FITFUERSLEBEN

Move to Focus

THE HANDS-ON GUIDE

Playful exercises for better focus, easier homework and calmer afternoons





61	45	7
Exercises & games	Printable worksheets	Day challenge

For parents of kids ages 6 to 12

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome!



This is a hands-on guide to help your child with learning, without pressure and without complicated theory. Most exercises take one to five minutes and work anywhere: before homework, in the morning before school or on the go.

I'm an elementary school teacher from Austria, and I've done many of these exercises with my students for years. What works in the classroom works at the kitchen table, too.

How to start

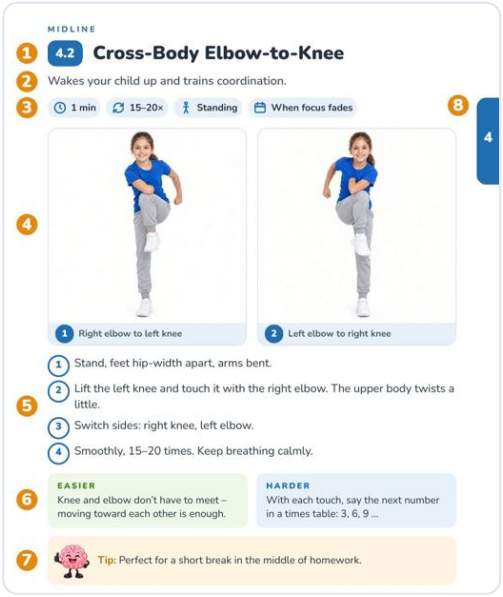
1 **Today: the Quick Start**
Six exercises for the most common situations. Chapter 2, page 7.

2 **When you get stuck: find the right exercise**
A table shows what helps when your child is tired, fidgety or stressed. Page 11.

3 **Stick with it: the 7-Day Challenge**
One week, two exercises a day. That's how it becomes a routine. Chapter 9, page 52.

You don't have to read this book cover to cover. Take what you need right now, and write your favorite exercises on the fridge list (page 109).

How an exercise page works



1. **Number and name**
   4.2 means: Chapter 4, exercise 2.
2. **What it's for**
   What the exercise does, in one sentence.
3. **At a glance**
   Time, reps, position, materials and when it fits.
4. **Photos**
   What the movement looks like.
5. **Steps**
   To read aloud, step by step.
6. **Variations**
   Easier for younger kids or for starting out, harder for older kids or later on.
7. **Tip**
   What has worked in everyday life.
8. **Chapter tab**
   For flipping through quickly.

Each chapter has its own color

4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Chapters 4 to 13 are the hands-on chapters. The color on the page edge shows you where you are.

CHAPTER 1 · UNDERSTANDING

Why Movement Helps Kids Learn

No magic, just three simple effects



There's no mysterious brain effect behind these exercises. It comes down to three very simple effects.

1 **Movement wakes you up**

After half a day of sitting, circulation is low and eyes start to close. A few minutes of movement turn that around.

2 **Coordination takes attention**

When you have to watch your left arm and your right knee at the same time, you can't daydream. That's focus training, just standing up instead of sitting at the table.

3 **Movement lets off steam**

“Sit still already!” doesn't help a wound-up kid. The energy has to get out first. Then the body settles down, and the mind with it.

Five minutes is enough



FROM THE RESEARCH

Researchers at the Karlsruhe University of Education in Germany followed 132 elementary school kids in grades 2 to 4. In every class period, the kids took a movement break of five minutes at most. Their concentration improved measurably compared with classes that had no movement breaks.

What you won't find in this book

No miracle promises, no left-brain/right-brain myths, no energy flows. Just movement, play and structure – and an honest explanation of why it helps.

Key takeaway

Movement helps kids learn because it wakes them up, takes attention and releases tension. A few minutes is enough.

CHAPTER 2 · UNDERSTANDING

Quick Start

Six exercises you can try today



Want to get started right away? These six exercises cover the most common situations. Each one takes just a few minutes.

You'll find full instructions with photos and variations starting in Chapter 4. Each exercise lists its page number.

Look
How is your child doing?

→

Pick an exercise
to fit the moment

→

1–3 minutes
then get to work

What an afternoon can look like

- ✔ Come home, eat, drink a glass of water.
- ✔ One exercise that fits the moment, 1–3 minutes (table on p. 11). Very wound up? Burn off energy first.
- ✔ Settle in at the table with a worksheet, 2–5 minutes (Chapter 8).
- ✔ Homework in short blocks, with quick movement in between.



Tip: Start with just one exercise. Once it sticks, add the next one.

When your child is ...



LOW FOCUS

Cross-Body Elbow-to-Knee

20× elbow to knee, alternating sides.

→ Exercise 4.2 · p. 15



BEFORE READING

Lazy Eight

Draw 10 lazy eights in the air with each hand.

→ Exercise 4.6 · p. 19



TIRED

The 30-Second Sprint

Run in place for 30 seconds, knees high.

→ Exercise 6.1 · p. 32



STRESSED

4-6 Breathing

Breathe in for 4 counts, out for 6. Five times.

→ Exercise 7.1 · p. 39



TENSE

Neck Loosener

Hold one shoulder, slowly turn your head to the side.

→ Exercise 5.1 · p. 25



RESTLESS AT THE DESK

Mirror Drawing

Draw mirror images with both hands at the same time.

→ Exercise 4.7 · p. 20

CHAPTER 3 · UNDERSTANDING

Which Exercise When?

Two lines, four types of exercise and the right choice



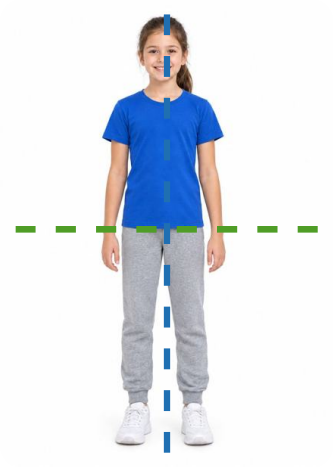
Many exercises in this book go across the body: right hand to left knee, left elbow to right knee. Why these in particular?

Cross-body movements are simply harder. Both sides of the body have to work together, and out of sync. That takes exactly the kind of attention your child is often missing when learning.

At first, many kids get tangled up and lose the rhythm. That's the very moment attention is at work. It gets smoother every week.

> **What you might read elsewhere**
>
> Some guides say these movements “connect the two halves of the brain.” It's a nice image, but it isn't accurate: the two halves are always connected anyway. The exercises still work, just for a different reason.

The two lines of the body



The midline runs straight down and divides the body into left and right. Exercises that cross it are the strongest attention training in the book.

The waistline runs across at hip height and divides the body into top and bottom. The exercises in Chapter 5 loosen and stretch the whole body and build balance and posture. A child who stands loose and steady finds it easier to keep still.

The four types of exercise

Midline Exercises
Cross-body. The toughest coordination task, ideal right before learning.
Chapter 4 · from p. 13

Loosen-Up & Balance Exercises
Loosen up, stretch, balance. For good posture and calm sitting.
Chapter 5 · from p. 24

Energy Boosters
Short and strong. Perks up tired kids.
Chapter 6 · from p. 31

Calm-Down Exercises
For winding down after stress, nerves or a long day.
Chapter 7 · from p. 38

How to pick the right exercise

IF YOUR CHILD …	THEN TRY …
is tired and sluggish	**Energy Boosters** Chapter 6 · p. 31
is fidgety and can't sit still	**burn off energy, then calm down** Chapter 13 · p. 92, then 7 · p. 38
is stiff or tense from sitting	**Loosen-Up & Balance Exercises** Chapter 5 · p. 24
is stressed or nervous	**Calm-Down Exercises** Chapter 7 · p. 38
has trouble focusing	**Midline Exercises** Chapter 4 · p. 13
needs to settle in before learning	**Two-Hand Worksheets** Chapter 8 · p. 49
finds the exercises boring	**exercises with props** Chapter 10 · p. 61
doesn't feel like doing exercises	**a game** Chapter 11 · p. 71, Chapter 12 · p. 83

Every child has one area that matters most

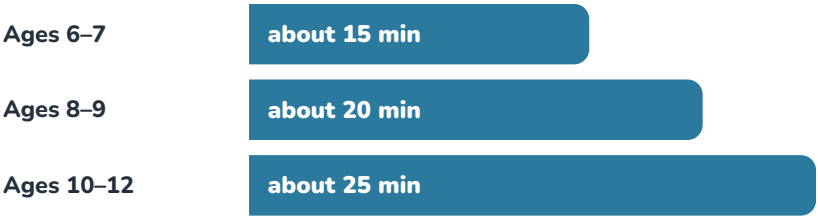
One child almost always needs a boost, the next mostly needs calming, the third needs coordination. Over time you'll notice which area counts most for your child.

And if your child doesn't feel like it?

Don't argue. Show the exercise yourself, a little silly is fine, and ask: “Can you do it faster than me?” Or let your child choose between two exercises. If it just won't work today, let it go. Tomorrow you can try again.

How long can my child focus?

Rules of thumb from experience for focusing in one stretch:



These are guidelines, not norms. They change with the day, your child's interest and the task. But they show: if your child fades after twenty minutes of homework, that's not failure. It's normal.

Better ten focused minutes than forty dragging ones.

Key takeaway

Focus has a natural limit. Plan homework in short blocks, with a 2 to 5 minute movement break in between. Short, good sessions do more than long battles.

CHAPTER 4 · MIDLINE

Midline Exercises

Moving across the body – and staying fully on task



In these exercises, your child moves across the middle of the body: right hand to left knee, right foot in front of the left.

Both sides of the body have to work together, taking turns. Nobody can daydream while doing that.

That makes them the most demanding exercises in the book.

Use these when your child ...

- ✔ has a hard time concentrating
- ✔ gets stuck while studying
- ✔ switches subjects (e.g. from math to reading)
- ✔ needs to get going in the morning
- ✔ seems “tangled up” when writing or reading

The 9 exercises

4.1	Cross-Body Hand-to-Knee	1 min · Standing	p. 14
4.2	Cross-Body Elbow-to-Knee QUICK START	1 min · Standing	p. 15
4.3	Sideways Cross-Step	1 min · Standing	p. 16
4.4	Cross-Arm Swings	1 min · Standing	p. 17
4.5	Seated Cross Toe Touch	1 min · Sitting	p. 18
4.6	Lazy Eight QUICK START	1 min · Sitting/standing	p. 19
4.7	Mirror Drawing QUICK START	2–3 min · Sitting	p. 20
4.8	Ear-to-Arm Eight	1 min · Standing	p. 21
4.9	Arm Circles	1 min · Standing	p. 22

4.1 Cross-Body Hand-to-Knee

Moving across the midline – takes full attention.

1 min | 20× | Standing | Mornings, study breaks



1 Right hand touches left knee



2 Left hand touches right knee

1. Stand tall, feet hip-width apart, arms loose.
2. Lift the left knee and touch it with the right hand.
3. Back down. Now right knee and left hand.
4. Keep switching – 20 times in all.

EASIER
Go slowly. You count out loud.

HARDER
Count backward from 20 while doing it.



Tip: Especially helpful in the morning or during study breaks to recharge.

4.2 Cross-Body Elbow-to-Knee

Wakes your child up and trains coordination.

1 min | 15–20× | Standing | When focus fades



1 Right elbow to left knee



2 Left elbow to right knee

1. Stand, feet hip-width apart, arms bent.
2. Lift the left knee and touch it with the right elbow. The upper body twists a little.
3. Switch sides: right knee, left elbow.
4. Smoothly, 15–20 times. Keep breathing calmly.

EASIER
Knee and elbow don't have to meet – moving toward each other is enough.

HARDER
With each touch, say the next number in a times table: 3, 6, 9 ...



Tip: Perfect for a short break in the middle of homework.

4.3 Sideways Cross-Step

Trains balance and a sense of space.

1 min | 10 steps per side | Standing | Movement break



1 Right leg crosses in front of the left



2 Left leg follows

1. Stand, feet shoulder-width apart, arms loose.
2. Cross the right leg sideways in front of the left.
3. Bring the left leg next to it.
4. This way you travel sideways to the left. After 10 steps, go back: now the left leg crosses in front of the right.

EASIER
Walk along a wall with one hand on it.

HARDER
Alternate crossing in front of and behind the standing leg.



Tip: Fits nicely into a little dance or a movement game.

4.4 Cross-Arm Swings

Loosens up and links movement with calm breathing.

1 min | 10–15× | Standing | After sitting a long time



1 Cross arms – breathe out



2 Open arms – breathe in

1. Stand, feet hip-width apart, arms loose.
2. Cross both arms in front of the body – breathe out.
3. Breathing in, open the arms wide to the sides.
4. 10–15 times. Keep the shoulders relaxed.

EASIER
Very slowly. You breathe along out loud.

HARDER
Switch which arm crosses on top: right, then left.



Tip: Good before a new study block or after sitting a long time.

4.5 Seated Cross Toe Touch

Cross-body training that works even in a small space.

1 min | 10–15× per side | Sitting | At the desk



1 Sit up tall



2 Right hand to left foot

1. Sit up tall on a chair, feet flat on the floor, knees shoulder-width apart.
2. Lean forward and touch the left foot with the right hand.
3. Sit back up. Now left hand to right foot.
4. 10–15 times per side. Keep the back as straight as you can.

EASIER
Reach only to the shin.

HARDER
You call out “left!” or “right!” – your child reacts right away.



Tip: Needs almost no space: works right at the desk or in a waiting room.

4.6 Lazy Eight

Trains hands and eyes together and has a calming effect.

1 min | 10× per hand | Sitting or standing | Before reading & writing



1 Stretch the arm forward



2 Draw a lazy eight in the air

1. Sit or stand comfortably, back straight.
2. Stretch one arm out in front.
3. With the thumb, draw a big sideways figure eight in the air. The eyes follow the thumb, the head stays still.
4. 10 times per hand, then switch.

EASIER
First draw a big eight on paper and trace it with a finger (worksheets in Chapter 8).

HARDER
Use both hands at once, fingers interlaced.



Tip: Ideal right before reading or writing.

4.7 Mirror Drawing

Both hands work at the same time – builds coordination and creativity.

2–3 min | Sitting | 2 pencils, paper | When restless at the table



1 A pencil in each hand



2 Both hands draw mirror images

1. Take a pencil in each hand and hold it loosely.
2. Draw mirror-image patterns with both hands at once: circles, lazy eights.
3. Keep the pencils moving smoothly.
4. About 2–3 minutes.

EASIER
Big paper, big shapes.

HARDER
Draw simple pictures as mirror images: heart, house, butterfly.



Tip: Colored pencils are more motivating. You'll find matching worksheets in Chapter 8.

4.8 Ear-to-Arm Eight

Trains balance and concentration.

1 min | 5× per side | Standing | Short movement break



1 Head rests on the outstretched arm



2 Arm and head draw an eight

1. Stretch one arm straight out in front.
2. Tilt the head onto the upper arm so the ear touches the arm.
3. With the hand, draw a big sideways figure eight in the air. The upper body swings along, the eyes follow the hand.
4. 5 times, then switch sides.

EASIER
Draw the eight smaller and slower.

HARDER
Keep the knees slightly bent and draw the eight slowly.



Tip: Good for short movement breaks – helps your child feel focused and calm.

4.9 Arm Circles

Loosens shoulders and neck, links movement with breathing.

1 min | 10× each direction | Standing | After sitting a long time



1 Small circles



2 Big circles

1. Stand tall, stretch both arms out to the sides.
2. Make small forward circles with both arms.
3. Let the circles slowly grow until the whole shoulders move.
4. 10 times, then change direction.

EASIER
Just circle the shoulders.

HARDER
One arm circles forward, the other backward.



Tip: Perfect for loosening up after sitting a long time.

Make it more fun

1. **With music**
   Put on a favorite song and do the exercises to the beat.

2. **Mini race**
   Who can do more cross-body steps in 30 seconds?

3. **In daily life**
   While brushing teeth, touch the left cheek with the right hand. Even a tiny cross-body move like this takes full attention for a moment.

Key takeaway

In cross-body exercises, the two sides of the body take turns. Your child has to stay alert and can't drift off. That deliberate steering of attention is exactly what you're training.

Our week – check off what you did

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Cross-Body Hand-to-Knee							
Cross-Body Elbow-to-Knee							
Sideways Cross-Step							
Cross-Arm Swings							
Seated Cross Toe Touch							
Lazy Eight							
Mirror Drawing							
Ear-to-Arm Eight							
Arm Circles							

CHAPTER 5 · LOOSEN & BALANCE

Loosen-Up & Balance Exercises

Bringing top and bottom together – for a calmer body



These exercises loosen and stretch the whole body, from the shoulders down to the calves. They build balance and body awareness.

A child who stands loose and steady also finds it easier to sit still and focus.

Use these when your child …

- ✔ has been sitting a long time and seems stiff
- ✔ seems physically tense
- ✔ “can’t sit still” before homework

The 5 exercises

5.1	**Neck Loosener**	1 min · Sitting/standing	**p. 25**
5.2	**Calf Stretch**	1 min · Standing	**p. 26**
5.3	**Arm Stretch**	1 min · Sitting/standing	**p. 27**
5.4	**Strong Stance**	1 min · Standing	**p. 28**
5.5	**Back Release**	1–2 min · Standing	**p. 29**

5.1 Neck Loosener

Relaxes the neck and shoulders and frees up head movement.

1 min | 3–4× per side | Sitting or standing | When tense



1 Hand grips the shoulder



2 Head turns to the side

1. Put the right hand on the left shoulder and squeeze the muscle firmly.
2. Slowly turn the head to the left, then to the right, then lower it down.
3. Breathe in and out calmly with each movement.
4. 3–4 times, then switch hand and side.

EASIER
Just turn left and right.

HARDER
Breathe out long while turning and go “hoo-hoo” like an owl.



Tip: Ideal before focused work or when the neck and shoulders are tense.

5.2 Calf Stretch

Gets the legs going and releases tension.

1 min | 10× per side | Standing | chair | When tired



1 Heel presses down



2 Heel lifts

1. Place a sturdy chair with its back against the wall and hold on with both hands.
2. Take a big step back with one leg.
3. Breathing out, press the back heel into the floor. Breathing in, lift it again.
4. 10 times, then switch legs.

EASIER
Take only a small step back.

HARDER
No holding on, hands on the hips.



Tip: Ideal before studying, during breaks or when tired.

5.3 Arm Stretch

Loosens the shoulders and chest and makes breathing easier.

1 min | 3–5 sec each direction | Sitting or standing

After a lot of writing



1 Left arm up



2 Right hand holds the upper arm

1. Stand or sit tall, shoulders relaxed.
2. Stretch the left arm straight up.
3. Reach over the head with the right hand and hold the left upper arm.
4. Press the arm against the hand for 3–5 seconds each way: forward, back, in and out. The arm doesn't move. Then switch arms.

EASIER
Only press forward and back.

HARDER
Breathe out slowly while pressing and count to five.



Tip: Helps with tension from a lot of writing.

5.4 Strong Stance

Gives stability, loosens the hips and straightens the body.

1 min | 3× per side | Standing | After sitting a long time



1 Foot and head turn to the side



2 Bend the knee

1. Stand with legs wide apart, hands on the hips.
2. Turn the right foot and the head to the right. The left foot points forward.
3. Breathing out, bend the right knee. Breathing in, straighten up again.
4. 3 times, then switch sides.

EASIER
Bend the knee just a little.

HARDER
Stretch the arms out to the sides and hold them still.



Tip: Ideal for loosening the hips and improving posture after sitting a long time.

5.5 Back Release

Relaxes the hips, back and legs and trains balance.

1–2 min | 2× per side | Standing | After sitting a long time



1 Cross the feet



2 Hang forward loosely

1. Cross the feet.
2. Slowly bend the upper body forward. Head and arms hang loosely.
3. Gently swing the arms back and forth, breathing deeply in and out.
4. Roll up slowly, one vertebra at a time. Then cross the feet the other way.

EASIER
Bend the knees slightly and hang down only as far as the knees.

HARDER
Touch the floor with the fingers. Then roll up extra slowly.



Tip: Great for relaxing the back after sitting a long time.

How to use the exercises

1. **Before homework**
   If your child whines and “can’t sit still,” try a balance exercise like “Strong Stance” first. Sitting is often easier afterward.

2. **After sitting a long time**
   “Back Release” and “Calf Stretch” loosen the back and legs.

3. **After a lot of writing**
   “Arm Stretch” and “Neck Loosener” relax the shoulders and neck.

Key takeaway

Loosen-up and balance exercises connect the upper and lower body. They build balance, improve body awareness and help release inner restlessness.

Our week – check off what you did

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Neck Loosener							
Calf Stretch							
Arm Stretch							
Strong Stance							
Back Release							

CHAPTER 6 · ENERGY

Energy Boosters

Wide awake in 30 seconds



Sometimes your child simply needs an energy boost: in the morning, in the afternoon slump or when the eyes start to close.

The five exercises take 30 to 60 seconds and need no extra equipment.

Movement gets the circulation going. A body that's moving is more awake than one that has been sitting for hours.

Use these when your child …

- ✔ is tired and sluggish
- ✔ can't get going
- ✔ fades in the middle of homework

Tired or wound up?

Tired kids need this chapter. Wound-up kids first need to really let off steam. That's what the Power Moves in Chapter 13 are for (10 to 15 minutes).

The 5 exercises

6.1	The 30-Second Sprint	30 sec · Standing	p. 32
6.2	The Shake Countdown	1 min · Standing	p. 33
6.3	Rocket Launch	1 min · Standing	p. 34
6.4	Stair Boost	1 min · Standing	p. 35
6.5	The Desk Wake-Up	1 min · Sitting	p. 36

6.1 The 30-Second Sprint

Gets the circulation going and wakes your child up in half a minute.

30 sec | Standing | When tired



1 Right knee up



2 Left knee up

1. Stand side by side with enough room in front.
2. Run in place. Knees as high as possible, arms pumping along.
3. As fast as you can for 30 seconds. Use a timer or count together.
4. Then stand still and take three deep breaths in and out.

EASIER
Knees only halfway up, but keep a steady pace.

HARDER
Speed up once more in the last 10 seconds.



Tip: The quickest exercise in the book. Join in: when your child sees you getting out of breath, they'll be twice as eager.

6.2 The Shake Countdown

Wakes up the body and requires counting – awake and alert at once.

1 min | 8 – 4 – 2 – 1 | Standing | In the afternoon slump



1 Shake out an arm



2 Shake out a leg

1. Stand loosely, arms hanging.
2. Shake the right arm 8 times, left arm 8 times, right leg 8 times, left leg 8 times. Count out loud.
3. Same round with 4, then 2, and finally 1.
4. Get faster with each round.

EASIER
Only shake the arms.

HARDER
Count in another language.



Tip: The countdown is the trick: your child has to count and keep track while moving. By the end it usually gets wiggly and silly.

6.3 Rocket Launch

A short, strong energy boost – and a ritual kids enjoy.

