clay, or continue to practice tearing paper.

Remember to always encourage a “thumbs up” position while holding the scissors.



✓ Snips Paper

Once the child has mastered opening and closing the scissors, they can move on to making small snips on the paper. They are not moving forward on the paper with scissors, just making snips. This can happen soon after or around the time they begin to open and close the scissors.

However, some children may need more time before introducing the paper. It all depends on their skill level.

✓ Snips Paper Moving Forward

By the time a child hits age 3, they are able to make snips in the paper while moving the scissor forward across the paper.

✓ Uses Helping Hand

Between 3 and 3.5 years old, a child begins to use their “helping hand” or non-dominant hand to hold the paper and help manipulate it while cutting with their dominant hand. Remember to encourage a “thumbs up” position while holding both the paper and scissors.



✓ Cuts Straight Line

By age 3 to 3.5, a child can move the scissors along a straight line. Their accuracy is still a work in progress.

By age 4, their accuracy improves.

✓ **Cuts Curved Line**

By age 4, a child is able to cut on a curved line.

✓ **Cuts Circle Shape**

Also by age 4, once a child has mastered curved lines, they are able to take on circle shapes.

✓ **Cuts Square Shape**

Between the ages of 4.5 and 5 years old, a child can cut out a square shape.

✓ **Cuts Complex Shapes**

Between the ages of 5-6, a child can begin to cut out more complex shapes such as figures.

It's important to remember that all children are different and they may master these skills at different times. The most important thing is that they are resilient and always try their best.

