Welcome to this free sample of Fantastic Fingers® activities for preparing children’s bodies and minds for school.

It’s easy - read, watch & do!
This 10 page sample includes: a song and four play based activities which you can also watch on the no password required short video: [http://www.learnwithmyfantasticfingers.com/strongen-wrist-forearm-muscles](http://www.learnwithmyfantasticfingers.com/strongen-wrist-forearm-muscles) and instructions for six related hands-on early learning activities.

Many developmental benefits
Many developmental skills are enhanced while doing these Fantastic Fingers® activities, including: speech & language skills, listening skills, attention & concentration, creativity, and rhythm & motor planning. Of the 100 activities, 40 extension activities focus on developing early numeracy and literacy while improving foundational motor skills. It’s ideal for preparing children’s bodies and minds for school.

The motor part of this sample
The motor component of this song and fortnightly activities focuses on developing strength in the wrist extensor muscles, which are needed for precise control of the fingers. Strengthening these wrist muscles brings the thumb and fingers together naturally. This is known as the tenodesis effect.

Feel it!
Drop your wrist, let your fingers go floppy and relaxed. Now lift your wrist back up slowly and watch how the first three writing fingers come together.

The tenodesis effect

What do parents, teachers & OTs love about Fantastic Fingers®?

- the activities
- easily available equipment
- the balance between table top & physical activities
- the creative element
- easy to follow
- user-friendly
- the kids love it
- it’s fun, playful and child friendly
- definitely helps to improve fine motor coordination
- good ideas for teachers to implement
- graded from easy to more difficult
- follows a developmental progression
- the songs
- it fits easily into the school term
- teacher and parent friendly

Feedback from an anonymous online survey
Track 3 — Wrist Rhymes
Song and Games – Mr Muscles and Finger Fun

Why Do It
Wrist Rhymes develops strength in specific wrist muscles required to hold the wrist in extension (back) and stable when colouring, writing and keyboarding.

What to Do
Sit on the floor with legs crossed and perform the wrist and arm actions on the song sheet. Encourage forceful clapping and tapping as this works the wrist muscles the most. Emphasise straight backs. Keep the elbows straight (long arms) for the seal and crocodile actions.

Variation
The child places the wrist of their preferred hand on a table with palm off the surface. Adult places their fingers over the back of the child’s hand and gently pushes the child’s palm down onto the table. The child resists the adult’s movement for five counts. Do 5 times.

Further Games
These also develop good wrist strength:

i  Tracing, Drawing & Colouring Against a Vertical Surface
Trace, draw or colour in on paper mounted on a smooth vertical surface e.g. door, whiteboard (middle of the paper positioned at eye-level, forearm below hand). Use worksheets 9-13 (also 73-100). Chalkboard easels or part of a wall painted with blackboard paint are ideal for vertical drawing.

Draw in chalk on a fence and ‘paint off’ with water. Rub a crayon sideways over raised objects covered by a thin sheet of paper e.g. leaves, stuck onto paper, which is in turn fixed to the wall with a thin sheet of paper on top.

Tracing shapes with paper fixed to the wall

ii  Jumping Frogs/Ants ‘n Pants®
Lie on the stomach, resting on the forearms with the base of the wrist on a non-carpeted floor. Use the middle or pointer finger of the preferred hand to push down and flick toy frogs or ants onto a target or across a line.

Flicking frogs with base of wrist down

iii  Balancing Games
Hold a bean bag or similar item in the hand with the palm up, wrist back at shoulder height and walk backwards, heel to toe etc. Or balance marbles on a plastic plate while walking.

Balancing a bean bag with wrist extended

Related Activity Tracks
See Track 4.
Wrist Rhymes
Words and Actions
(words and melody by Ingrid C. King)

I can clap like a seal, clap, clap, clap

(arms out to the front, base of wrists together, hands clap forcefully)

I can snap like a croc, snap, snap, snap

(base of wrists together, preferred hand on top and other on bottom, hands clap forcefully)

I can buzz like a bee, buzz, buzz, buzzy

(arms out to side and wrists move up and down very quickly)

I can tap my knee, one, two, three

(forearm rests on thigh and move wrist up and down loudly)

Now copy me!
(tap a pattern for the children to copy or count up to ten)
## Fantastic Fingers® Program Sheet
### Weeks 5 & 6 – Track 3 - the program guide or make your own

| **Materials:** | Print colouring worksheets 9-13 (can also use worksheets 73-100), felt markers; 6-8 plastic jumping frogs or ants; bean bag or plastic plate with rim, 5 marbles |
| **Preparation:** | Watch video track 3 & read pp24-25 |
| **Activities:** | Repeat each activity 3 times a week for 2 consecutive weeks |

### 1 Wrist Rhymes (MP3 track 3)
In week 6 include variation

*Can they clap loudly keeping the base of their wrists together?*

### i Tracing & Colouring Against a Vertical Surface
Mount worksheet as demonstrated on p24; trace around; remove and colour in at a table
In week 6 include some colouring in while the worksheet is mounted on the vertical (allow for choice with the worksheets or select other suitable pictures if preferred)

*Time how long they can trace for while the paper is mounted to the wall before tiring and needing to continue at the table. Compare first and last times.*