1 min | 5× | Standing | Before homework



1 Get really small



2 Blast off!

1. Crouch down low, get really small, arms close to the body.
2. Count down from five together.
3. At “Blast off!” jump up, arms high in the air.
4. Get small again. Launch five times in all.

EASIER
No jump: just stretch up from the crouch.

HARDER
Clap once above the head during the jump.



Tip: The countdown turns the exercise into a start signal: Rocket Launch, then off to the desk.

6.4 Stair Boost

Uses what you have at home for a quick energy boost.

1 min | 1× stairs | Standing | On the way to the desk



1 Up the stairs



2 No stairs: jumping jacks

1. Go up the stairs once and back down. Up briskly, down always walking and holding the handrail.
2. No stairs? 15 jumping jacks (legs apart, arms overhead, back again) or 20 jumps in place.
3. Then stand still briefly and let the breathing settle.

EASIER
Walk instead of hurrying on the way up too.

HARDER
Time the trip up and write down the best time. Going down is still walking.



Tip: Fits into your routine without extra time: once up the stairs, then to the desk.

6.5 The Desk Wake-Up

Wakes your child up without standing – for the slump in the middle of homework.

1 min | Sitting | In the middle of homework



1 Press palms firmly



2 Arms stretched up high

1. While sitting, press the feet firmly into the floor for five seconds, then let go.
2. Press the palms firmly together in front of the chest for five seconds, then let go.
3. Slowly roll the shoulders backward three times.
4. Stretch both arms up high and take a deep breath in.

EASIER
Do only steps 2 and 4.

HARDER
Hold the tension for 10 seconds each time.



Tip: A lifesaver when your child still needs ten minutes but has run out of steam. Quiet and seated, it even works at school.

How to use the exercises

1. **Before homework**
   The 30-Second Sprint – instead of candy or TV.

2. **As a daily start signal**
   One Rocket Launch, then off to the desk. If you do it the same way every day, your child soon knows on their own what comes next.

3. **When energy runs out halfway**
   The Desk Wake-Up – quiet and seated.

Key takeaway

When your child is tired or can't get going, these five exercises are quick energy boosters. Join in: when you take part, your child is usually more eager.

Our week – check off what you did

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
The 30-Second Sprint							
The Shake Countdown							
Rocket Launch							
Stair Boost							
The Desk Wake-Up							

CHAPTER 7 · CALM DOWN

Calm-Down Exercises

Wind down and let go



These exercises help your child wind down: before a test, after an exciting day, or when everything gets to be too much.

Almost all of them start with the body. What works most reliably is a long breath out and tensing, then relaxing the muscles on purpose.

If your child is wound up

Going from full speed to zero doesn't work. Let your child burn off energy for a few minutes first (Chapter 13), then move on to this chapter. First let off steam, then calm down.

The 8 exercises

7.1	**4-6 Breathing**	1 min · Sitting/lying down	**p. 39**
7.2	**Teddy Bear Breathing**	2 min · Lying down	**p. 40**
7.3	**Squeeze the Lemon**	2 min · Sitting	**p. 41**
7.4	**Warm Hands**	1 min · Sitting	**p. 42**
7.5	**Five – Four – Three**	2 min · Anywhere	**p. 43**
7.6	**Writing Hand Break**	1 min · Sitting	**p. 44**
7.7	**Light-Beam Breathing**	1 min · Sitting/lying down	**p. 45**
7.8	**Look Far Away**	30 sec · Sitting	**p. 46**

7.1 4-6 Breathing

Reliably calms the body – the most effective exercise in this chapter.

1 min | 5 breaths | Sitting or lying down | Before a test



1 Breathe in: smell the flower



2 Breathe out: make the candle flicker

1. Sit or lie down comfortably.
2. Breathe in through the nose and count to four in your head.
3. Breathe out through slightly open lips and count to six.
4. Repeat five times.

YOUNGER KIDS

Breathing in, "smell the flower." Breathing out, blow so slowly that "the candle" only flickers.

OLDER KIDS

Slowly stretch the breath out to a count of eight.



Tip: The breath out has to be longer than the breath in. That's what matters.

7.2 Teddy Bear Breathing

Makes calm breathing visible – especially good for younger kids.

2 min | 10 breaths | Lying down | Stuffed animal | Before falling asleep



1 Stuffed animal on the belly



2 Rock the animal gently

1. Your child lies flat on their back.
2. Place a stuffed animal on their belly.
3. The job: rock the animal gently up and down with each breath without letting it fall off.
4. Keep going for ten calm breaths.

YOUNGER KIDS
"Rock the teddy to sleep."

OLDER KIDS
Use a book instead of a stuffed animal and count the breaths yourself.



Tip: When kids are tense, they breathe shallowly into the chest. The stuffed animal shows what deep breathing feels like, no explaining needed. Also nice as a bedtime ritual.

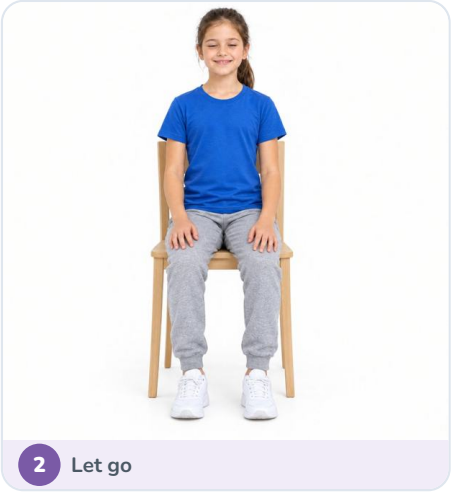
7.3 Squeeze the Lemon

Releases tension because your child feels the difference between tight and loose.

2 min | 4 rounds | Sitting | When tense



1 Squeeze tight



2 Let go

1. **Hands:** Make fists as if you're squeezing a lemon. Hold for five seconds, then let go and shake them out.
2. **Shoulders:** Pull them up to your ears like a turtle. Five seconds, then drop them.
3. **Face:** Scrunch it up as if you bit into a lemon. Five seconds, then relax.
4. **Legs:** Press your feet hard into the floor. Five seconds, then relax.

YOUNGER KIDS
Show a real lemon and make the faces together.

OLDER KIDS
Hold the tension for ten seconds each time.



Tip: Letting go is the real exercise. After each round, ask: "Can you feel how warm and heavy that is now?"

7.4 Warm Hands

A short, soothing ritual for when everything gets to be too much.

1 min · 5 breaths · Sitting · After a loud day



1 Rub hands warm



2 Warm hands over the eyes

1. Rub your palms together fast until they're warm – about ten seconds.
2. Gently place the warm hands over your closed eyes without pressing.
3. Stay like this for five calm breaths. It's dark, warm and quiet.
4. Slowly take your hands away and open your eyes.

YOUNGER KIDS
The hands make a "cave" for the eyes.

OLDER KIDS
Do 4-6 Breathing at the same time.



Tip: This exercise shuts everything off for a moment: no light, no noise, just warmth. Good after a loud school day or when tears are on the way.

7.5 Five – Four – Three

Brings an upset child back to the here and now.

2 min | 1–2 rounds | Anywhere | On the go, before tests



1 See five things



2 Hear four things

1. Name five things you can see.
2. Name four things you can hear.
3. Name three things you can feel – the chair, the floor, your T-shirt.
4. If needed, start over.

YOUNGER KIDS
Start with three – two – one.

OLDER KIDS
Keep going with two things you can smell and one you can taste.



Tip: No props, no space, just a voice. The best choice on the go, in the car or before a test. Take turns: first your child, then you.

CALM DOWN

7.6 Writing Hand Break

Loosens a cramped hand after a lot of writing.

1 min | Sitting | Between two tasks



1 Gently stretch the fingers



2 Spread the fingers wide

1. Gently bend each finger back, one at a time, for a few seconds each.
2. Massage the palm in small circles with the thumb of the other hand.
3. Shake out both hands loosely.
4. Spread the fingers wide and relax them again – three times.

YOUNGER KIDS
Shake out your hands like a wet dog.

OLDER KIDS
Tap each finger to the thumb, first slowly, then fast.



Tip: Make it a fixed break between two tasks, not just when your child complains. One minute is enough.

7.7 Light-Beam Breathing

Quiets the mind and relaxes the body.

1 min | 5 breaths | Sitting or lying down | Evenings, when stressed



1 Close your eyes



2 The light flows through the body

1. Close your eyes and imagine a warm beam of light.
2. Breathe in deeply. The light flows from your head down to your feet.
3. Breathe out and let go of all the tension.
4. Keep going for five breaths.

YOUNGER KIDS
Your child picks the color of the light.

OLDER KIDS
The light moves slowly from one body part to the next.



Tip: Good before bed or on a stressful day.

CALM DOWN

7.8 Look Far Away

Relaxes the eyes after reading, writing or screen time.

30 sec | Look 20 sec | Sitting | After reading



1 Reading for a long time



2 Look into the distance

1. Look up from the notebook or screen and find something as far away as possible: a house, a tree, the sky.
2. Look at it for twenty seconds without straining your eyes.
3. Then close your eyes for a few seconds.
4. Repeat after every longer stretch of reading.

YOUNGER KIDS
Ask: “What’s the farthest thing you can see?”

OLDER KIDS
Set a rhythm: every 20 minutes, look far away for 20 seconds.



Tip: When reading or using a screen, the eyes stay focused up close the whole time. Looking far away relaxes them. Best right at a window.

Which exercise when?

IF YOUR CHILD …	TRY …
is upset and won't listen	**Five – Four – Three**
is nervous before a test	**4-6 Breathing**
comes home from school overwhelmed	**Warm Hands**
looks tense	**Squeeze the Lemon**
can't settle down at night	**Teddy Bear Breathing or Light-Beam Breathing**
has been writing for a long time	**Writing Hand Break**
has been reading or looking at a screen for a long time	**Look Far Away**

Key takeaway

Almost all of these exercises start with the body, not the head: a long breath out, letting the muscles go, a moment of warmth and darkness. That works more reliably than any “Calm down.” And with a wound-up child, burn off energy first, then calm down.

Our week – check off what you did

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
4-6 Breathing							
Teddy Bear Breathing							
Squeeze the Lemon							
Warm Hands							
Five – Four – Three							
Writing Hand Break							
Light-Beam Breathing							
Look Far Away							

CHAPTER 8 · WORKSHEETS

Two-Hand Worksheets

The calm bridge to learning



Almost every other exercise in this book is about movement. With the worksheets, your child sits still at the table.

Two-hand means both hands work at the same time. That can't happen on autopilot: as soon as your child's mind wanders, one hand gets sloppy or stops.

Movement wake up → **Worksheet** settle in, 2–5 min → **Learning** homework

Going straight from running around to homework rarely works. A worksheet in between brings your child to the table, into a calm state and into exactly the posture they'll learn in next.

Tracing sheets (35)

Circles, waves, figure eights, rows of dots. Both hands make the same movement at the same time. Start here.

Double-focus sheets (10)

Your child pays attention to two things at once: finding a color on the left, a shape on the right. Much harder – the goal for later.

Try it yourself

Trace a circle with your left hand while you draw a wave with your right. You'll notice right away how much attention it takes.

Work up in three levels

You need two tennis balls and two pens of the same color. Start with the balls. When your child does a sheet calmly twice, move up a level.



LEVEL 1

Ball

A tennis ball under each palm. Roll the balls along the lines.



LEVEL 2

Pen

Two pens of the same color, one per hand. Trace at the same time.



LEVEL 3

Finger

Use a finger (or a coin or button) to tap and connect the dots.

The rules

- ✔ **Before homework, one sheet is enough.** In a separate practice session, three at most.
- ✔ **2 to 5 minutes** per sheet is enough.
- ✔ **Always both hands at the same time.** That's the whole point.
- ✔ **Slow beats fast.** It's not about speed and not about perfection.
- ✔ **Print favorite sheets more than once.** Repeating is not a step back.

The hardest sheet in the book

In the **color-word double focus**, color words are printed in the wrong color. Your child points to a **word** with the left index finger and reads it quietly. At the same time, the right hand taps the color the word names, not the color of the ink.

RED BLUE GREEN YELLOW BLUE

RED GREEN YELLOW

This is harder than it sounds: the ink color jumps out right away and pulls the hand the wrong way. That's the point: putting the brakes on the first impulse and paying attention to the word on purpose. Adults get it wrong too – try it yourself.

Save the double-focus sheets for later

They are the goal you work toward, not the starting point.

How to support your child

“Take it slow.” **“Take your time.”** **“It doesn't have to be perfect.”** **“Great, you're sticking with it.”**

Please don't comment on the lines, correct them or compare. A wobbly line is not a mistake. The goal isn't the picture, it's the minutes your child spent calmly focused on the task.



Tip: You'll find all 45 printable sheets in the appendix.

CHAPTER 9 · CHALLENGE

The 7-Day Challenge

Once through the whole book – in seven days



The challenge takes you through the whole book in seven days. Each day pairs two exercises, usually one active and one calm. In the challenge, the exercises are shorter than in the exercise chapters. Go by the minutes on each day's page. Day 7 takes a little longer.

10–15 min
a day is usually enough.

Same time
e.g. after school – that's how it becomes a routine.

1 question
to talk about at the end. A sentence or two is enough.

DAY	FOCUS	✓
1	Wake up and settle in	☐
2	Burn off energy first, then focus	☐
3	Release stress and listen	☐
4	Midline and coordination	☐
5	Remember and concentrate	☐
6	Practice stopping and calm down	☐
7	Family Olympics and favorites	☐

DAY 1

Wake up and settle in

Get the body going, challenge coordination and start off easy with a first game together.



Cross-Body Hand-to-Knee ☐

20 reps · 1 min

→ Exercise 4.1



Mirror Game ☐

together · 4–5 min

→ Exercise 11.1

Our question for today

How did your focus change after the exercises? Did you both laugh?

How did it go today? great okay hard

DAY 2

Burn off energy first, then focus

Try out the book's most important idea: let the energy out first, then calm down on purpose.



Cross-Body Jumping Jacks ☐
3 × 30 seconds
→ Exercise 13.1



Cool-Down Breathing ☐
5 calm breaths
→ Exercise 13.10

Our question for today

Was getting still after burning off energy easier or harder than usual?

How did it go today? great okay hard

DAY 3

Release stress and listen

Let go of tension and turn attention inward and to the ears.



4-6 Breathing ☐

5 breaths

→ Exercise 7.1



Sound Detective ☐

together · 5 min

→ Exercise 11.8

Our question for today

How relaxed do you feel? Which sound was hardest to guess?

How did it go today? great okay hard

DAY 4

Midline and coordination

Cross the midline in a playful way, then take a calm moment to notice how it feels.



Beanbag Obstacle Course ☐
together · 6 min
→ Exercise 11.2



Lazy Eight ☐
10× per hand
→ Exercise 4.6

Our question for today

Was throwing across the body easier than at the start? Which hand felt less familiar?

How did it go today? great okay hard

DAY 5

Remember and concentrate

Train memory – the “notepad in your head” for math and reading – plus steady hands at speed.



Tray Memory ☐
together · 6 min
→ Exercise 11.9



Cup Stacking ☐
timed · 4 min
→ Exercise 10.3

Our question for today

How many things could you remember at once? Did you get faster at stacking?

How did it go today? ☺ great ☐ 😐 okay ☐ ☹ hard ☐

DAY 6

Practice stopping and calm down

Stop on purpose in the middle of moving – then relax deeply.



Stop-and-Go Run ☐
5 min
→ Exercise 13.5



Light-Beam Breathing ☐
5 breaths
→ Exercise 7.7

Our question for today

How hard was it to freeze right away? Could you relax afterward?

How did it go today? great okay hard

DAY 7

Family Olympics and favorites

Pull the whole week together into a fun competition and decide which exercises you'll keep.



Family Olympics ☐
together · 15–20 min
→ Exercise 11.7



Your Favorites Mix ☐
2–3 favorite exercises from the week
→ all chapters

Our question for today

Which exercise was the most fun? How does your child feel now compared to Day 1?

How did it go today? great okay hard

You did it! What sticks?

Look back together: which exercises helped the most? Make those three or four a regular part of your everyday life.

Our favorite exercises

When will we do them?

What has changed



Tip: Repeat the challenge after a few weeks. Then you'll see what has become a habit.

CHAPTER 10 · WITH PROPS

Exercises with Balls, Scarves & Cups

Everyday objects turn exercises into little games



Balls, scarves and cups add variety and give kids an extra push.

With props, kids often stick with it longer than with instructions alone.

All of these exercises are quick to set up.

Use these when your child ...

- ✔ finds the usual exercises boring
- ✔ wants to try something new
- ✔ likes doing things together with you

The 8 exercises

10.1	**Ball Rhythm Dance**	5–10 min · Standing	**p. 62**
10.2	**Scarf Juggling**	5 min · Standing	**p. 63**
10.3	**Cup Stacking**	5 min · Standing	**p. 64**
10.4	**Cross-Body Ball Toss**	3–5 min · Standing	**p. 65**
10.5	**Scarf Eights**	2–3 min · Standing	**p. 66**
10.6	**Cross-Body Bounce**	3 min · Standing	**p. 67**
10.7	**Cross-Body Wall Throw**	3–5 min · Standing	**p. 68**
10.8	**Partner Cross Pass**	5 min · Standing	**p. 69**

WITH PROPS

10.1 Ball Rhythm Dance

Makes moving fun and trains rhythm and coordination.

5–10 min | 1–2 min per song | Standing | Ball, music | As a fun break



1 Ball from hand to hand to the beat



2 Little dance steps with the ball

1. Put on a favorite song with a good beat. Stand loosely, knees slightly bent.
2. Move the ball to the beat: from hand to hand or back and forth in front of the chest.
3. Add little dance steps: to the side, forward and back, turning in a circle.
4. Several songs, 1–2 minutes each.

EASIER
Just pass the ball from hand to hand, no dance steps.

HARDER
On every fourth beat, bounce the ball on the floor once.



Tip: A soft ball or soccer ball is all you need. Make sure there's enough room.

10.2 Scarf Juggling

Trains eye-hand coordination and crosses the midline.

5 min | 1–2 scarves | Standing | Scarf | As a break



1 Right hand tosses up and across



2 Catch with the left

1. Take a scarf in the right hand.
2. Gently toss the scarf up and to the left.
3. Catch it with the left hand.
4. Take it back in the right hand and toss again.

EASIER
Just toss it up and catch it with the same hand.

HARDER
Go faster or use two scarves.



Tip: Scarves fall slowly. That means quick wins – even for kids who aren't confident with balls yet.

WITH PROPS

10.3 Cup Stacking

Trains skill with both hands, reaction time and focus.

5 min | Several rounds | Standing | 6 cups

As a family tournament



1 Build a pyramid



2 Take it down fast

1. Clear the table. Everyone gets 6 cups.
2. On “Go,” build a pyramid: 3 on the bottom, 2 on top of that, 1 on top.
3. As soon as it stands, take it down just as fast – nest the cups back together.
4. Whoever finishes first wins. Or play against a stopwatch.

EASIER
Just 3 cups: 2 on the bottom, 1 on top.

HARDER
10 cups: 4 on the bottom, then 3, 2, 1.



Tip: Plastic or paper cups work fine. Turn it into a mini family tournament.

10.4 Cross-Body Ball Toss

Challenges coordination of both hands and reaction time.

3–5 min | 10–20 tosses | Standing | Soft ball | As a break



1 Right hand tosses up and across



2 Back to the right hand – next toss

1. Take the ball in the right hand.
2. Gently toss it up and over to the left side.
3. Catch it with the left hand.
4. Pass it back to the right hand and toss again.

EASIER
Use a bigger, softer ball.

HARDER
With a partner: see Partner Cross Pass (10.8).



Tip: A tennis ball or small soft ball is all you need. Keep the tosses low at first.

WITH PROPS

10.5 Scarf Eights

Trains the eyes and coordination across the midline.

2–3 min | 5–10× per hand | Standing | Scarf | After reading



1 Arm with scarf stretched forward



2 A Lazy Eight with the scarf

1. Hold a scarf in one hand and stretch the arm forward.
2. Draw a big Lazy Eight (a sideways figure eight) in the air with the scarf.
3. The eyes follow the scarf, the head stays still. Keep breathing calmly.
4. 5–10 eights, then switch hands.

EASIER
Draw smaller eights.

HARDER
Use both hands at the same time, one scarf in each.



Tip: Ideal after a lot of reading or screen time.

WITH PROPS

10.6 Cross-Body Bounce

Takes coordination of both sides and full attention.

3 min | Standing | Rubber ball | As a break



1 Right hand bounces across to the left



2 Left hand bounces it back

1. With the right hand, bounce the ball at an angle to the left so it hits the floor in front of the middle of your body.
2. The left hand catches it and bounces it back at an angle to the right.
3. This way the ball keeps crossing the midline, back and forth.
4. Start slowly, then speed up.

EASIER
Catch the ball with both hands and bounce it again.

HARDER
Count out loud or recite a poem while bouncing.



Tip: A soft rubber ball bounces evenly and is easy to control.

WITH PROPS

10.7 Cross-Body Wall Throw

Trains hands and eyes to work together.

3–5 min | 10–20 throws | Standing | Ball, empty wall | As a break



1 Right hand throws at an angle against the wall



2 Catch with the left

1. Stand a few steps in front of an empty wall.
2. Throw with the right hand at an angle so the ball bounces back to the left side.
3. Catch it with the left hand. Then throw with the left and catch with the right.
4. 10–20 times.

EASIER
Move closer to the wall.

HARDER
Stand farther back or clap once after each catch.



Tip: A soft ball is easy on the wall. Outside, the side of the house works too.

10.8 Partner Cross Pass

Builds teamwork and crosses the midline.

5 min | Standing | Soft ball | With a partner



1 Right hand throws across



2 Left hand throws back

1. Stand facing each other.
2. Throw the ball with your right hand across to your partner's right hand.
3. Your partner takes the ball in the left hand and throws it back across to your left hand.
4. After a few throws, switch: now your child throws with the left.

EASIER
Stand closer and roll instead of throwing.

HARDER
With each throw, say the next number in a times table.



Tip: Say "right" and "left" out loud as you go. That also helps with telling left from right.

How to use these exercises

1 **The prop box**
Put balls, scarves and cups in a small box that's always within reach. Then the next exercise is ready in ten seconds.

2 **As a mini tournament**
Cup Stacking or the Cross-Body Wall Throw against the clock – the family plays against each other.

3 **After reading**
Scarf Eights relax the eyes after a lot of reading or screen time.

Key takeaway

Even simple objects turn an exercise into a little game. Many of these exercises cross the midline, so they train the same thing as Chapter 4 – just with more fun.

Our week – check off what you did

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Ball Rhythm Dance							
Scarf Juggling							
Cup Stacking							
Cross-Body Ball Toss							
Scarf Eights							
Cross-Body Bounce							
Cross-Body Wall Throw							
Partner Cross Pass							

CHAPTER 11 · GAMES

The 10 Focus Games

Play together instead of practicing



Now it's your turn to play together. These games take the ideas from Chapters 4 to 7 and wrap them in friendly competition, laughter and small wins.

