

Parent Guide

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What is this resource and how do I use it?

Learn what pre-writing shapes are, when your child should be able to make pre-writing shapes and how you can help your child with forming pre-writing shapes with this helpful guide and practical activities! There's an informative page for you, plus pre-writing shapes on cards and a pencil control activity to print for your child.

What skills does this practise?

Pencil Control

Mark Making

Fine Motor Skills

Sensory Play

Further Activity Ideas and Suggestions

We've got lots of themed pencil control booklets that are perfect for supporting your child's pre-writing skills. Choose from themes like **on the farm**, **fairy tales** and **space**. As they progress in reception, use our **Rainbow-Themed Letter Formation Strips** to support them with their handwriting.

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Starting School: Pre-Writing Shapes

What are pre-writing shapes?

Pre-writing shapes are the lines and shapes that your child needs to be able to make before they're able to effectively form letters and numbers. They're a mixture of straight lines, shapes with straight sides and shapes with curves; all of which occur when forming letters and numbers. Pre-writing shapes also involve moving the writing tool in different directions which, again, helps with the formation of letters and numbers.

When should my child be able to make pre-writing shapes?

Pre-writing shapes are usually progressive and your child will be able to make more complex shapes as they get nearer to school age. Here is an estimate of when children are usually ready to make different pre-writing shapes.



About 2 years old



About 2 and a half years old



About 3 years old



About 3 and a half years old



About 4 years old



About 4 and a half years old



About 5 years old

As you can see, by the time your child is getting ready to start school, they may have the skills to form most of these pre-writing shapes. However, please don't worry if they're not – that's what we're here for!

Starting School: Pre-Writing Shapes

How can I help my child with pre-writing shapes?

Firstly, print and laminate our Pre-Writing Shape Cards. Your child can then use these for a range of activities – take a look at some of our favourites:

Use the cards in a sensory tray with sand or dry rice.

Display the cards in your child's bedroom or playroom.


Enlarge the cards for some big mark making!

Encourage your child to copy the shapes with chalk outside.

Draw the shapes with chalk, then have your child draw over them with a wet paintbrush – they'll love watching them disappear!

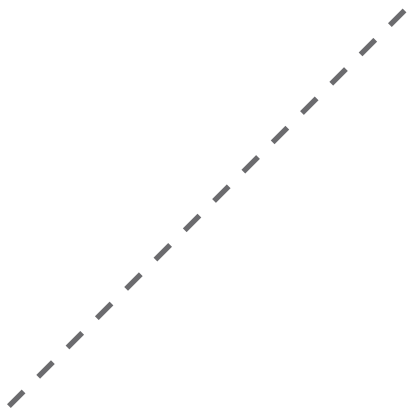
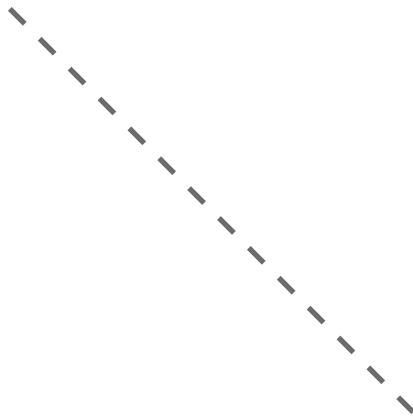
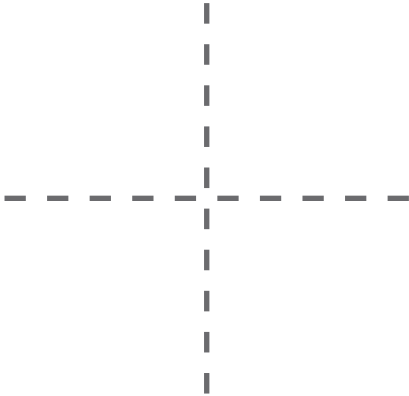
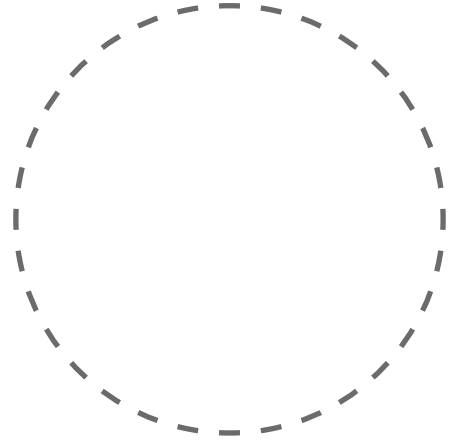
Help them to paint the shapes onto cardboard.