### ii Jumping Frogs/Ants ‘n Pants®
Follow instructions on p24, place frogs/ants on a smooth surface; jump each frog/ant 3 times or until fatigued
In week 6, do the activity sitting cross-legged

*While keeping the base of their wrist on the ground, measure how far can they flick? Compare first and last.*

### iii Balancing Games
Follow instructions with the bean bag and then the plate adding marbles; provide a line or object to walk to or around

*Can they maintain their hand at shoulder height throughout? How many marbles drop on the floor?*
Track 3 — **Numeracy & Literacy Ext.**
Shapes, Money, Measurement, Initial Sound & Mass - extension

**Vertical Surface Activities**

|i  Stencil Shapes|
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To name, describe and draw the basic shapes is important for geometry. Using an A4 size of firm cardboard or thick plastic, cut out a shape from the centre (leave enough on the sides to keep the stencil edges strong). Make several stencils with big and small circles, squares, rectangles and triangles.

![Stencil with grey area removed](image)
Shape is off-set to the right to give the non-preferred left hand space to support the stencil easily

Position stencil against a vertical surface e.g. chalkboard or large sheet of paper mounted against a wall (top edge at eye-level, forearm below hand). Press firmly into surface with non-preferred hand. Using small pieces of chalk/crayon draw around edges of the shape. Remove stencil and use others to create a picture e.g. a house. Make repeating patterns using the stencil e.g. △ ○ △ ○

Re-create the stencilled pattern by arranging cardboard or plastic 2-D shapes. Recognising and creating patterns is an important skill.

|ii  Money Rubbings|
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Select a variety of coins. Name and order the coins according to value and stick well against a vertical surface (at eye-level). Secure a sheet of thin paper over the top. Rub over coins using the side of a wax crayon until the pattern emerges clearly. Do more and cut out. Play shop with the ‘money’.

|vi  Longest Jumper Competition|
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Decide what to use to measure with e.g. hand span, ruler or measuring tape. Line the plastic frogs or ants up on the starting line. Take turns to flick them one at a time from left to right. Measure the distance each jumped. Use language such as long/er/est and short/er/est. Record the distances and place the ordinal cards from worksheets 7–8 next to the furthest three frogs to show which one was first, second and third. Extend to include using other ordinal numbers.

|vii  Froggie Tell Me the Sound|
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If new to identifying the first sound in a word, arrange the picture cards from worksheets 14–25 in front of a line of plastic toy frogs e.g. picture cards of the ant, apple, snake, sun. Jump the frog and say the name and first sound of the picture the frog lands on or near. Alternatively, draw dinner plate sized circles in chalk on a smooth surface or draw circles on a large sheet of paper or use disposable plates with the letter or word drawn inside/on. Once the frog jumps inside the circle or plate, say the initial sound. Add on a writing component by copying over the letter. Use different colours.

|viii  Human Balancing Scale|
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Hold both hands with palms facing up and wrists back at shoulder height. Child must not look as partner quietly counts out different amounts of marbles into two plastic bowls (easier) or plastic plates with rim. At first make the difference very great. Child closes eyes as partner places the bowls onto their palms. Wait for the marbles to stop rolling and guess which plate is heavier. Repeat several times and then swop roles. Use language such as heavier, lighter, more, same and less.
Worksheet 9: Outlining & Colouring Tricky Thumb – p24

Track 3: Attach worksheet to a wall or window as this will help with muscle strengthening. Outline over the grey lines with a marker. If developmentally ready, colour in the smaller areas of the picture using bending and stretching movements of the 3 Friends which are the thumb, pointer and middle fingers. Then colour in the other areas at a table.

Name: ________________________________________________
Worksheet 10: Outlining & Colouring Patty Pointer – p24

Track 3: Attach worksheet to a wall or window as this will help with muscle strengthening. Outline over the grey lines with a marker. If developmentally ready, colour in the smaller areas of the picture using bending and stretching movements of the 3 Friends which are the thumb, pointer and middle fingers. Then colour in the other areas at a table.

Name: ________________________________
Worksheet 7: Ordinal Number Cards – pp23, 27, 63

Tracks 2, 3, 14 Ext.: Mount against vertical. Redraw number inside lines using different coloured pencils. Cut out. Use with extension activity Longest Jumper Competition.

- first
- second
- third
- fourth

-st
-nd
-rd
-th
Worksheet 8: Ordinal Number Cards – pp23, 27, 63

Tracks 2, 3, 14 Ext.: Mount against vertical. Redraw number inside lines using different coloured pencils. Cut out. Use with extension activity Longest Jumper Competition.

Sample pages 22-24 & more from Songs and Games for Fantastic Fingers © Ingrid C. King (MSc OT)
Worksheet 14: A & B Picture Cards – pp27, 31, 49, 53

Tracks 3, 4, 10 & 11 Ext.: Mount against wall. Colour then cut out each picture along the thick lines. Use with the extension activity Froggie Tell Me the Sound.

Aa ant
Aa apple
Bb ball
Bb bear
Worksheet 15: C & D Picture Cards – pp27, 31, 49, 53

Tracks 3, 4, 10 & 11 Ext.: Mount against wall. Colour then cut out each picture along the thick lines. Use with the extension activity *Froggie Tell Me the Sound*.

Cc  cat  Cc  cake

Dd  dog  Dd  dinosaur