You need a few everyday objects, a little space and 5 to 20 minutes.

You're the most important part

When you join in, laugh along and sometimes lose, “having to practice” turns into something you do together. After each game, take a moment to talk about what felt easy and what was hard.

The 10 games

11.1	**Mirror Game**	10 min · Standing	**p. 72**
11.2	**Beanbag Obstacle Course**	12 min · Standing	**p. 73**
11.3	**Clothespin Race**	12 min · Standing	**p. 74**
11.4	**Balloon Challenge**	12 min · Standing	**p. 75**
11.5	**Book Balance Contest**	12 min · Standing	**p. 76**
11.6	**Card-Sorting Race**	12 min · Sitting	**p. 77**
11.7	**Family Olympics**	20 min · Standing	**p. 78**
11.8	**Sound Detective**	10 min · Anywhere	**p. 79**
11.9	**Tray Memory**	12 min · Sitting	**p. 80**
11.10	**The Freeze Challenge**	12 min · Standing	**p. 81**

11.1 Mirror Game

Builds careful watching and copying – a gentle way to start.

10 min · Standing · nothing · With a partner



1 One person leads ...



2 ... the other mirrors

1. Stand facing each other, about 3 feet apart.
2. One person makes slow moves: raise an arm, tilt the head, squat down.
3. The other is the mirror and copies everything as a mirror image.
4. Switch roles after 3–4 minutes.

MAKE IT HARDER

Go faster, add silly faces, move both hands in different directions.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Mirror Drawing (4.7) – the same skill, calmly at the table.



Tip: Start with funny moves: wrinkle your nose, hop like a frog. It's fine to laugh out loud.

11.2 Beanbag Obstacle Course

Builds eye-hand coordination and focus through clear tasks.

12 min | 3 stations | Standing | beanbags, basket | With a partner



1 Station 1: Toss into the basket



2 Station 2: Beanbag on the head

1. You need 2–3 beanbags (or rolled-up socks), a basket and enough space for three stations.
2. **Station 1 – Target toss:** 5 tosses each into the basket. Every basket scores a point.
3. **Station 2 – Balance:** walk a few yards with the beanbag on your head.
4. **Station 3 – Pass:** toss and catch – first with the same hand, then the other hand, then across the body.

MAKE IT HARDER

Toss with your eyes closed, stand on one leg at Station 3, make the course longer.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Cross-Body Ball Toss (10.4) and Cross-Body Hand-to-Knee (4.1).



Tip: Let your child choose the order of the stations. Kids who get a say are more eager to play.

11.3 Clothespin Race

Strengthens the hands and fine motor skills – writing-hand training that doesn't look like practice.

12 min | 3 rounds | Standing | clothespins | With a partner



1 Clip them on as fast as you can



2 Both hands at once

1. Get at least 20 clothespins ready and hang a T-shirt over a chair back for each player.
2. **Round 1:** 10 clothespins each – who clips them all on first?
3. **Round 2:** both hands at the same time – 3 clothespins on the right and 3 on the left. Who finishes first?
4. **Round 3:** The clothespins lie to your left and right. Your right hand only takes from the left, your left hand only from the right.

MAKE IT HARDER

Clip them onto the other player's clothes. Bonus round: pick up clothespins with your feet.

PAIRS WELL WITH

The two-hand worksheets (Chapter 8) – there, too, both hands work at the same time.



Tip: If the weaker hand struggles, that's normal. That's the hand this game is working.

11.4 Balloon Challenge

Builds reaction, coordination and following a moving object with the eyes – important for reading.

12 min | 3 games | Standing | balloon | With a partner



1 Don't let the balloon touch the floor



2 One hand only

1. Blow up 1–2 balloons (or use a rolled-up scarf).
2. **Floor is lava:** The balloon can't touch the floor. Pass it with hands, head, knees.
3. **One hand only:** everyone uses just one hand – ideally the weaker one.
4. **Count challenge:** count up with every tap. How high can you go?

MAKE IT HARDER

Heads only, both kneeling, or two balloons at once.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Lazy Eight (4.6) and Ear-to-Arm Eight (4.8) – the calm way to practice eye tracking.



Tip: Balloons float slowly, so even kids who aren't sporty succeed. Pick up popped pieces right away (choking hazard for little siblings). If anyone has a latex allergy, use a scarf.

11.5 Book Balance Contest

Builds posture and balance – direct preparation for sitting at a desk.

12 min | 3 events | Standing | book | With a partner



1 Walk with a book on your head



2 The royal challenge: squat down

1. One book per player, not too heavy.
2. **Walking course:** walk once around the table with the book on your head.
3. **Royal challenge:** with the book on your head, squat down and stand back up.
4. **Multitasking:** with the book on your head, count backward from 20. If the book falls, start over. Make it through without a drop and you get a point.

MAKE IT HARDER

Stack two books, or balance while standing on one leg.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Strong Stance (5.4) and Back Release (5.5) build the same posture.



Tip: It's hard work, even if it doesn't look like it: straight back, tight tummy, relaxed shoulders. That's exactly what your child needs for sitting.

11.6 Card-Sorting Race

Builds looking closely and reacting fast – the skills needed for worksheets.

12 min | 3 tasks | Sitting | deck of cards, stopwatch | With a partner



1 Sort by suit



2 Memory version

1. Get a deck of cards and a stopwatch ready (a phone works).
2. **Suit sorter:** sort into four piles – hearts, diamonds, spades and clubs – against the clock.
3. **Line them up:** put all the hearts in order, from the lowest card up to the ace, against the clock.
4. **Memory:** lay out 8 cards (4 pairs) face down and take turns flipping two. Whoever finds more pairs wins.

MAKE IT HARDER

Sort with the weaker hand, build two piles at once, play memory with 16 cards.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Cup Stacking (10.3) – steady hands at speed.



Tip: No playing cards? Picture or number cards work too. For younger kids, sorting into red and black is enough.

11.7 Family Olympics

Several games turned into a little celebration – the highlight of the chapter.

20 min | 4 events | Standing | everything from before | On the weekend



1 A contest for the whole family



2 Award ceremony

1. Get everything from the earlier games ready: beanbags, balloon, book, clothespins.
2. Events: basket toss (most baskets in 5 tosses), clothespin round (first to finish), balloon rally (who keeps the balloon up longest).
3. Final event: walk with a book on your head while counting backward from 20.
4. 1 point for each event won. In a tie, both get the point. The winner gets a certificate or picks what's for dinner.

MAKE IT HARDER
Let the kids invent their own events.

PAIRS WELL WITH
The 7-Day Challenge (Chapter 9) – the Olympics are its finale on Day 7.



Tip: The mood matters more than the points: serious enough to compete, relaxed enough that the losers laugh along. Second place gets applause too.

11.8 Sound Detective

Builds careful listening and tuning out distractions – like in a noisy classroom.

10 min | 3 rounds | Anywhere | nothing

With a partner, also on the go



1 Eyes closed, ears open



2 What was that sound?

1. **What do I hear?** Close your eyes for 30 seconds, collect every sound you hear, then compare.
2. **Guess the sound:** make a sound behind your back (keys, spoon, paper) and the other person guesses.
3. **Sound chain:** repeat a sound and add one of your own. How long can the chain get?

MAKE IT HARDER

Repeat several sounds in the right order, or pick out one sound while soft music plays.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Light-Beam Breathing (7.7) – calm through the senses, a good bridge into learning.



Tip: Great on the go: in the car, in the waiting room. Closing your eyes and listening is calming, too.

11.9 Tray Memory

Builds visual memory – the “notepad in your head” for math and reading.

12 min | 3 rounds | Sitting | tray, cloth, 4–10 objects | With a partner



1 Take a good look



2 What's missing?

1. **What's missing?** Show 4 to 6 objects for 20 seconds. Eyes closed, take one away – what's missing?
2. **Memory flash:** show the tray for 10 seconds, cover it and have your child name everything.
3. **Switch roles:** Your child sets up the tray, you guess.

MAKE IT HARDER

More objects (8–10), take away or swap two things, show the tray for only 5 seconds.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Cup Stacking (10.3) – full attention and short-term memory.



Tip: Start easy (4–5 objects). Memory games are only fun as long as they work more often than not.

11.10 The Freeze Challenge

Builds the ability to put the brakes on impulses and pause on purpose – what fidgety kids need most.

12 min | 3 games | Standing | music | With a partner



1 Dance to the music



2 Stop – statue!

1. **Freeze:** You control the music. Your child moves to it and freezes like a statue the moment it stops. Anyone who wobbles gets a giggle point.
2. **Flip it:** stand still while the music plays, dance in the silence. Thinking in reverse is the trick.
3. **Traffic light:** You call out colors: GREEN = walk, YELLOW = slow, RED = freeze. Switch without warning, and trade roles after 3 minutes.

MAKE IT HARDER

Freeze on one leg, use two rules at once (RED = freeze and hand on head), make the pauses sometimes very short, sometimes very long.

PAIRS WELL WITH

4-6 Breathing (7.1) – from wound up to calm, on purpose.



Tip: Play along fully and "lose" on purpose now and then. When you get caught as a wobbly statue, everyone laughs. Pausing is a game, not a scolding.

Your 10-Day Game Plan

Pick any game you like – or play a different one every day for ten days in a row. Check off what you've done.

DAY	GAME	WHAT IT BUILDS	✓
1	**Mirror Game**	Careful watching	☐
2	**Beanbag Obstacle Course**	Eye-hand coordination	☐
3	**Clothespin Race**	Fine motor skills in both hands	☐
4	**Balloon Challenge**	Reaction and eye tracking	☐
5	**Book Balance Contest**	Posture and sitting strength	☐
6	**Card-Sorting Race**	Speed and focus	☐
7	**Family Olympics**	All of it together	☐
8	**Sound Detective**	Careful listening	☐
9	**Tray Memory**	Remembering (working memory)	☐
10	**The Freeze Challenge**	Putting the brakes on impulses	☐

The best time

Try to play at the same time each day, for example in the afternoon before homework. After a few days, it becomes a ritual.

Key takeaway

This isn't practice, it's play. That's exactly why the training happens almost in passing: looking closely, listening, remembering and putting on the brakes.

CHAPTER 12 · SELF-CONTROL

Self-Control Games

Practice focus with no materials – on the go, in the car and while waiting



For this chapter you need nothing: no space, no materials, no special time. Just your voices.

These games train how well your child can steer themselves. That's often what makes the difference in learning.

Use these when your child ...

- ✔ gets restless in the car or while waiting
- ✔ rushes into writing without thinking
- ✔ quickly forgets instructions

The 6 games

12.1	**Simon Says**	5 min · Anywhere	**p. 85**
12.2	**I'm Going on a Picnic**	5–10 min · Anywhere	**p. 86**
12.3	**Clap on Three**	5 min · Anywhere	**p. 87**
12.4	**The Instruction Tower**	5–8 min · Anywhere	**p. 88**
12.5	**No Yes, No No**	5 min · Anywhere	**p. 89**
12.6	**Category Switch**	5–8 min · Anywhere	**p. 90**

The three skills behind it

Picture your child as a ship. Motivation is the engine. But without someone at the helm, the ship goes anywhere except where it's supposed to go. The helmsman is made of three skills:

1 Hitting the brakes
Holding back the first impulse for a moment: not blurting out right away, not jumping up right away. Your child needs this when they have to wait in class or think first.

2 Holding it in mind
Remembering what matters right now while doing something else. Otherwise, halfway through a word problem, the actual question is forgotten.

3 Switching gears
Shifting from one rule to another, for example when the type of math problem changes.

Experts call these **executive functions**. They develop throughout childhood and can be practiced – best with games that have rules.

To be honest

These games won't turn your child into a model student overnight. They turn waiting time into time together, practice exactly the skills that trip kids up in learning – and to your child they don't feel like practice.

12.1 Simon Says

Builds careful listening and holding back an impulse – just like in the classroom.

5 min | Anywhere | nothing | Brakes



1 "Simon says: hands on your head!"

1. You give instructions: "Simon says: hands on your head." Your child does it.
2. Sometimes you leave out "Simon says." Then your child must not do it.
3. Nobody is out for a mistake – you just keep playing.
4. Switch roles after a few rounds.

MAKE IT HARDER
Talk faster. Do the moves yourself, even without "Simon says." Give two instructions in a row.

PAIRS WELL WITH
The Freeze Challenge (11.10) – the same braking, through movement.



Tip: Build up a rhythm so your child slides into autopilot – then break it. That's where the training happens.

12.2 I'm Going on a Picnic

Builds holding things in mind – the skill most often missing in learning.

5–10 min | Anywhere | nothing | Holding in mind



1 The classic for car rides

1. You start: “I'm going on a picnic and I'm bringing a toothbrush.”
2. Your child repeats everything and adds one item.
3. You take turns, and the list keeps getting longer.
4. If someone gets stuck, they get a hint. It's not about winning.

MAKE IT HARDER

Stick to one category (only animals), add a movement for each item, say the list backward.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Tray Memory (11.9) – remembering with the eyes instead of the ears.



Tip: Works from about age five and grows with your child. Even adults start to sweat at some point.

12.3 Clap on Three

Combines remembering and braking: keeping a rule in mind and stopping the autopilot.

5 min | Anywhere | nothing | Brakes + holding in mind



1 One, two, clap!

1. Take turns counting out loud: one, two, three ...
2. The rule: for every number with a three in it, you clap instead of saying it.
3. So: one, two, clap, four ... twelve, clap, fourteen ...
4. After a mistake, start again at one.

MAKE IT HARDER
Two rules (three = clap, five = stand up), count backward, speed up.

PAIRS WELL WITH
The Shake Countdown (6.2) – moving and counting along.



Tip: The trickiest game in the chapter – and the one with the most laughs. Mistakes are part of it, yours too.

12.4 The Instruction Tower

Builds remembering several steps and doing them in the right order.

5–8 min | Anywhere | nothing | Holding in mind



1 “Touch your nose, then turn around once!”

1. You give one movement instruction: “Touch your nose.” Your child does it.
2. Then two: “Touch your nose, then turn around once.”
3. Each round adds one more instruction.
4. If someone forgets a step, the tower falls and you start over. How tall can your tower get?

MAKE IT HARDER

Do everything only at the end, reverse the order, let your child build the tower for you.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Mirror Game (11.1) – watch closely and copy.



Tip: Perfect for the walk to school. In the checkout line, play a quiet version with small moves: nose, ear, wiggle your toes.

12.5 No Yes, No No

Builds braking and switching gears: holding back the obvious answer and finding a different one.

5 min | 10 questions | Anywhere | nothing

Brakes + switching



1 "Do you like pizza?" – "I sure do!"

1. You ask yes-or-no questions: "Do you like pizza?"
2. Your child answers but can't say "yes" or "no" – and can't nod or shake their head either. If one slips out, you switch.
3. They have to say it another way: "I sure do."
4. After ten questions, you switch.

MAKE IT HARDER

Also ban "maybe" and "uh-huh," ask faster, ban the word "red" too.

PAIRS WELL WITH

The Freeze Challenge (11.10) – the same holding back, with the body.



Tip: A classic even grandparents know. Works on any car ride.

12.6 Category Switch

Builds shifting from one rule to another without losing the beat.

5–8 min | Anywhere | nothing | Switching gears



1 "Switch – fruit!"

1. Take turns naming things from one category, for example animals.
2. At some point you call out: "Switch – fruit!" From now on, it's fruit.
3. After a few rounds, switch again, each time more by surprise.
4. Whoever takes longer than three seconds or sticks with the old category gets to call the next switch.

MAKE IT HARDER

Jump between three categories, no repeats, add a starting letter (only animals that start with B).

PAIRS WELL WITH

The traffic light in The Freeze Challenge (11.10) – switching gears on the move.



Tip: At first, announce the switch ("A switch is coming"). Later, surprise them – that's when it gets really challenging.

How to use this chapter

1. **Keep it short**
   Five minutes is enough. Stop while it's still fun.

2. **Play along and lose**
   When you mess up and laugh about it, it takes the pressure off your child. Kids who are allowed to make mistakes dare to try harder things.

3. **Don't explain that it's practice**
   Once a game sounds like training, it becomes a chore. It's a game. That's enough.

Key takeaway

The Self-Control Games train three skills that make the difference in learning: hitting the brakes on impulses, holding things in mind and switching gears. They take only a few minutes and your voices.

Our week – check off what you did

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Simon Says							
I'm Going on a Picnic							
Clap on Three							
The Instruction Tower							
No Yes, No No							
Category Switch							

CHAPTER 13 · POWER

Power Moves

Burn off energy first, then focus



Sometimes the restlessness runs too deep. Then less movement won't help, but more will: first let the energy out, then the mind can focus.

These ten exercises are more athletic than anything so far. Each one also trains coordination, memory, listening or putting on the brakes.

Order matters

You won't do all ten. Pick two or three exercises, 3 to 4 minutes each, and always finish with Exercise 10. That adds up to about 10 to 15 minutes.

The 10 exercises

13.1	**Cross-Body Jumping Jacks**	2–3 min · Standing	**p. 93**
13.2	**Bear Walk & Crab Walk**	8 min · Floor	**p. 94**
13.3	**Jump Rope Rhythm**	6 min · Standing	**p. 95**
13.4	**Animal Moves Course**	10 min · Standing/floor	**p. 96**
13.5	**Stop-and-Go Run**	6 min · Standing	**p. 97**
13.6	**Shadow Boxing on Command**	6 min · Standing	**p. 98**
13.7	**Balance Line**	8 min · Standing	**p. 99**
13.8	**Number Jump Mat**	10 min · Standing	**p. 100**
13.9	**Mirror Workout**	8 min · Standing	**p. 101**
13.10	**Cool-Down Breathing**	2–3 min · Lying down	**p. 102**

13.1 Cross-Body Jumping Jacks

Coordination across the midline – and it gets the blood pumping.

2–3 min | 3 × 30 sec | Standing | nothing | When restless



1 Right hand to left knee



2 Left hand to right knee

1. Hop lightly in place.
2. On the way up, the right hand taps the raised left knee, then left hand to right knee.
3. Start slow and cleanly across the body, then speed up – without getting sloppy.
4. 30 seconds at a good pace, short break, 3 rounds.

MAKE IT HARDER

Count by twos, clap on every multiple of 5, try it with eyes closed.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Cross-Body Hand-to-Knee (4.1) – the same move, done slowly.



Tip: If your child misses the knee, that's normal. Slow and right beats fast.

13.2 Bear Walk & Crab Walk

Works arms and legs across the body and strengthens the whole core.

8 min | several laps | Floor | nothing | When restless



1 Bear walk: on hands and feet



2 Crab walk: belly up

1. **Bear walk:** on hands and feet, bottom up, move forward – the hand and the opposite foot step forward at the same time.
2. **Crab walk:** belly up, walk backward or sideways.
3. Mark a route, for example from the couch to the door.
4. Go there as a bear, come back as a crab – without letting the bottom drop.

MAKE IT HARDER
Balance a beanbag on the back, weave around pillows, go in slow motion.

PAIRS WELL WITH
Strong Stance (5.4) and Back Release (5.5) – core strength for sitting well.



Tip: It looks like roughhousing, but it's hard coordination work. Join in – a bear walk through the living room gets you both laughing.

13.3 Jump Rope Rhythm

Builds rhythm, timing and both sides of the body – even without a rope.

6 min | Standing | Rope (optional) | When restless



1 With a rope



2 No rope: just the movement

1. With a rope – or just the jumping motion with circling hands.
2. Basic two-foot jump at a steady beat: find it first, then hold it.
3. Count out loud and set a personal record.
4. Now and then switch to one leg, then the other.

MAKE IT HARDER

No rope: clap instead of jumping on every multiple of 5, alternate left/right, change speed on your call.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Lazy Eight (4.6) – an even rhythm with both sides.



Tip: No room for a rope? The jumping motion is enough. It's about the rhythm, not the rope.

13.4 Animal Moves Course

Combines strength, balance and coordination with remembering a sequence.

10 min | Standing + floor | nothing | When restless



1 Frog: jump from a squat



2 Flamingo: on one leg

1. Learn the animals: frog (squat jumps), flamingo (one leg), crab (crab walk as in 13.2), snake (army crawl).
2. Decide on an order together.
3. Do the whole sequence in one go – the order has to stay in your child's head.
4. Add a new animal each round. How long can the chain get?

MAKE IT HARDER

Do the order backward, you call out only the animal, combine two animals into a new move.

PAIRS WELL WITH

I'm Going on a Picnic (12.2) – there, too, a sequence has to be remembered.



Tip: Let your child invent animals. A kangaroo they made up is easier to remember.

POWER

13.5 Stop-and-Go Run

Trains braking while working hard – much harder than when calm.

6 min | Standing | nothing | When restless



1 Go: run in place



2 Stop: freeze right away

1. Run in place, knees high, nice and fast.
2. On “Stop!” freeze completely right away – even mid-move.
3. On “Go!” start again right away. Give the commands at surprising moments.
4. Switch roles – your child gets to give the commands too.

MAKE IT HARDER
Extra commands (“Hop!”, “Backward!”), a set pose at each stop, two commands in quick succession.

PAIRS WELL WITH
The Freeze Challenge (11.10) – stopping on purpose, here while working hard.



Tip: Call “Stop” right when your child is really going. Braking from full speed is the real exercise.

13.6 Shadow Boxing on Command

Burn off energy while listening closely and telling left from right.

6 min | Standing | nothing | When restless



1 "Right!"



2 "Left!"

1. Knees slightly bent, fists loosely in front of the body. Punch only the air, an arm's length away from furniture and people.
2. You call the punches: "right – left – right – both." On "both," both fists punch at once.
3. Call faster and mix up the order.
4. Call short sequences: "left, left, right" – listen and remember.

MAKE IT HARDER

Across the body ("right fist to the front left"), number sequences as punches, reversed: on "right," punch left.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Sound Detective (11.8) – careful listening.

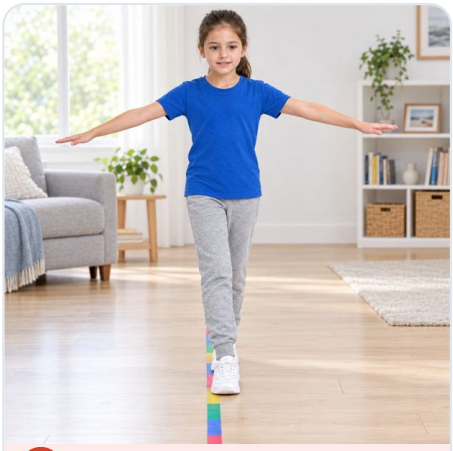


Tip: Left and right takes real thinking for many elementary school kids. A dot on the right hand helps at first.