Add pipe cleaners to the shapes for your child to trace with their finger.

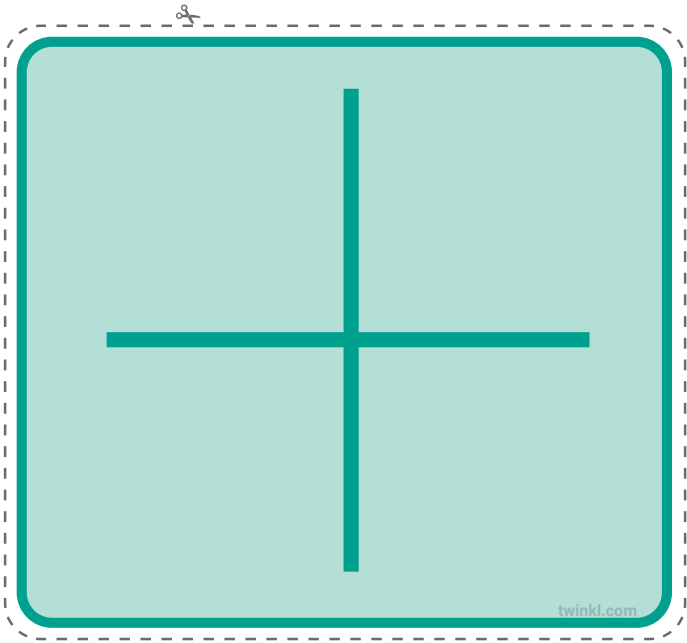
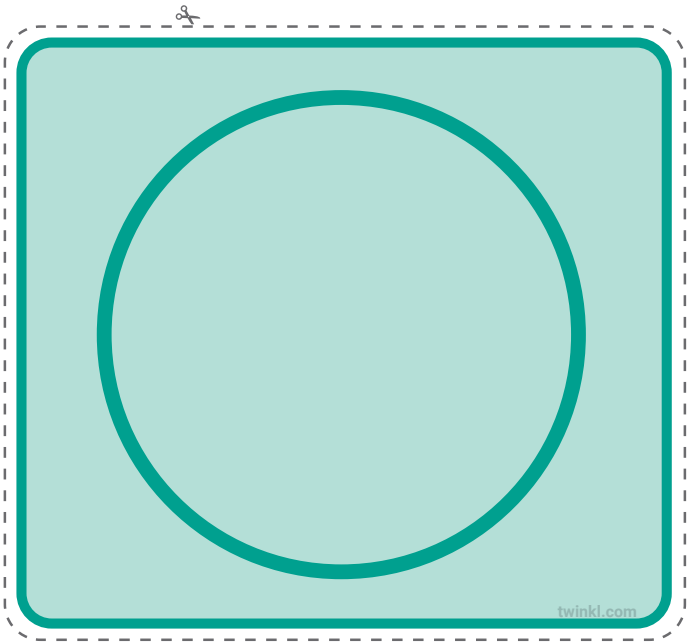
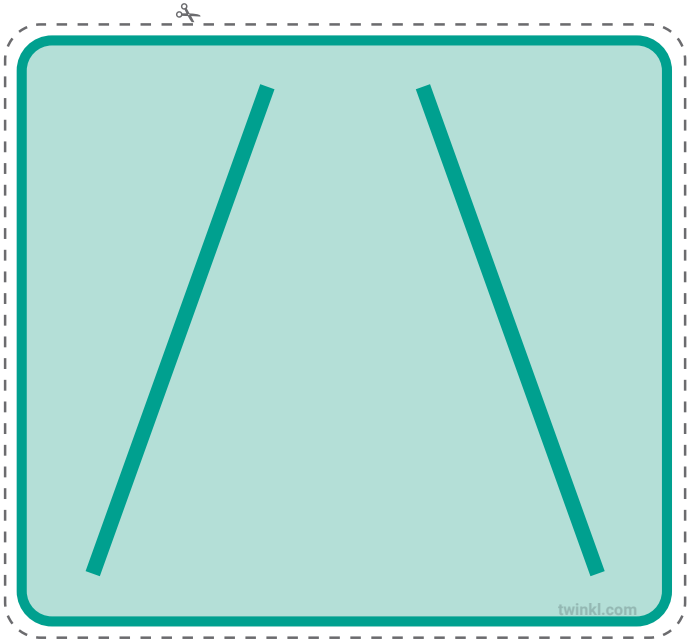
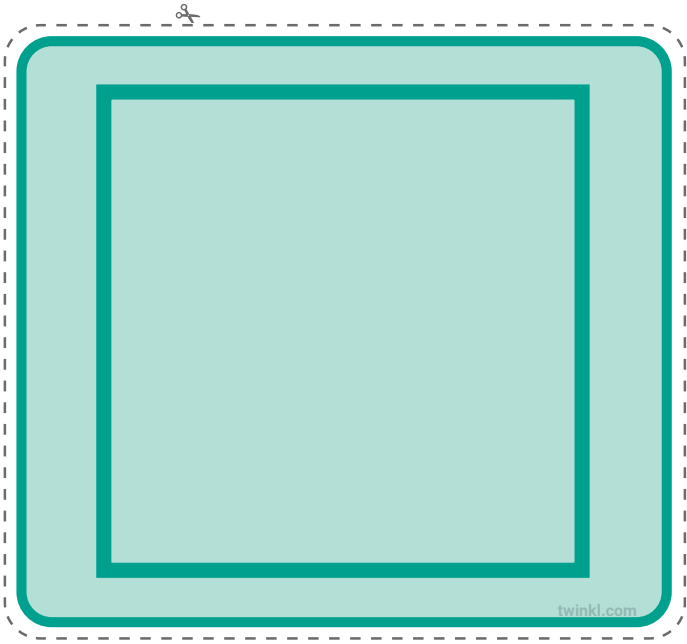
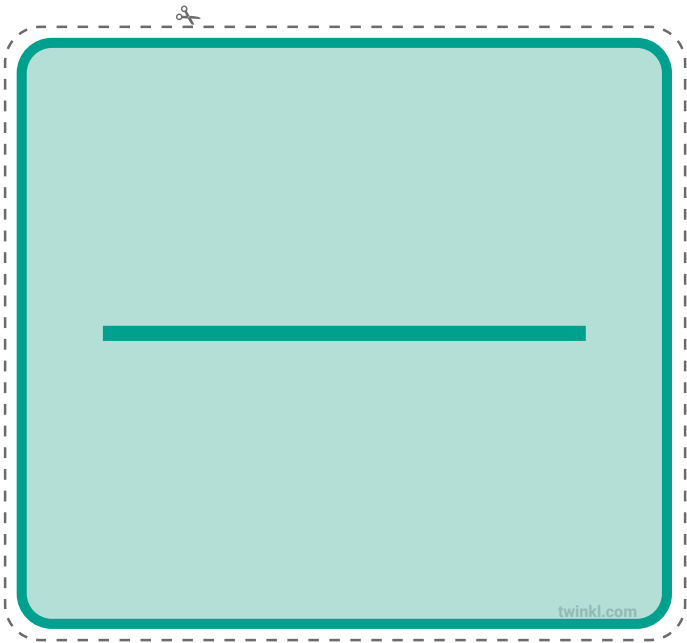
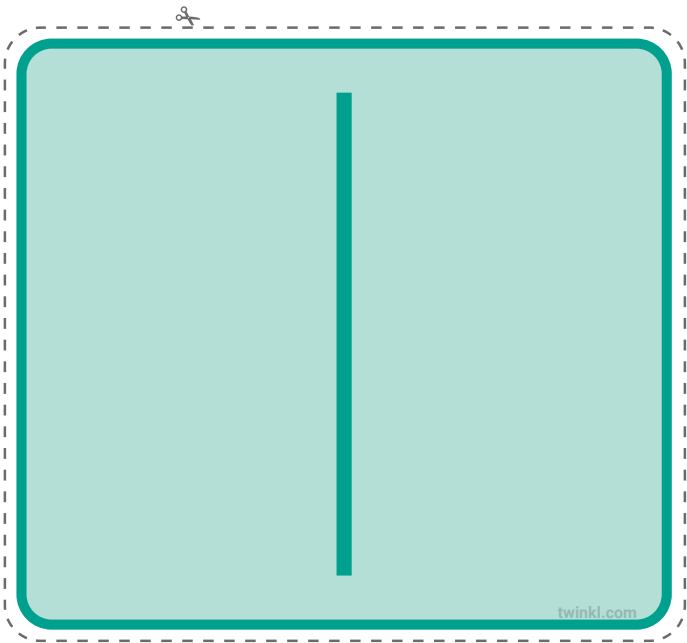
 You might also like to print and laminate our Pre-Writing Shapes Pencil Control Activity for your child to use if you're short on time or when out and about – the only other thing you need is a dry wipe pen so it's a super easy-to-do activity which has big benefits!

Pre-Writing Shapes Pencil Control Activity

Practise tracing these lines and shapes to help you get ready for writing at school.



Pre-Writing Shape Cards



Pre-Writing Shape Cards