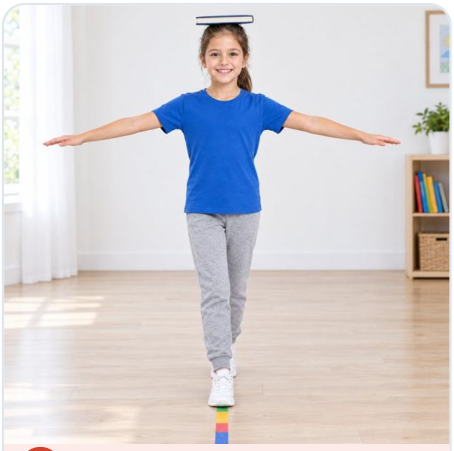
13.7 Balance Line

Builds balance and body control – the base for sitting still.

8 min | Standing | Tape | When restless



1 Heel to toe on the line



2 With a book on the head

1. A straight line on the floor: tape, the edge of a rug or a string.
2. Forward: one foot right in front of the other, arms out for balance.
3. The same line backward.
4. Stand with a book on the head or briefly with eyes closed.

MAKE IT HARDER

Half turn on the line, pass a beanbag from hand to hand, 5 seconds on one leg in the middle.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Book Balance Contest (11.5) and Strong Stance (5.4).



Tip: A child with a weak core has to keep rebalancing. Better balance leaves more of the mind free for learning.

13.8 Number Jump Mat

Combines movement with mental math – the bridge from play to learning.

10 min | Standing | Numbers 1–20 | Before homework



1 Numbers on the floor



2 "3 plus 4!" – jump onto the 7

1. Spread sheets with the numbers 1–10 (or 1–20) on the floor.
2. You call out a problem, for example "3 plus 4." Your child jumps onto the answer.
3. Several problems in a row – jumping from number to number.
4. To start: just jump the numbers in order, forward and back.

MAKE IT HARDER

Times tables with answers up to 20 (e.g. 4 times 5), land on the answer before the next problem, hop on one leg.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Clap on Three (12.3) – keeping numbers and rules in mind.



Tip: Tape the sheets to the floor or put them on a rug so nobody slips. And match the problems to what your child can do.

13.9 Mirror Workout

Burn off energy while watching closely and copying.

8 min | Standing | nothing | With a partner



1 Mirrored squat



2 Mirrored lunge

1. Real workout moves: squat, lunge, arm circles, jump with arms up.
2. One person leads slowly, the other mirrors at the same time.
3. Link two or three moves into a sequence.
4. After a few minutes, switch leaders.

MAKE IT HARDER
Speed up without getting sloppy, mirror a sequence from memory.

PAIRS WELL WITH
Mirror Game (11.1) – the same idea, calmer.



Tip: Looking closely and copying exactly is also what copying from the board takes. Praise careful watching, not just speed.

13.10 Cool-Down Breathing

Brings your child down after burning off energy – from “wound up” to “ready to learn.”

2–3 min | 10 breaths | Lying down | nothing | Always at the end



1 Hand on the belly



2 The belly becomes a balloon

1. After all the action, sit or lie down quietly.
2. Put one hand on the belly and feel it rise and fall.
3. Ten times, breathe in slowly and deeply – “the belly becomes a big balloon” – and breathe out slowly.
4. Stay still for a moment and feel the heartbeat slow down.

MAKE IT HARDER

Breathe in for a count of 4, out for 6, close the eyes, think of a favorite place.

PAIRS WELL WITH

Light-Beam Breathing (7.7) and 4-6 Breathing (7.1).



Tip: Never skip this exercise. The cool-down is what turns the energy you burned off into focus for learning.

Your Power Plan

A good routine: two or three Power Moves, then always the cool-down.

NO.	EXERCISE	WHAT IT BUILDS	✓
1	**Cross-Body Jumping Jacks**	Midline and stamina	☐
2	**Bear Walk & Crab Walk**	Cross-body coordination	☐
3	**Jump Rope Rhythm**	Timing, both sides	☐
4	**Animal Moves Course**	Memory and strength	☐
5	**Stop-and-Go Run**	Braking impulses	☐
6	**Shadow Boxing on Command**	Listening, left/right	☐
7	**Balance Line**	Balance, posture	☐
8	**Number Jump Mat**	Movement and mental math	☐
9	**Mirror Workout**	Watching, copying	☐
10	**Cool-Down Breathing**	Calming down, focus	☐

The golden rule

Burning off energy without a cool-down leaves kids jittery. With a cool-down, it leaves them calm and focused. The last few minutes always belong to Exercise 10.

Key takeaway

When your child is “bouncing off the walls,” 10 to 15 minutes is enough – after a long time sitting, before homework or on rainy days.

CHAPTER 14 · THE BASICS

Understanding Stress

What parents should know about school stress



Before tests, during homework, under high expectations: many kids feel tense and overwhelmed. You have a big influence on how your child handles it.

Short-term stress

Is part of life and can even motivate, for example before a test.

Ongoing stress

Comes from overload, fears or conflicts and wears down the body and focus.

Signs of stress in your child

- Stomachaches or headaches with no clear cause
- Trouble sleeping or nightmares
- Sudden irritability, meltdowns or withdrawal
- Eating more or less than usual
- Forgetfulness, trouble concentrating
- Saying things like “I can't do it” or “I'm stupid”

Six things that help



Talk about it
Ask open questions instead of “What's wrong?”: “How was your day?” “What was hard today?”

Take the pressure off
Praise effort and progress, not just grades. A better grade than last time is a success, even if it isn't good yet.

Let them move
The WHO recommends that kids get at least 60 minutes of activity a day on average, spread out is fine. Running around counts.

Make time to unwind
Hobbies and free time belong in the day just as much as homework.

Protect sleep
A calm bedtime routine helps kids switch off. More on this in Chapter 15.

Be a role model
It's fine to say: “This is getting to be too much, I'm taking a short break.” Breaks are allowed.

For typical situations

SITUATION	WHAT YOU CAN DO
Before a test	**The evening before, a few minutes of Light-Beam Breathing (7.7, p. 45), then early to bed.**
After a hard day at school	**First 15 minutes of movement or cuddling, then homework.**
When homework gets stressful	**After 15 to 25 minutes of learning, depending on age, a 2 to 5 minute movement break.**

If things don't get better

If stomachaches, sleep problems or withdrawal go on for weeks, talk to your pediatrician and your child's teacher. That isn't failure. It's good care.

Key takeaway

Stress is normal. Ongoing stress does harm. You can do a lot: spot the signs, take the pressure off, make room for movement and build calm routines. Feelings are allowed. So are breaks.

CHAPTER 15 · THE BASICS

Water, Sleep & Breaks

Three simple building blocks for every day



The best exercises won't help much if your child is tired, thirsty or overloaded. These three basics are easy for you to help with.

4–6 cups
(1–1.5 liters) a day, depending on age, weather and activity

9–11 hrs
of sleep is what kids ages 6 to 12 need

15–25 min
of learning, depending on age, then a 2–5 minute break

Water: the easiest focus helper



- **Their own water bottle,** one your child likes.
- **Always in sight** on the desk.
- **A few sips before learning** – as a small ritual.
- **Water or unsweetened tea.** Soda and juice often have around 25 grams of sugar per cup.

Sleep is learning time



During sleep, the brain locks in what was learned during the day. Kids who keep getting too little sleep learn less well, no matter how much they practice.

The bedtime routine

1. Screens off an hour before bed
2. Dim the lights
3. A few minutes of Light-Beam Breathing (7.7, p. 45)

Breaks aren't a luxury

Rule of thumb: after 15 to 25 minutes of learning, depending on age (page 12), take a 2 to 5 minute break. Move around during the break or do something completely different. A midline exercise from Chapter 4 is a perfect fit.



Key takeaway

Water: about 4 to 6 cups (1 to 1.5 liters) a day, with the bottle always in sight. Sleep: 9 to 11 hours, with a calm bedtime routine. Breaks: move a little every 15 to 25 minutes.

TO WRAP UP

What's Next?

You have the toolbox. Here's how to stick with it.



You took time you don't really have so that learning gets easier for your child.

Pick one exercise that fits your situation and try it tomorrow. That's all you need to start.

Our Fridge List

Start with one exercise. Over time, build up to three: one to wake up, one to calm down, one cross-body. Write them down here.

To wake up _____ p. _____

To calm down _____ p. _____

Cross-body _____ p. _____

TO WRAP UP · THE THREE STUMBLING BLOCKS

What happens in the next few weeks

The exercises work. What tends to get in the way are three stumbling blocks that many families know:

“I don't know which one to pick.”

It's Tuesday, 3:30, your child is whining, and you have thirty seconds to decide.

What helps: the fridge list. Three exercises, no more.

“After two weeks, it fizzled out.”

Curiosity carries the first week. By the second, it's gone, but the habit isn't there yet. A new habit takes closer to two months than three weeks.

What helps: On bad days, lower the bar instead of skipping. One minute counts, too.

“I still have to sit next to them every day.”

The exercises work, but only while you're there. The goal is for your child to do them alone at some point.

What helps: step back in stages, a few days per stage. If a stage doesn't hold, go back one, no blame.

You step back little by little:



TO WRAP UP

What you have now

- ✔ **Exercises for every mood:** to wake up, to calm down and for coordination (Chapters 4 to 7).
- ✔ **Two-hand worksheets** for a calm transition to learning (Chapter 8 and Appendix).
- ✔ **A 7-Day Challenge** to build a routine together (Chapter 9).
- ✔ **Exercises with props, and games** for afternoons together and for on the go (Chapters 10 to 12).
- ✔ **Power Moves** for when your child needs to let off steam first (Chapter 13).
- ✔ **The selection table** that tells you which exercise fits right now (page 11).

One last word

Twenty years from now, your child won't remember their elementary school math grade. But they will remember how it felt to sit at the table with you. Whether there was pressure – or someone who stayed calm and said: “Come on, we can do this together.”

There are no perfect parents. Only parents who keep trying, with love. And that's what you're doing.

Fit in mind, strong in life.

APPENDIX

The 45 Worksheets

To print out – Chapter 8 explains how to use them



On the following pages you'll find all the worksheets. Print them out. Slip them into a clear sheet protector and use dry-erase markers, and you can use them again and again.

35 tracing sheets

Pages 113 to 147
Both hands do the same thing. Start here.

10 double-focus sheets

Pages 148 to 157
The hands do different things. The goal for later on.

The short version

- ✔ **One worksheet before homework,** up to three for extra practice, 2 to 5 minutes each.
- ✔ **Always both hands at the same time.**
- ✔ **Level by level:** first ball, then pen, then finger (Chapter 8, p. 50).
- ✔ **Slow before fast.** A wobbly line is not a mistake.

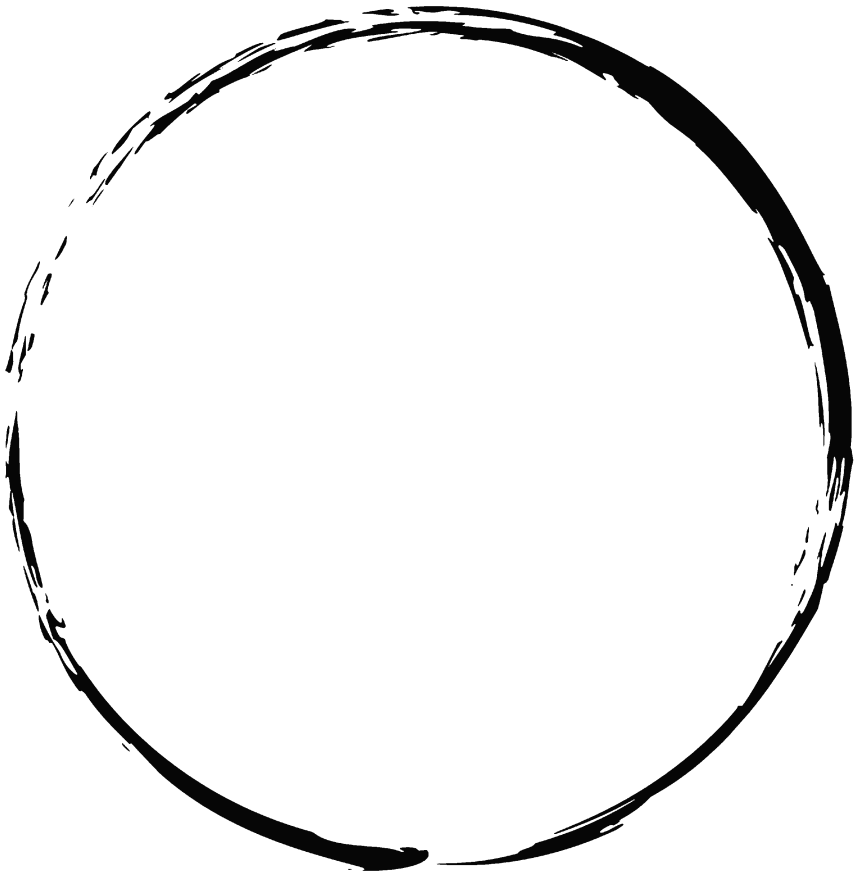
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V01 - Line & Circle

BALL

One hand traces the line back and forth while the other traces the circle.





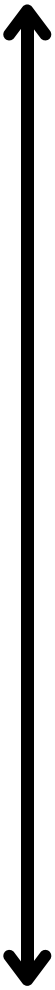


V02 - Across and Up

BALL

One hand traces the horizontal line back and forth while the other traces the vertical line up and down.



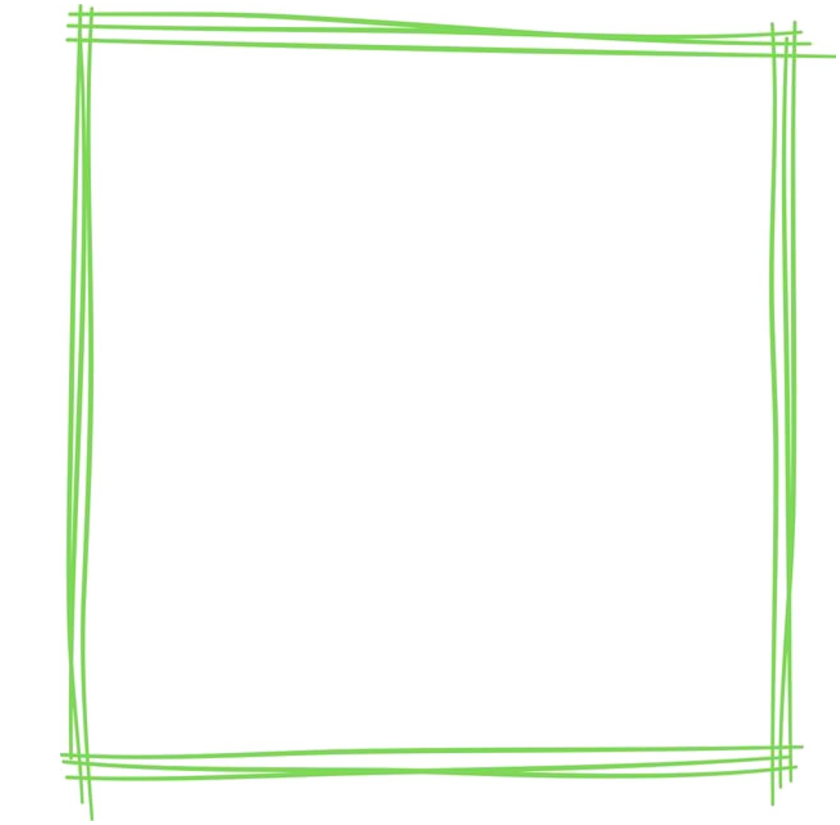




V03 - Bar & Frame

BALL

One hand traces the bar while the other goes around the outside of the square.



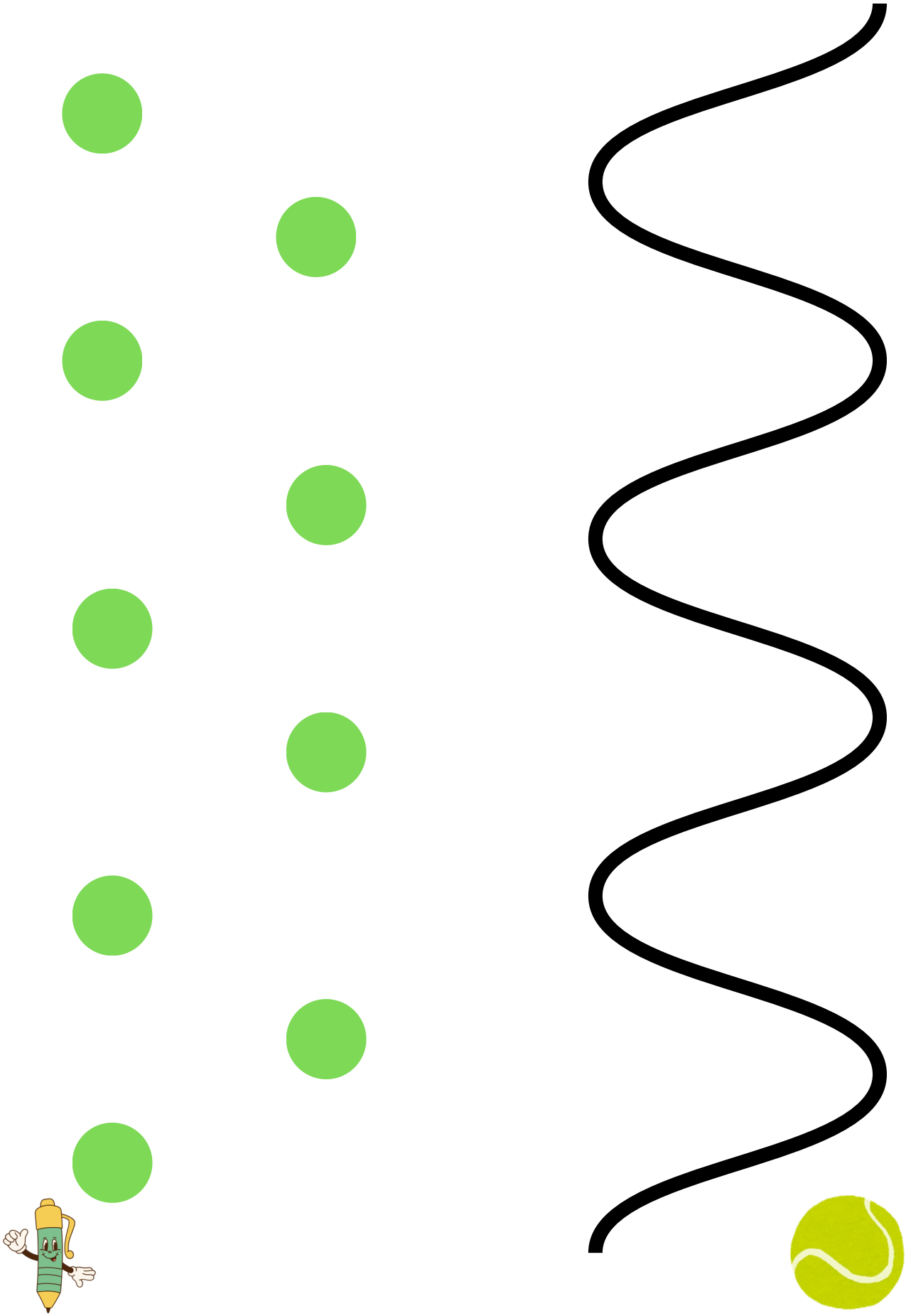


V04 · Footprint Trail BALL

Each hand follows one trail – both at once, from top to bottom.

V05 - Wave Past the Dots BALL

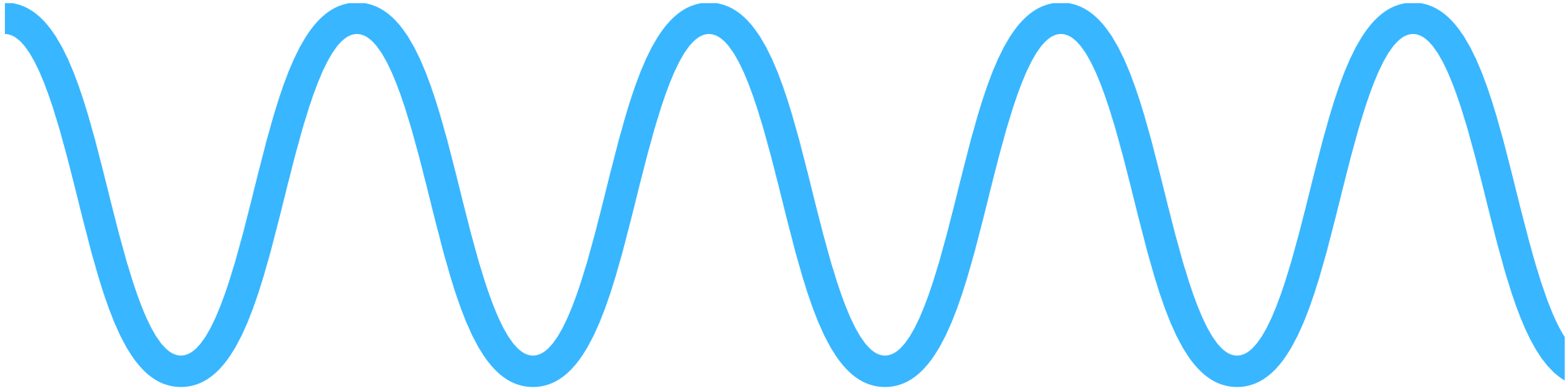
One hand draws a wave past the dots while the other traces the finished wave.

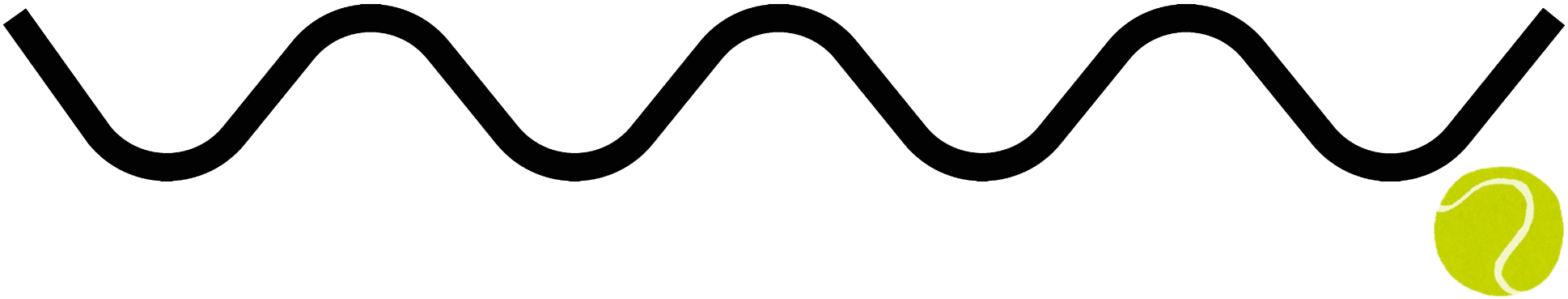


Draw a wavy line past the dots

V06 · Double Waves BALL

Each hand traces one wave – both at once, from top to bottom.

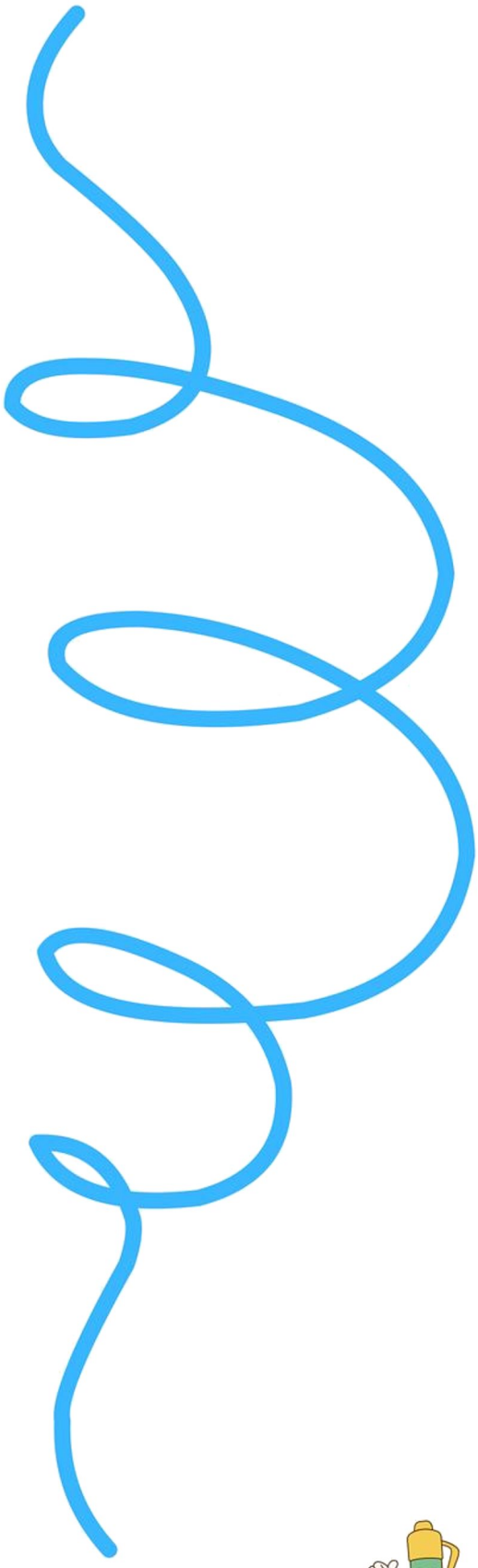




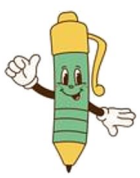
V07 - Arrow & Loops BALL

One hand traces the arrow up and down while the other traces the loops.





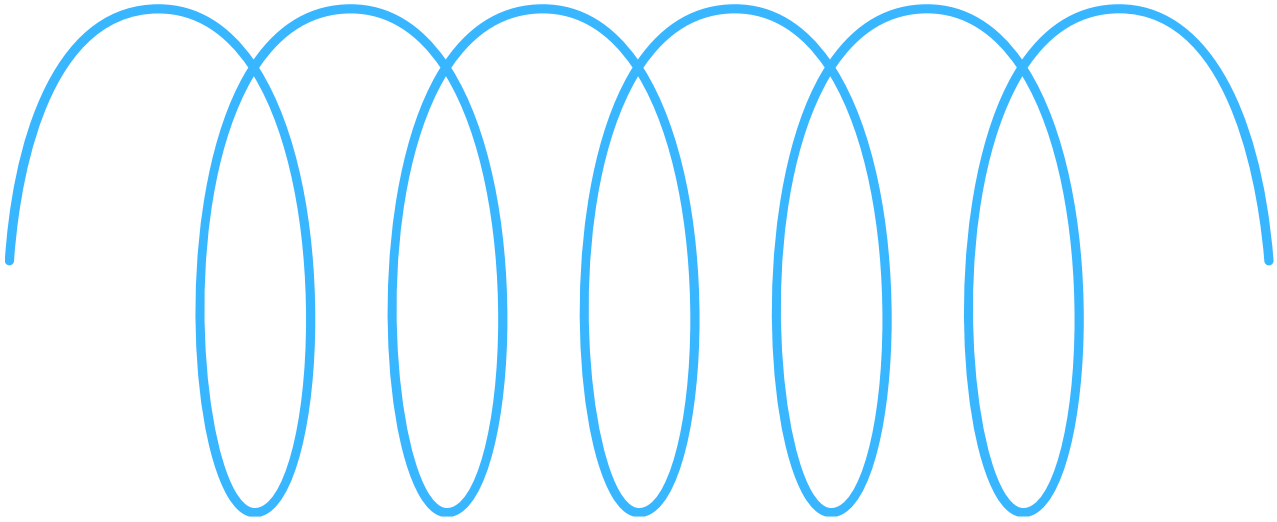


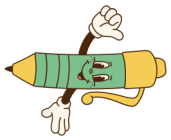


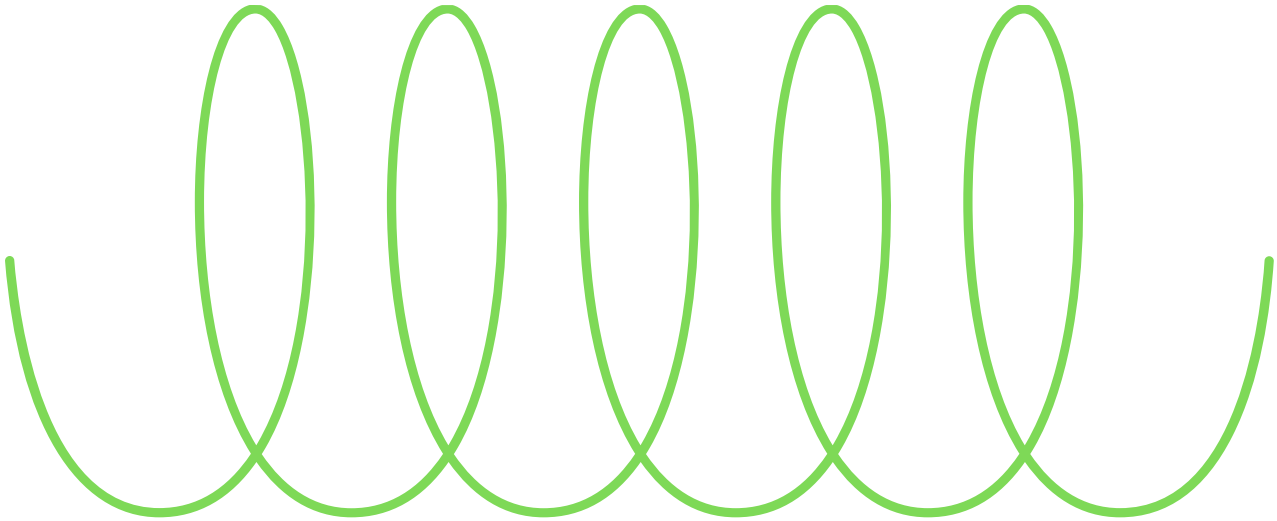
V08 - Rows of Loops

PEN

One hand on the top row, the other on the bottom row – both at once, from left to right.



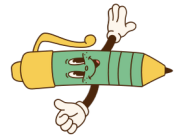




V09 · Mirror Patterns PEN

Use both hands at once to draw any pattern – mirror images, left and right of the dots.

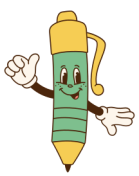




Draw different patterns from dot to dot

V10 - Colored Dot Rows PEN

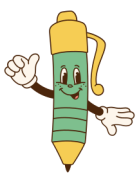
Use both hands at once to draw a symmetrical pattern from dot to dot.



V11 - Tiny Dots

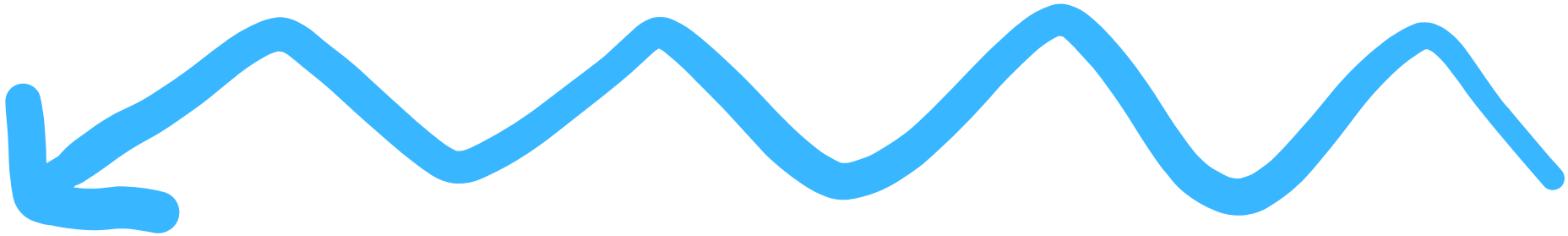
PEN

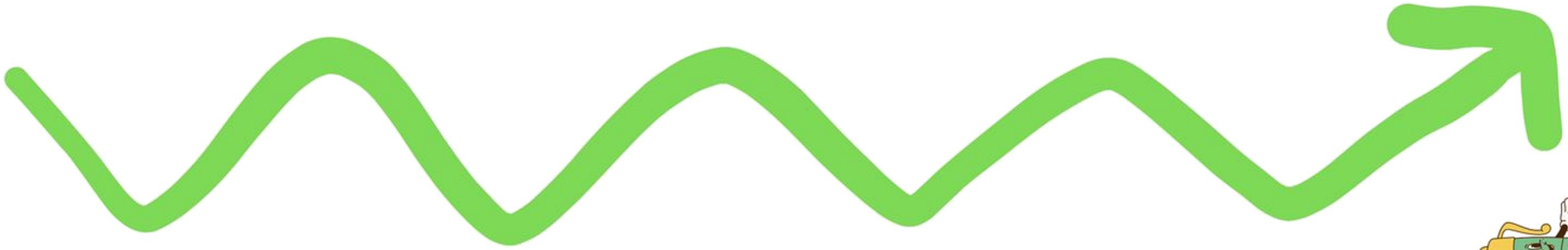
Symmetrical patterns with both hands again – this time very precisely.



V12 · Zigzag Up PEN

Each hand follows one zigzag path – both at once, in the direction of the arrows.



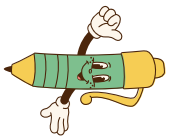




V13 - Horizontal Lines

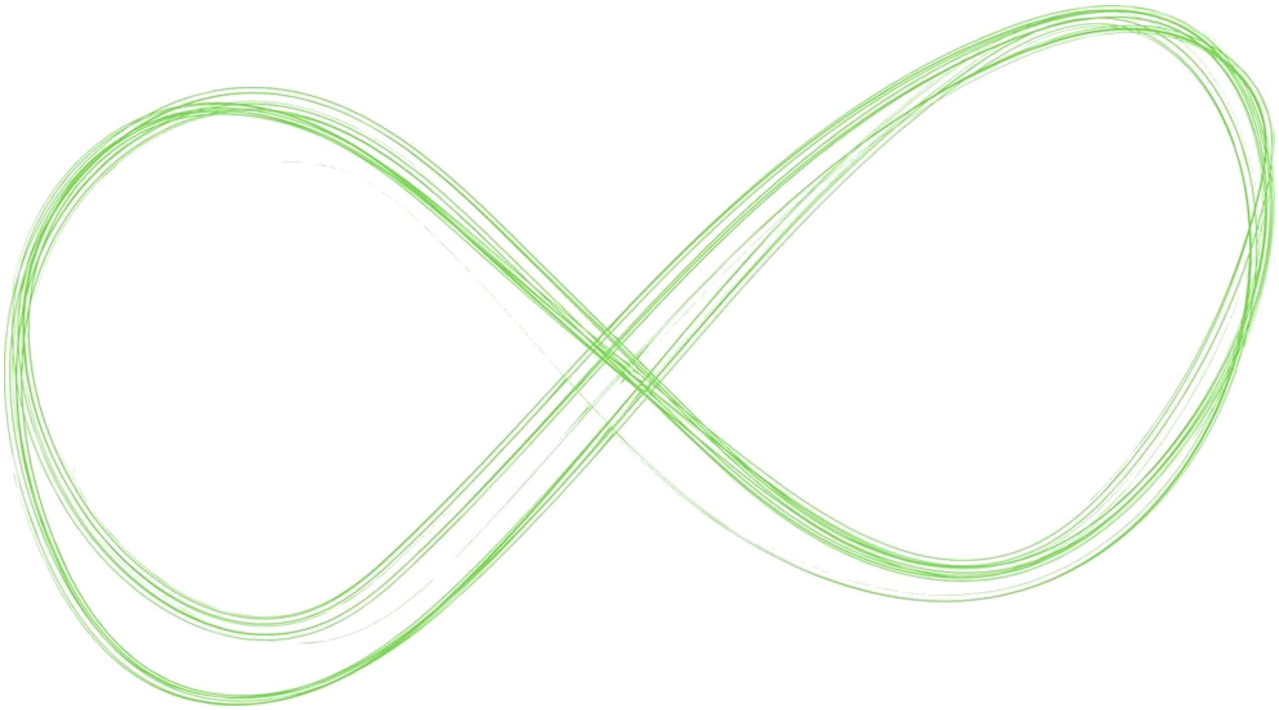
BALL

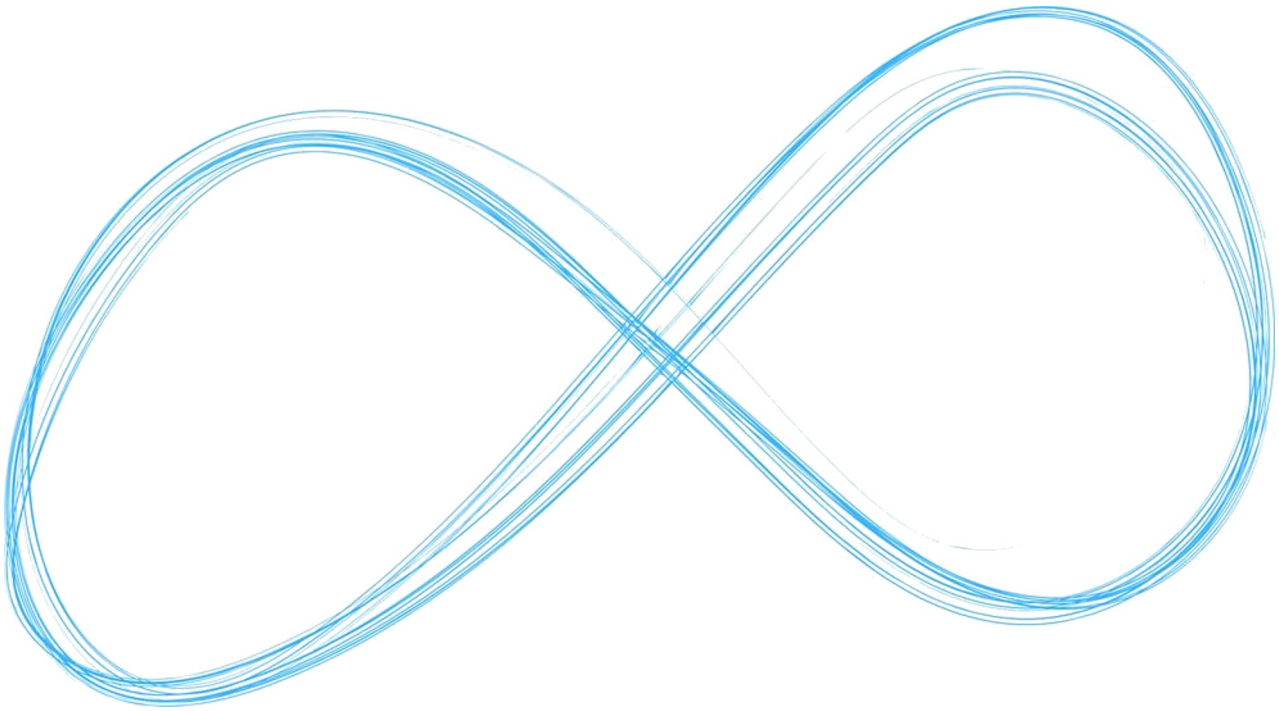
One hand traces the lines back and forth while the other traces the shapes next to them.



V14 - The Lazy Eight PEN

One hand on the top eight, the other on the bottom eight - at the same time, always in the same direction.



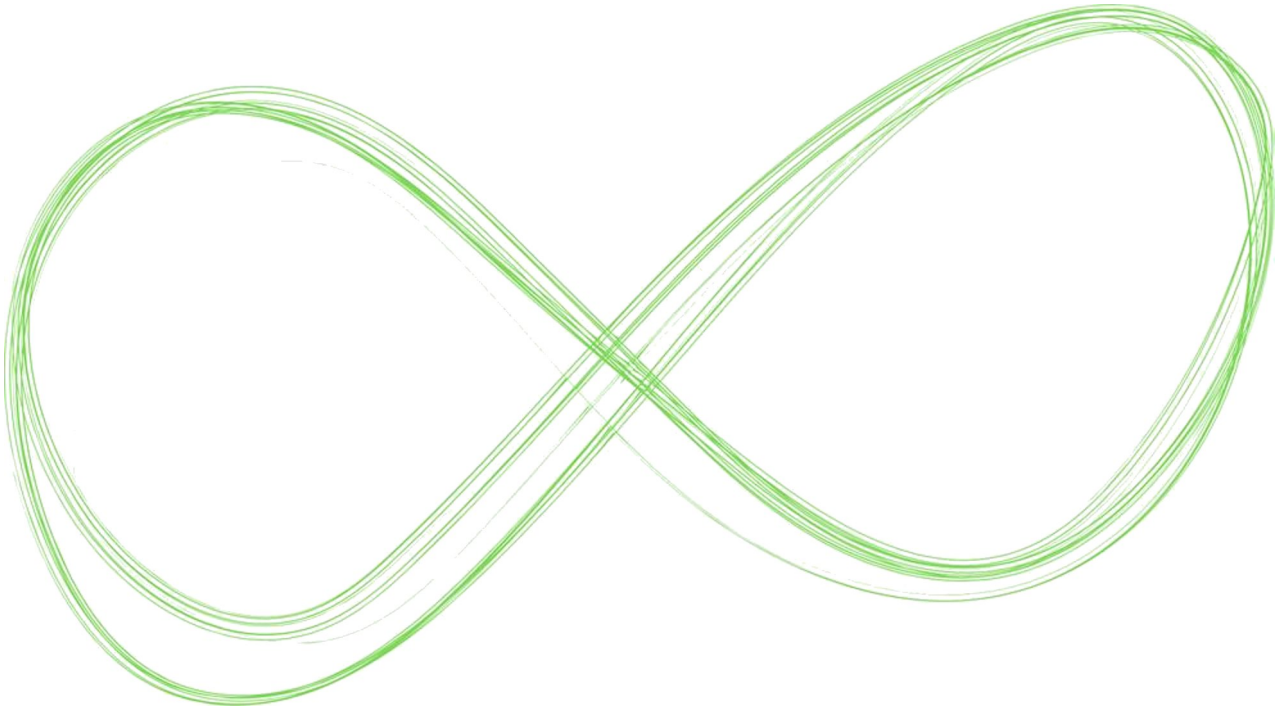


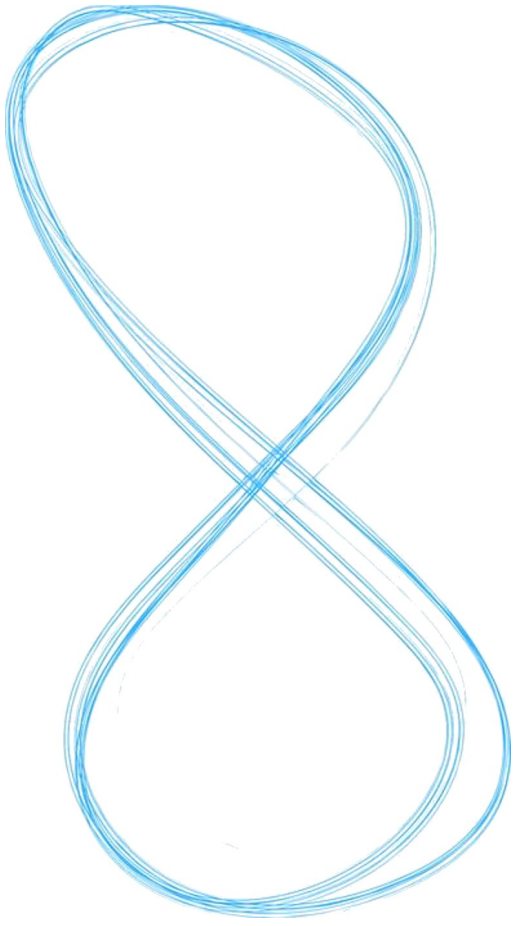


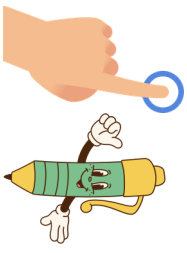
V15 - Big and Small Eight

PEN

One hand traces the big eight while the other traces the small one.

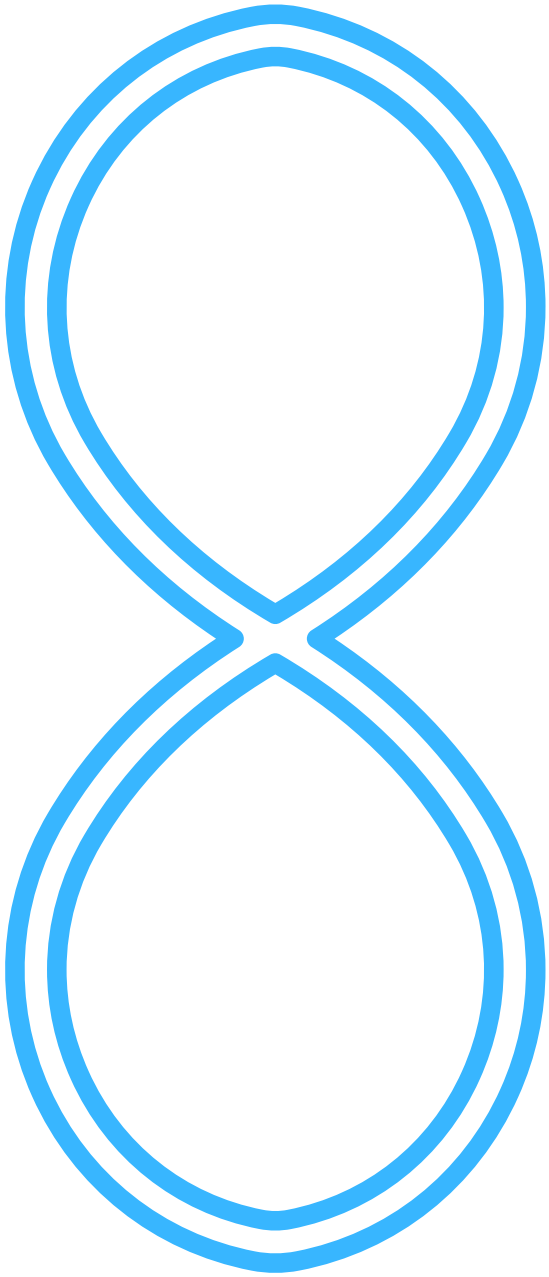


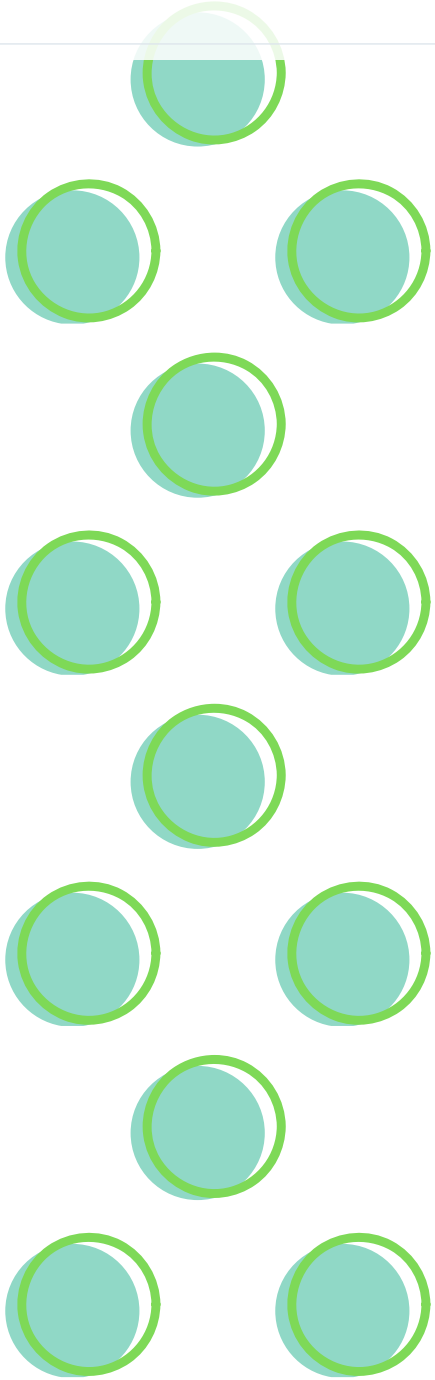




V16 · Eight & Circles FINGER

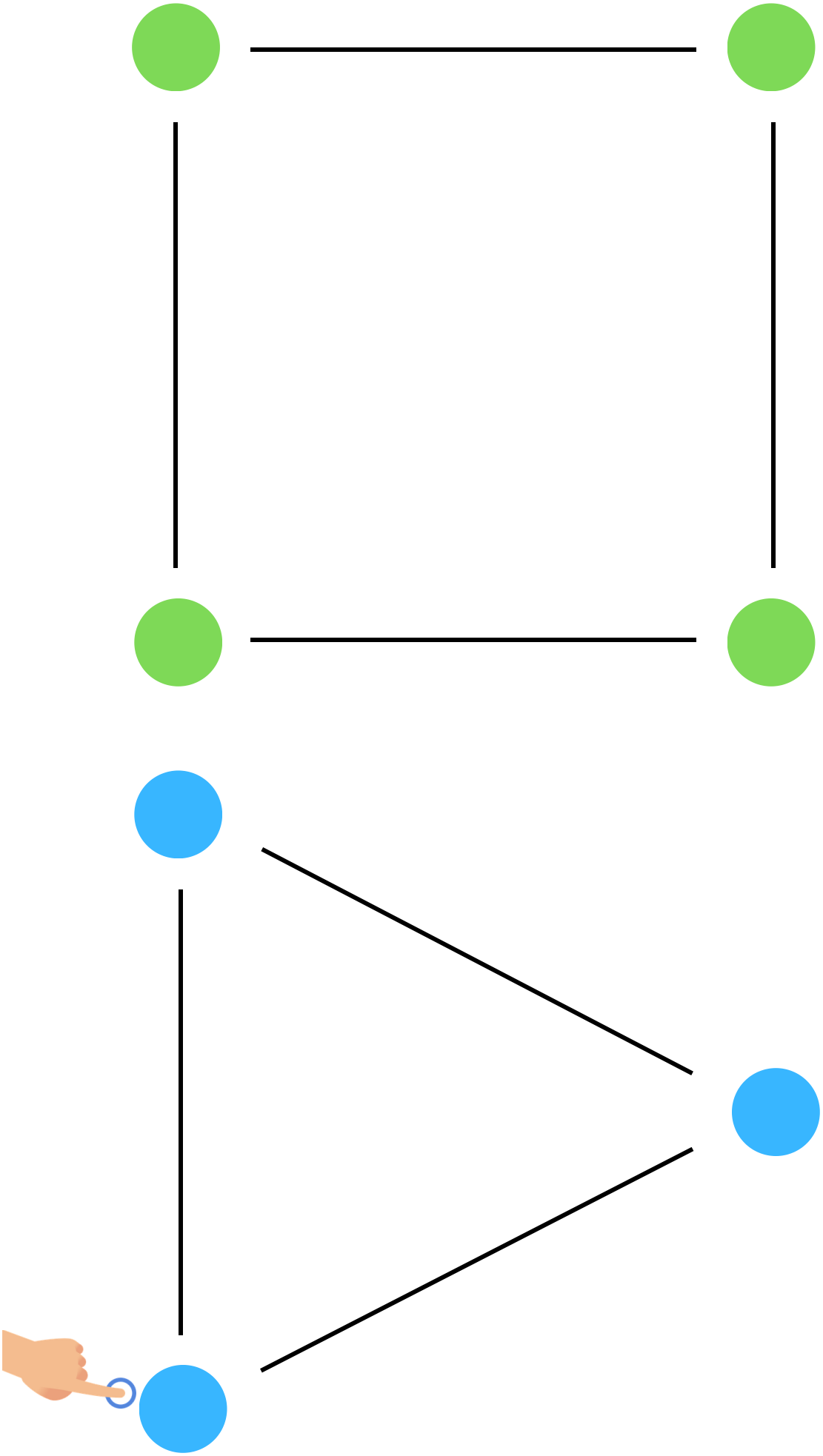
One hand taps along the eight while the other taps the circles in order.





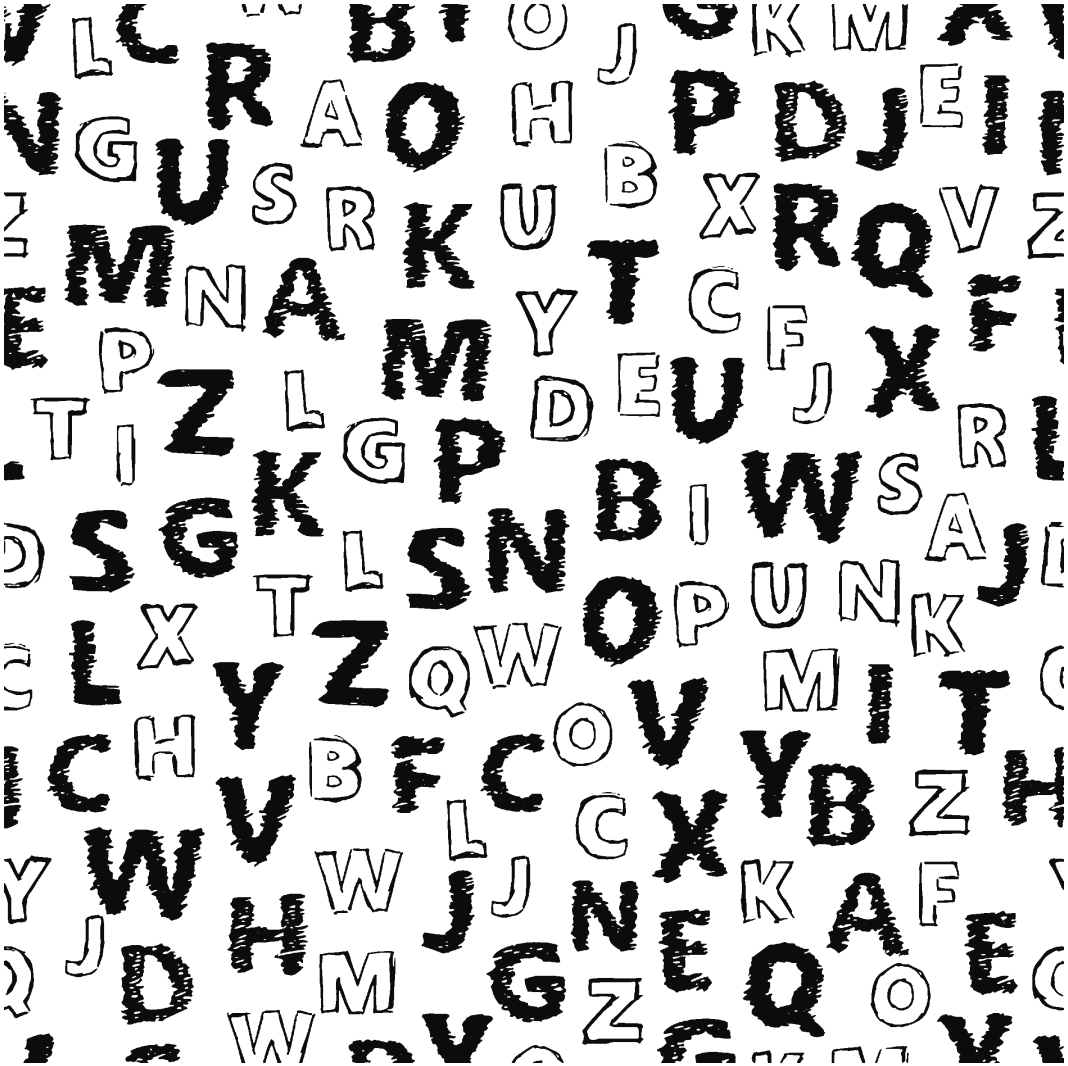
V17 - Dots in Square and Triangle FINGER

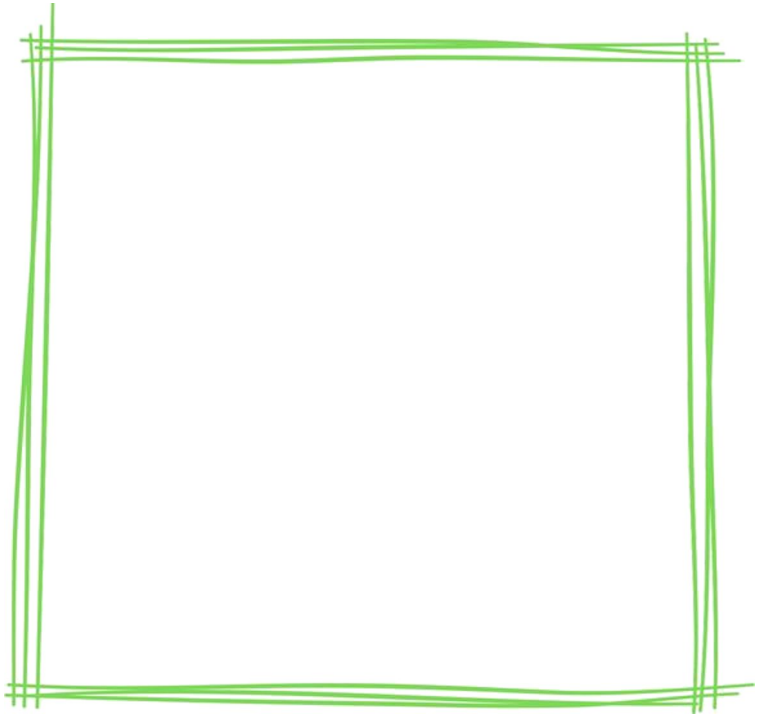
One hand taps the dots in the square while the other taps the ones in the triangle.



V18 · ABC Hunt FINGER

One hand finds the letters from A to Z while the other traces the frame next to them.







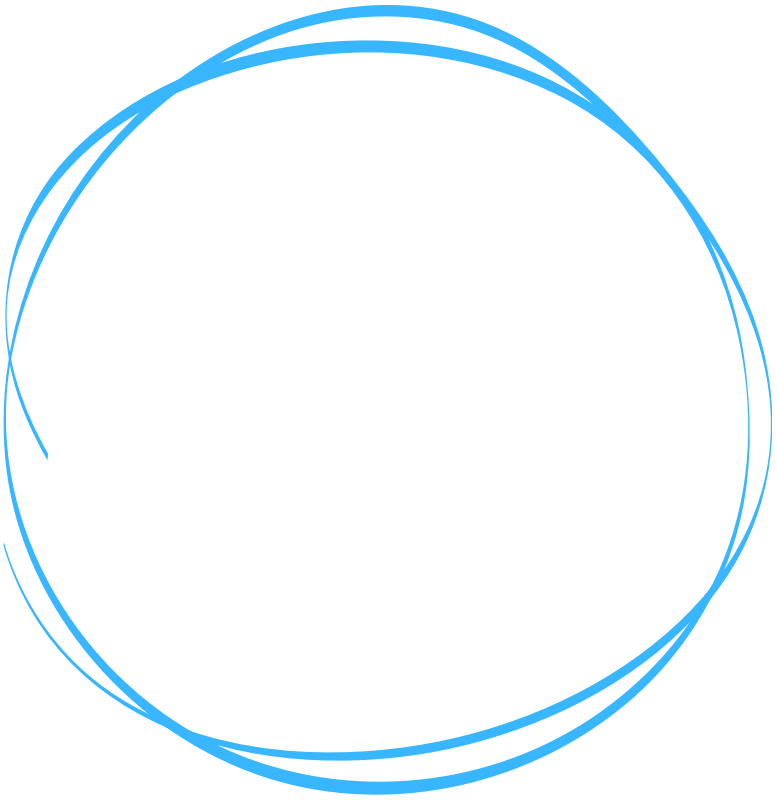
Tap the ABCs

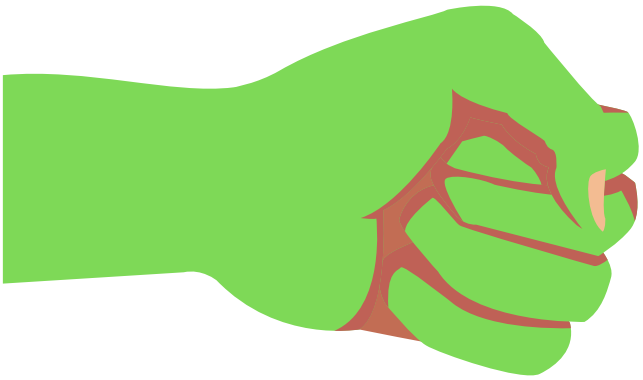
V19 - Circle & Hands

FINGER

One hand traces the circle while the other switches between a fist and an open hand.









1 2 3 4 5

3 1 5 4 2

4 2 3 1 5

2 5 3 4 1

3 2 1 4 5





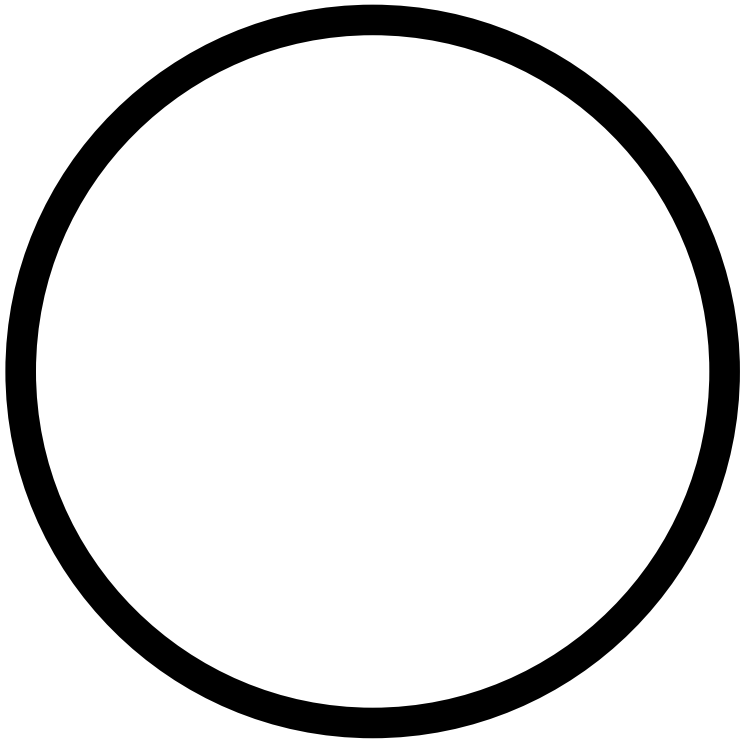
Left hand taps the number / Right hand shows the number

V21 - Circle & Patterns

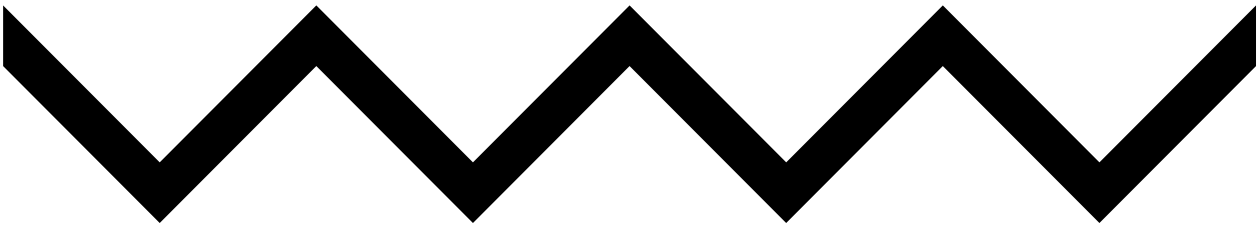
BALL

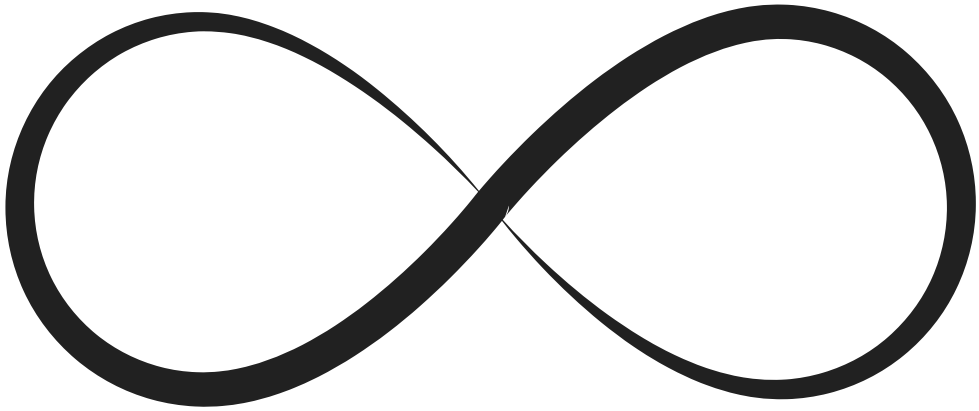
The left hand keeps going around the circle while the right hand traces the patterns below.





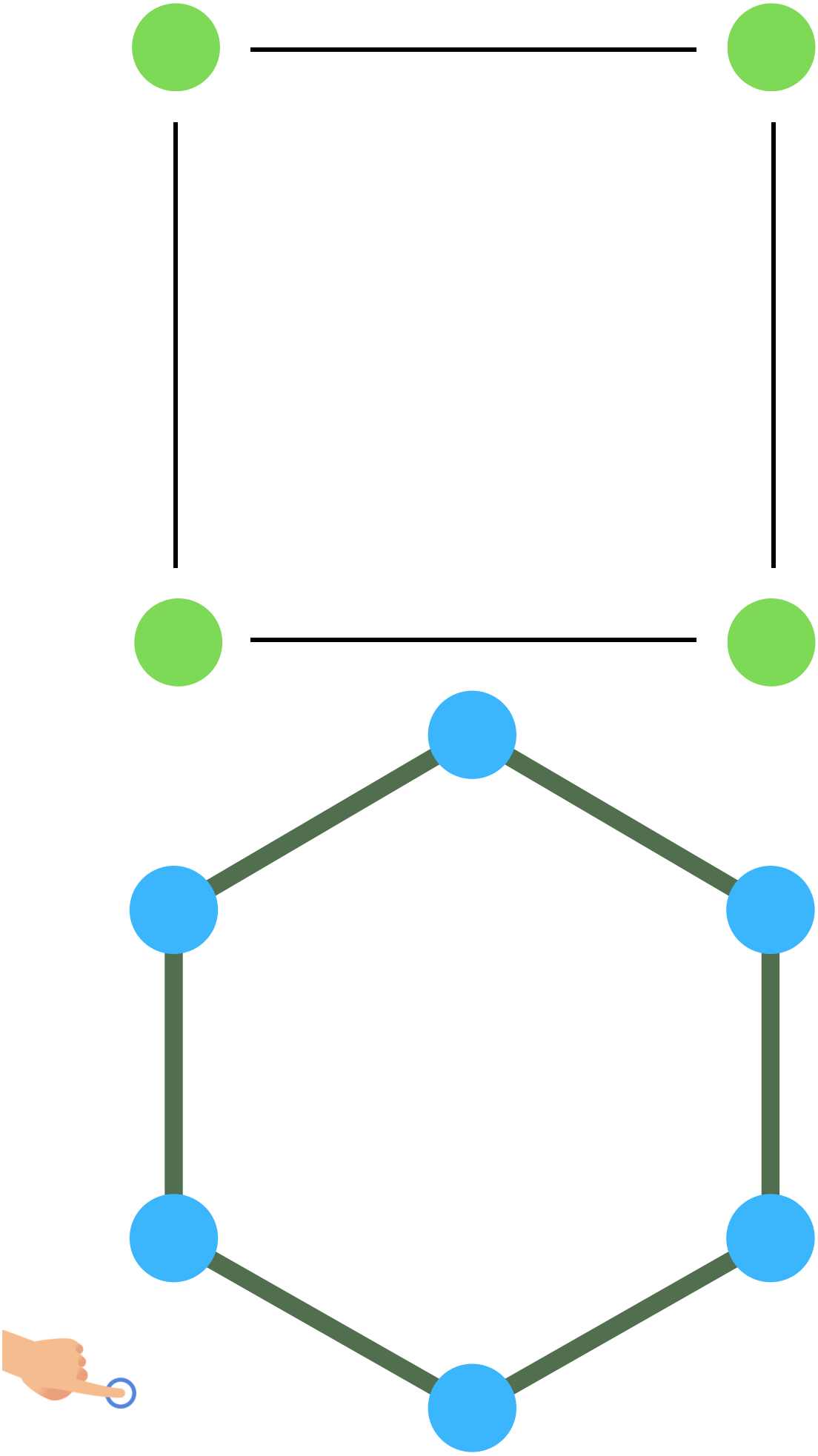






V22 · Dots in the Hexagon FINGER

One hand taps the corners of the square while the other taps those of the hexagon.

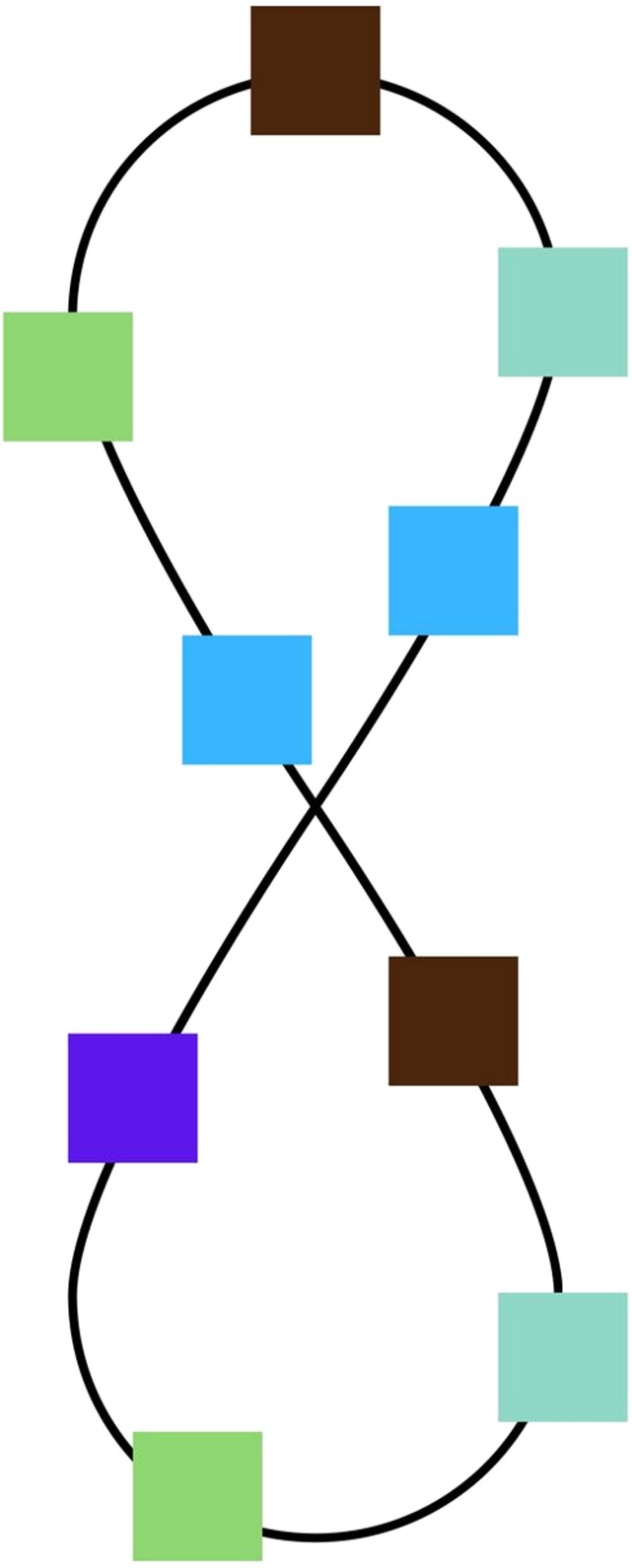


V23 - Find the Same Color

FINGER

Both hands look for the same color and tap it at the same time.

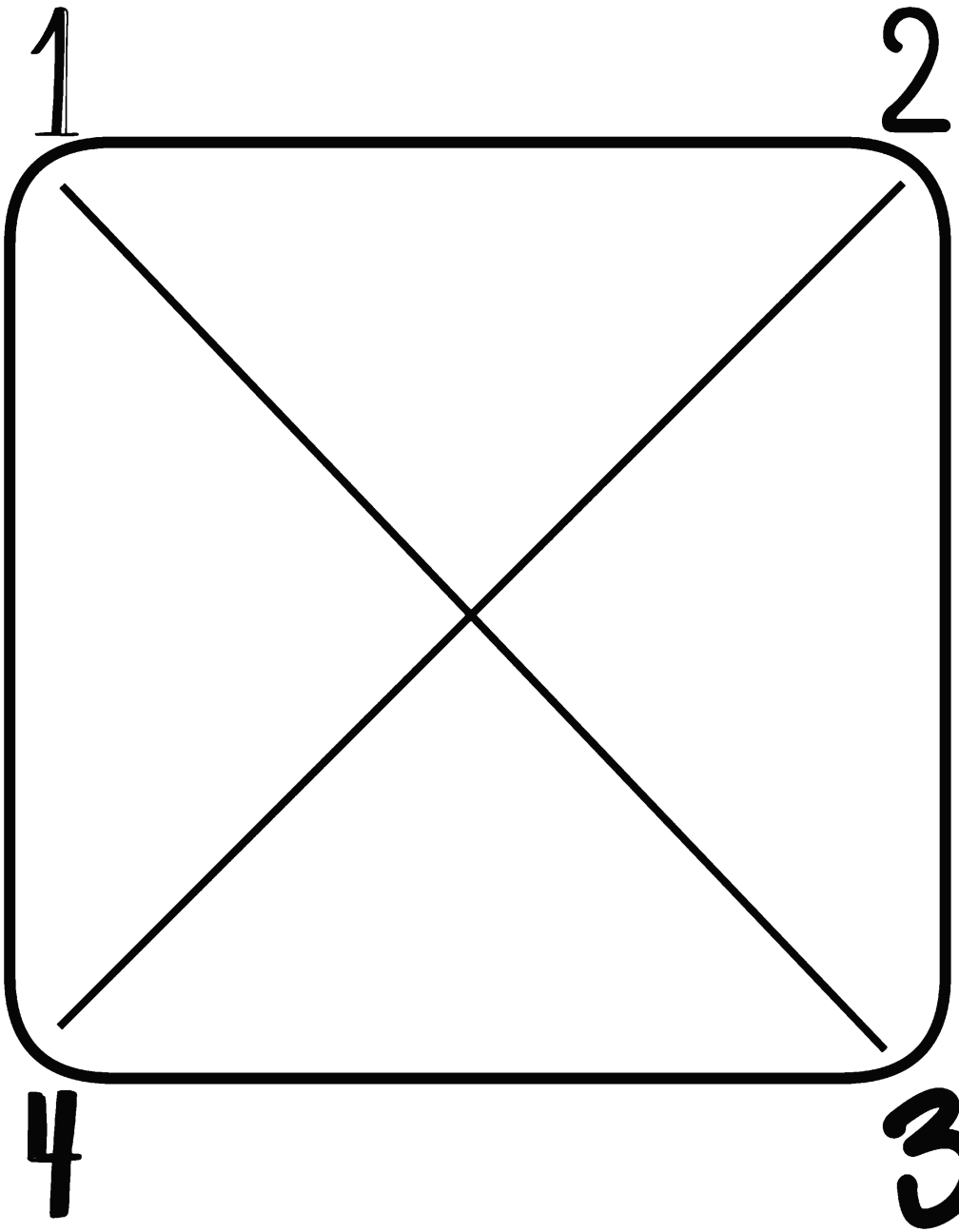


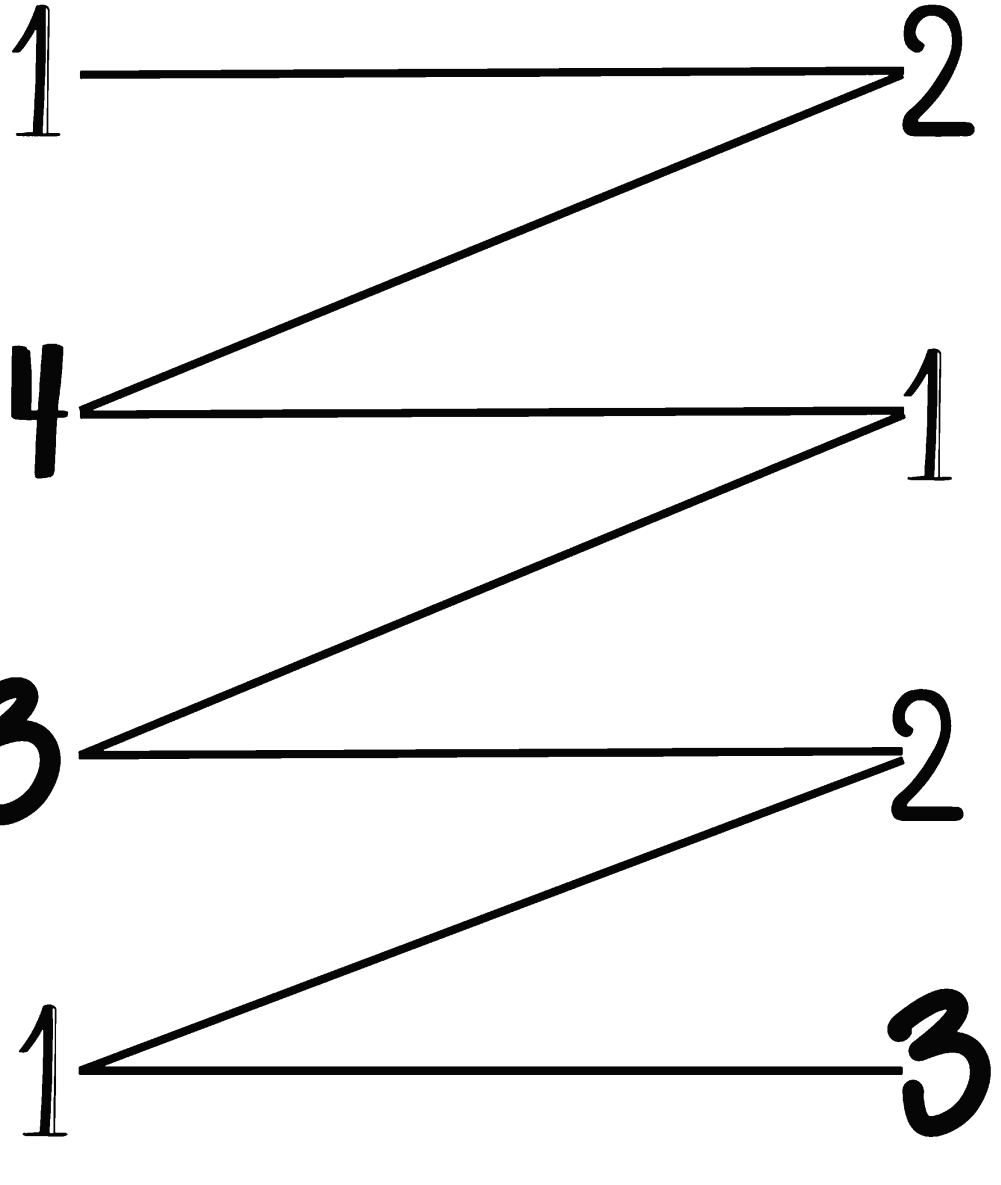




V24 · From 1 to 4 PEN

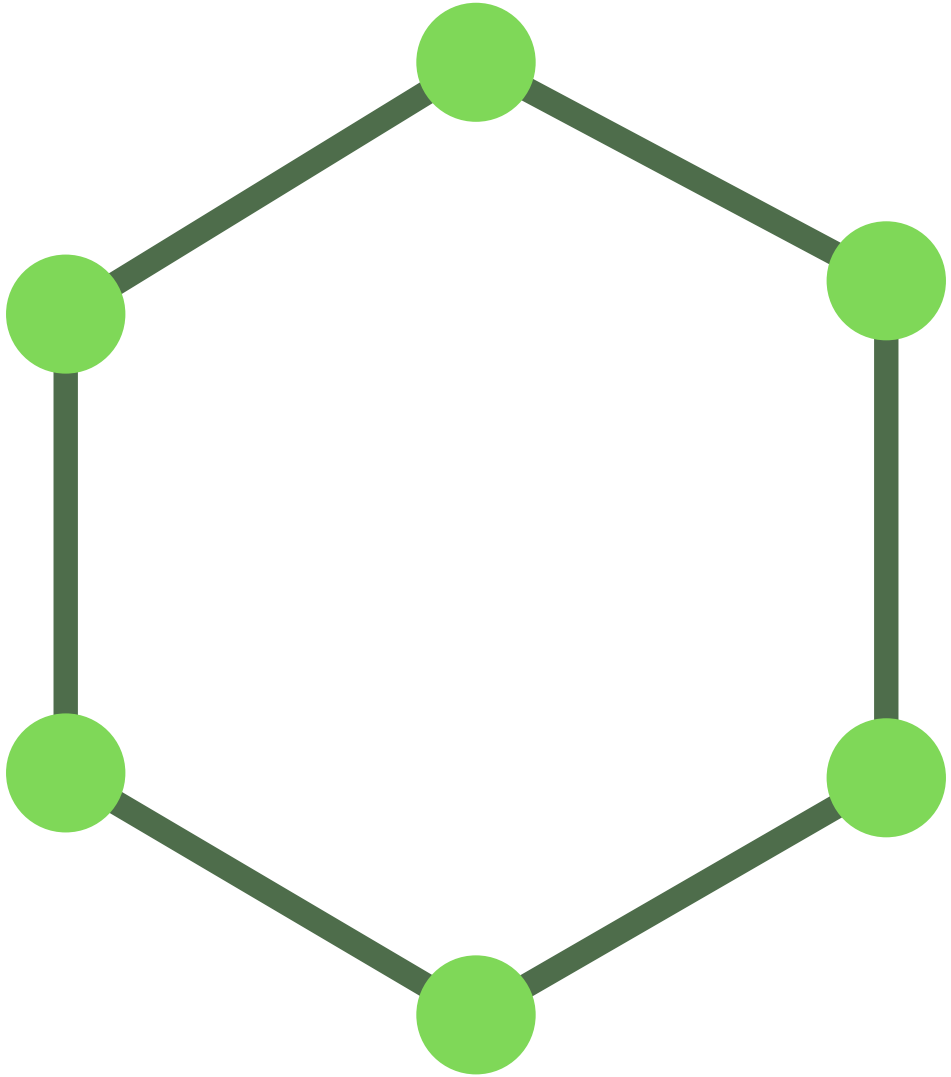
Left hand on the square, right hand on the zigzag: go from 1 to 2 to 3 to 4 at the same time.

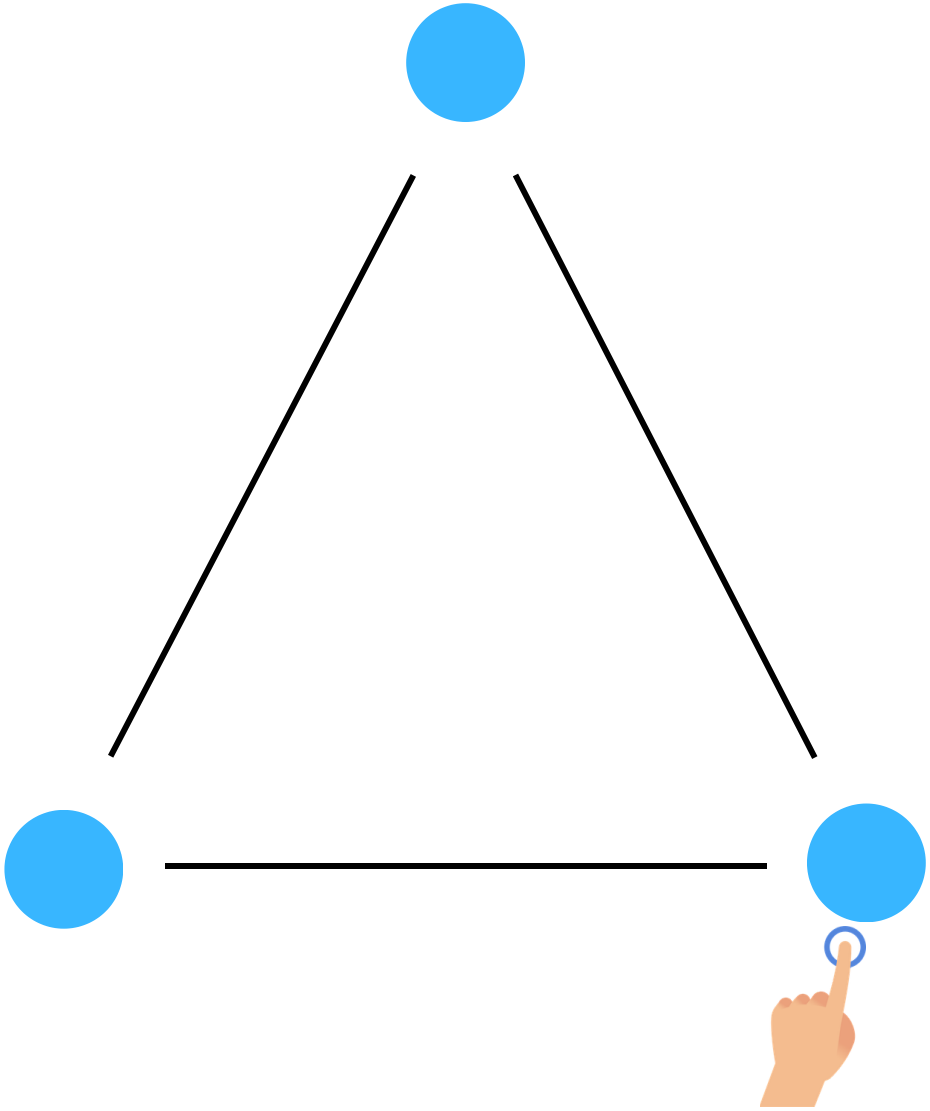




V25 · Hexagon & Triangle FINGER

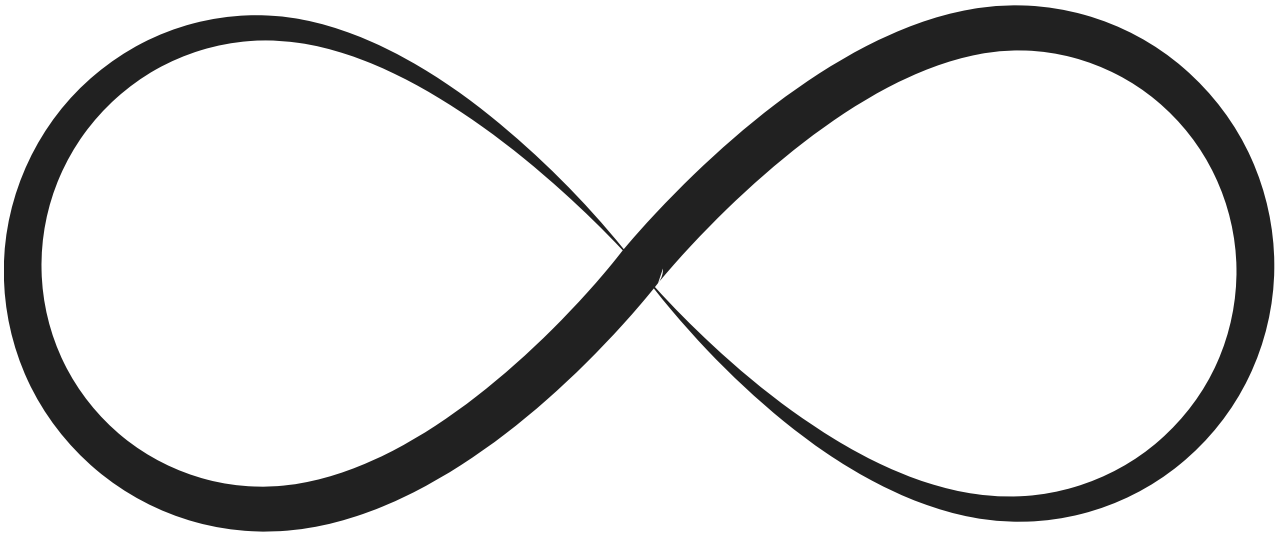
One hand taps the dots of the hexagon while the other taps those of the triangle.

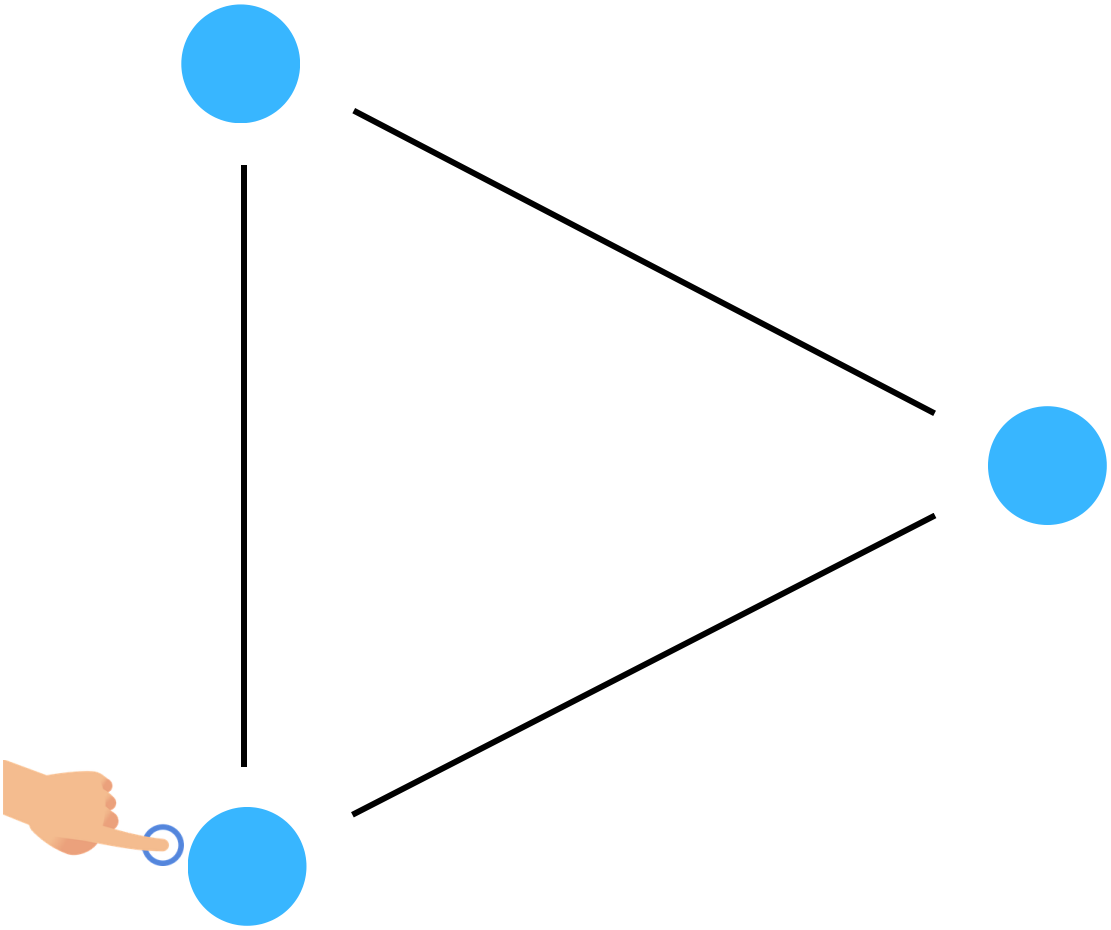




V26 · Eight & Triangle FINGER

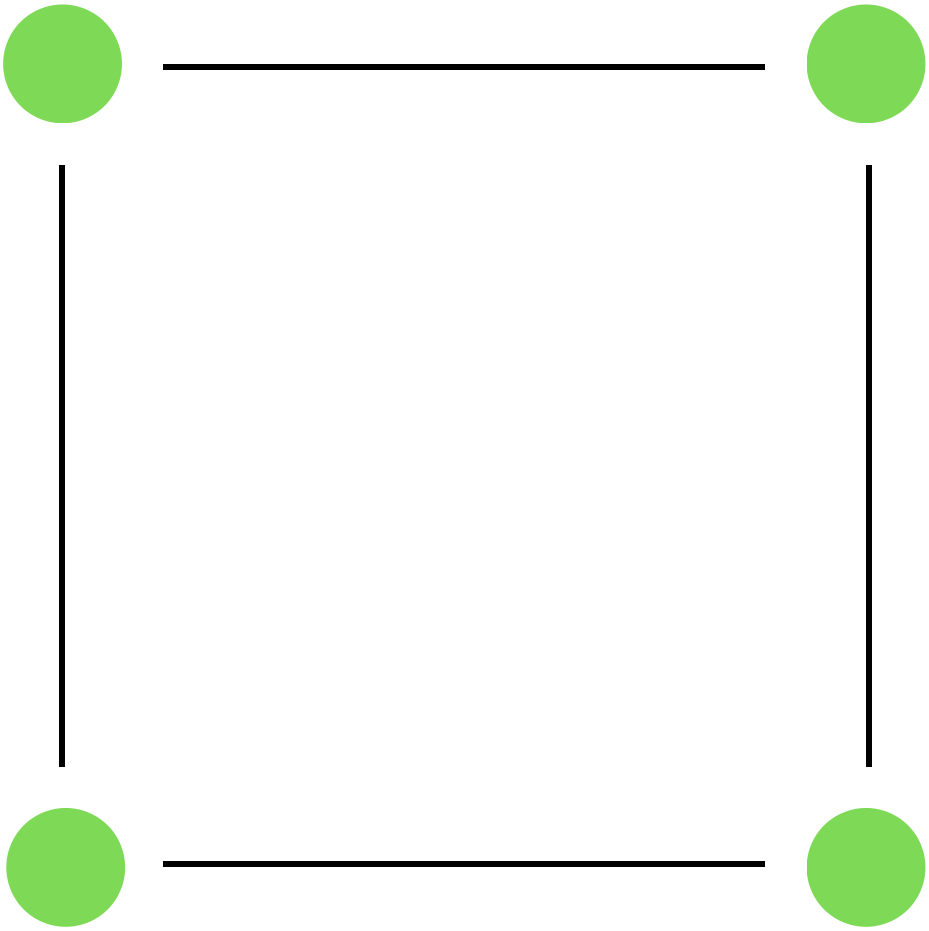
One hand taps along the eight while the other taps the triangle.

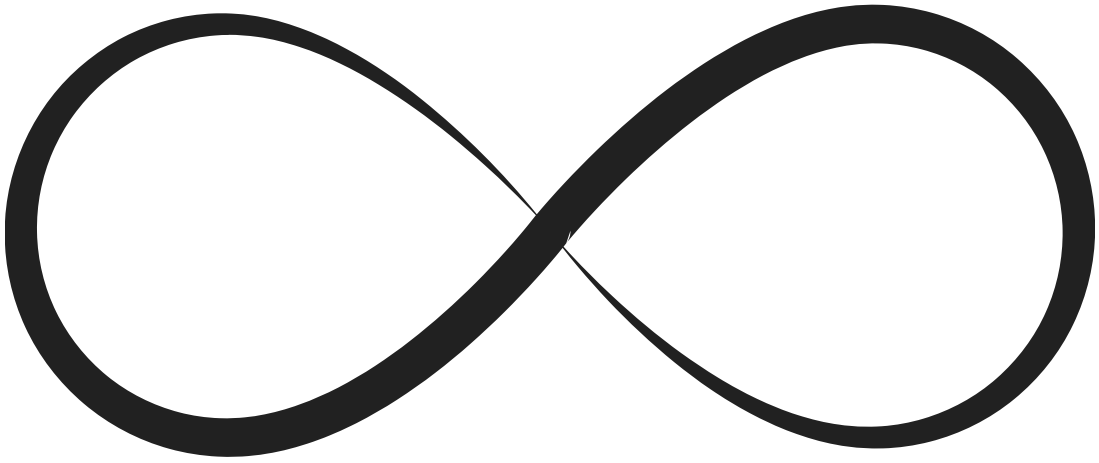




V27 · Square & Eight FINGER

One hand follows the dots in the square while the other follows the eight.

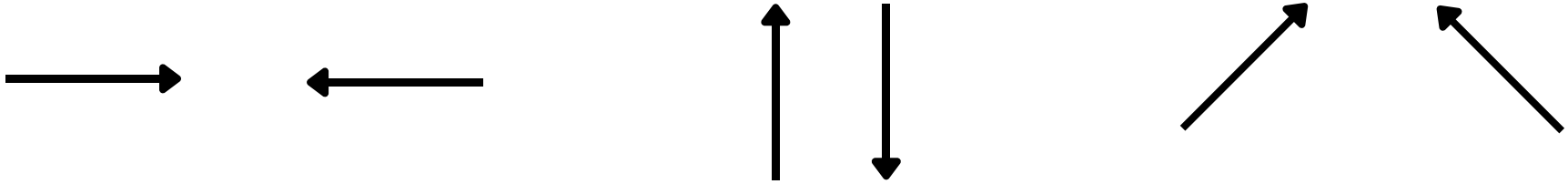


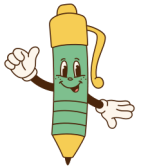




V28 · Four Directions PEN

Trace each arrow with both hands at once – again and again, one below the other, until you run out of room.

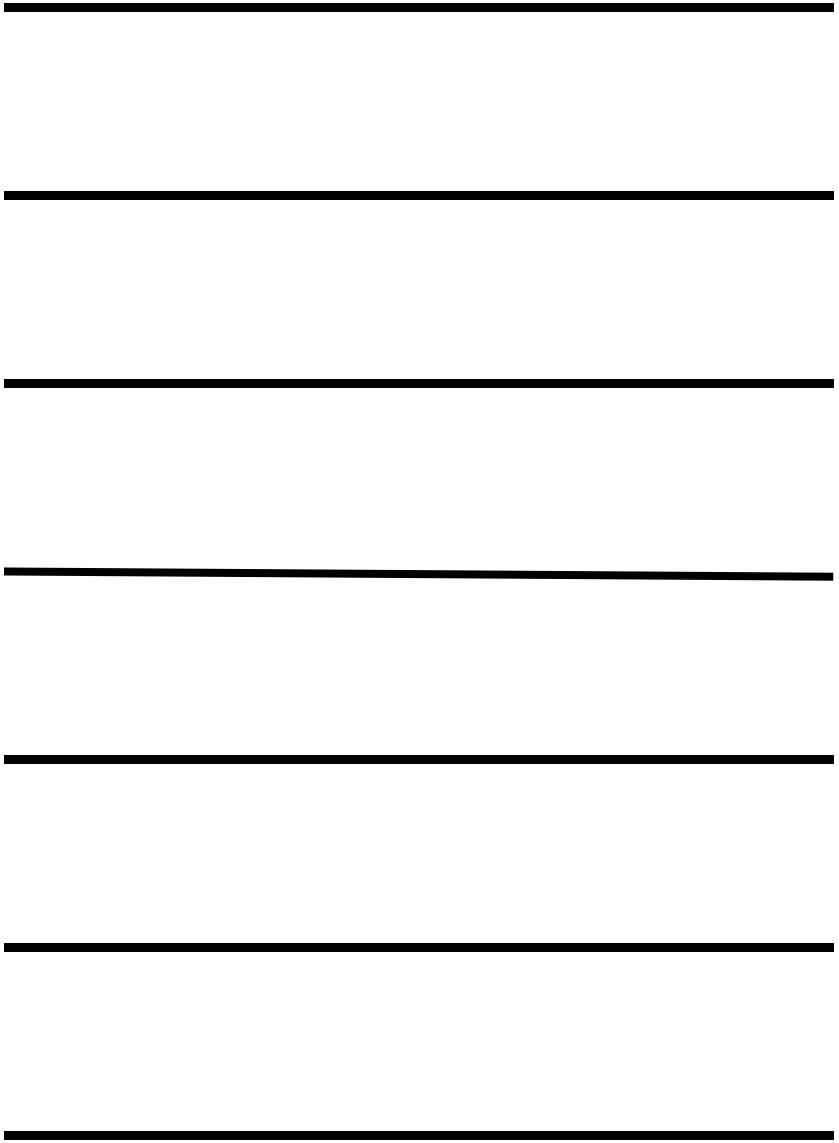




V29 · Wave Through the Gaps PEN

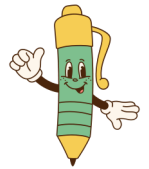
One hand traces the arrow back and forth while the other draws a wave between the lines.







Draw a wavy line through the gaps

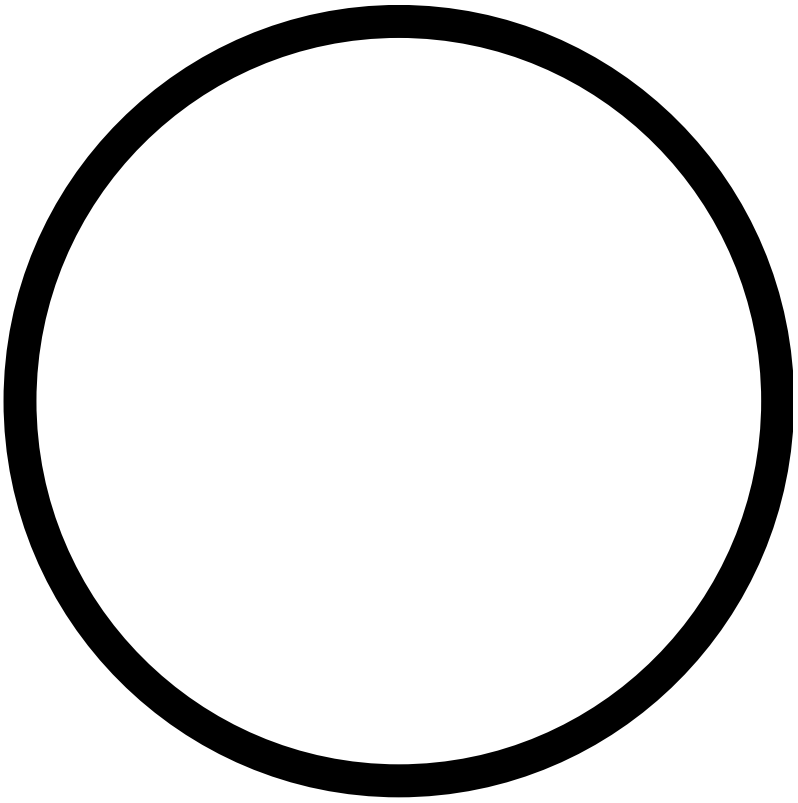


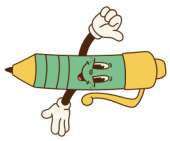


V30 - Circle & Writing Lines

PEN

One hand traces the circle while the other traces the lines below from left to right.

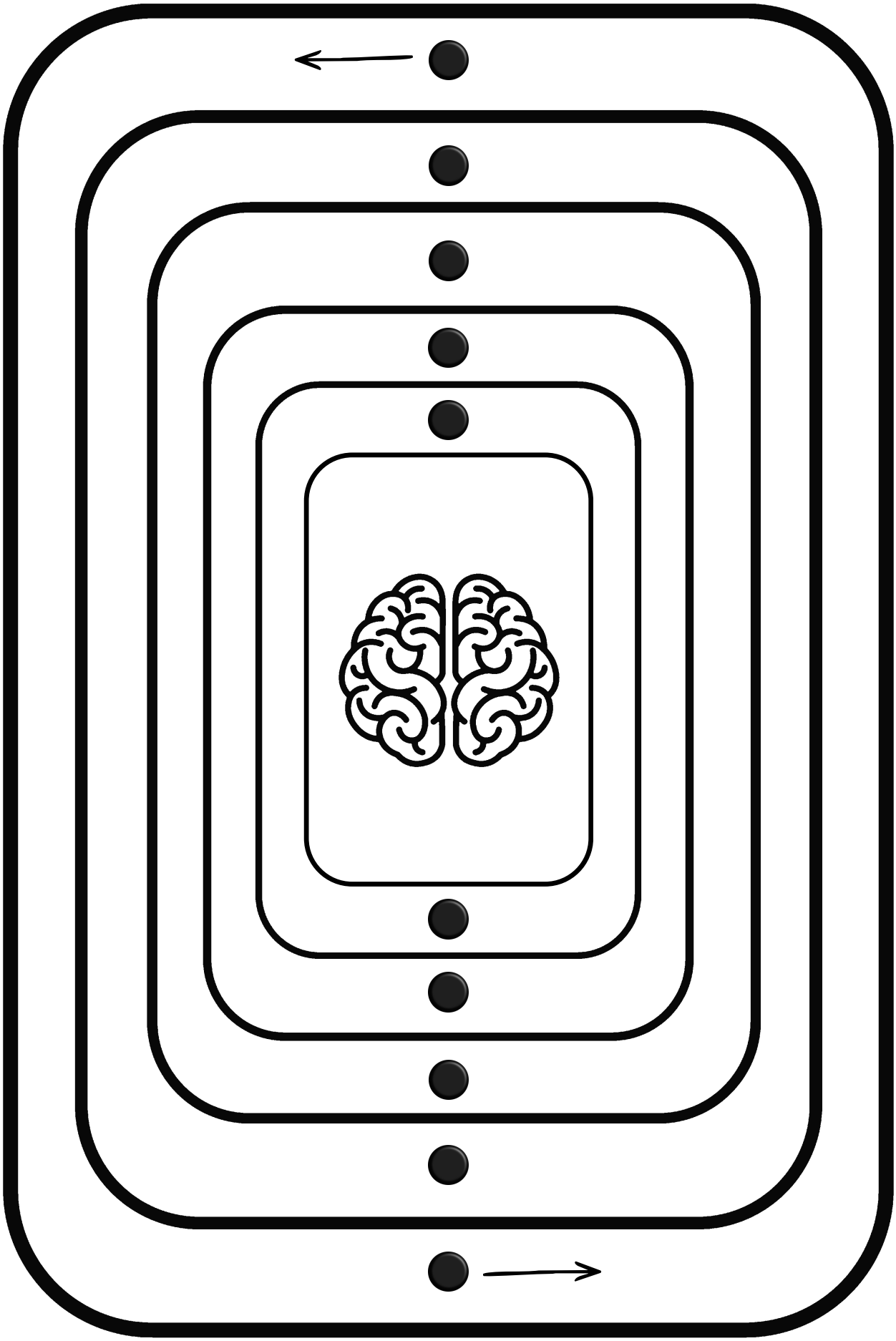


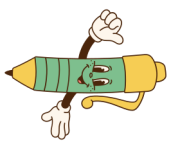


V31 - The Way In

PEN

Both hands follow the path at the same time from the outside in - and back out again.

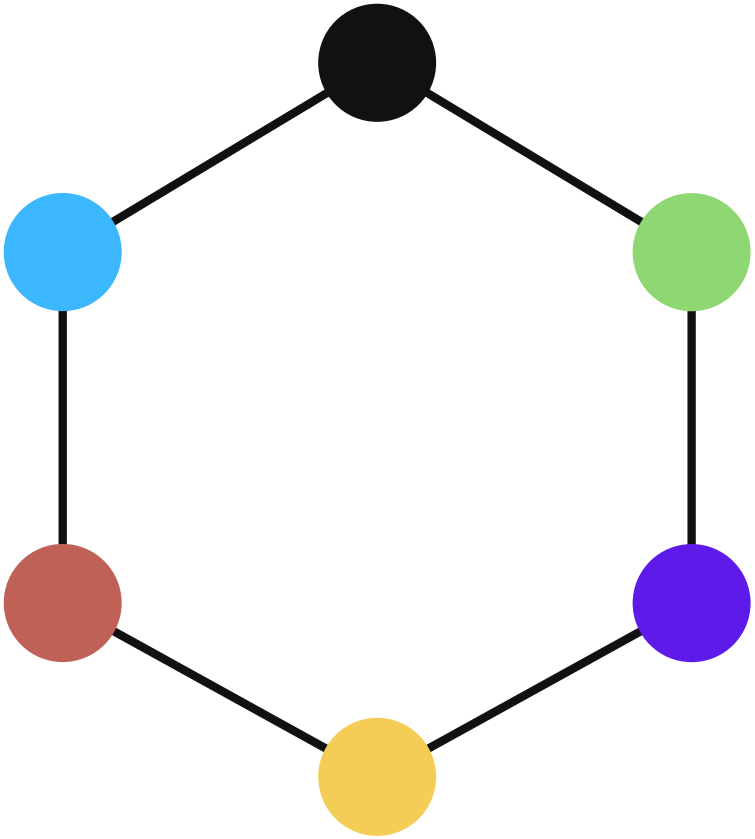


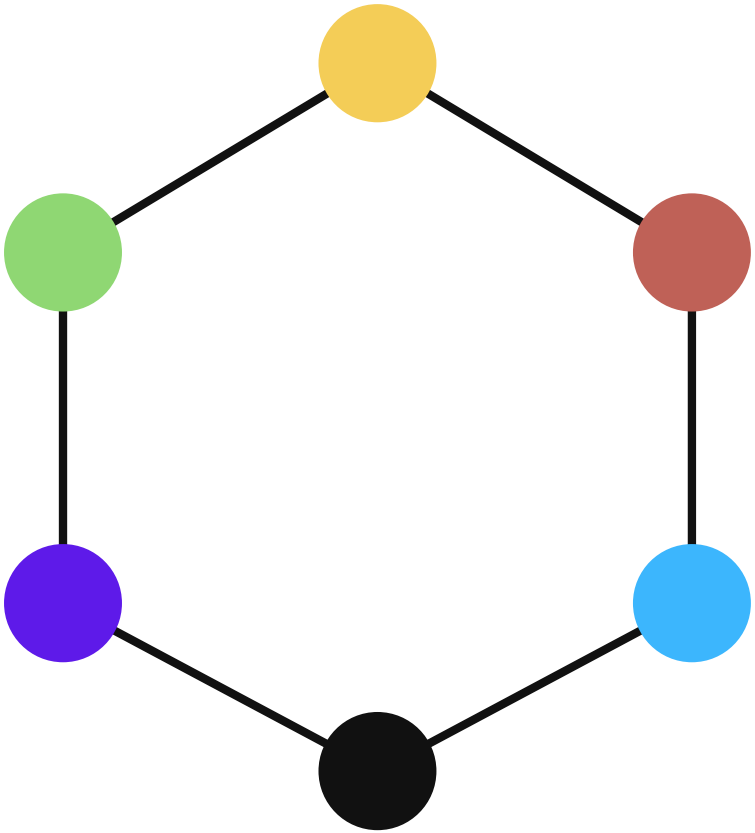


V32 · Colors on the Hexagon FINGER

One hand taps the colors on the top hexagon while the other taps the bottom one.



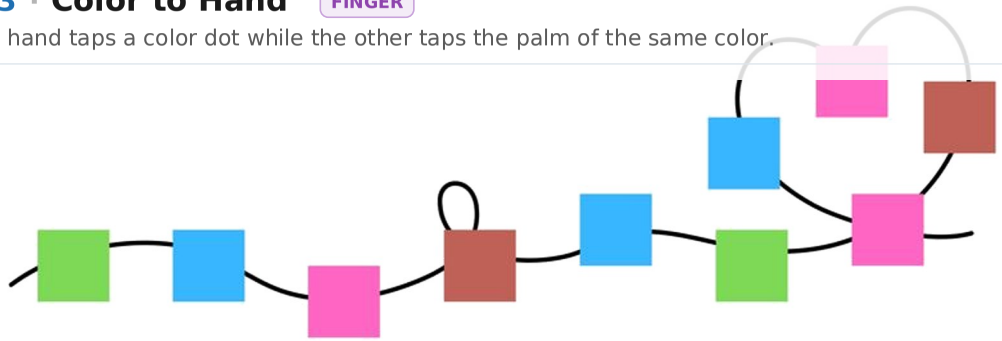






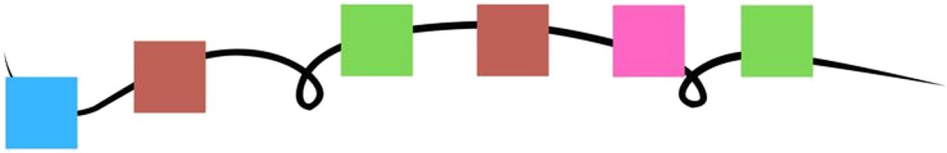
V33 · Color to Hand FINGER

One hand taps a color dot while the other taps the palm of the same color.



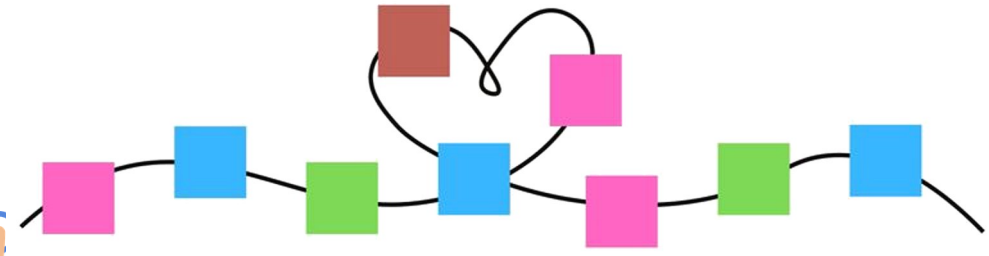








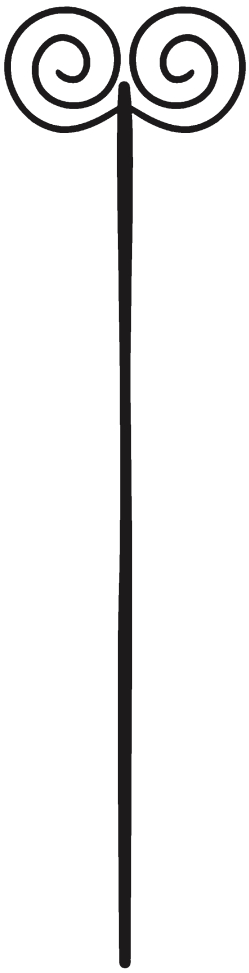


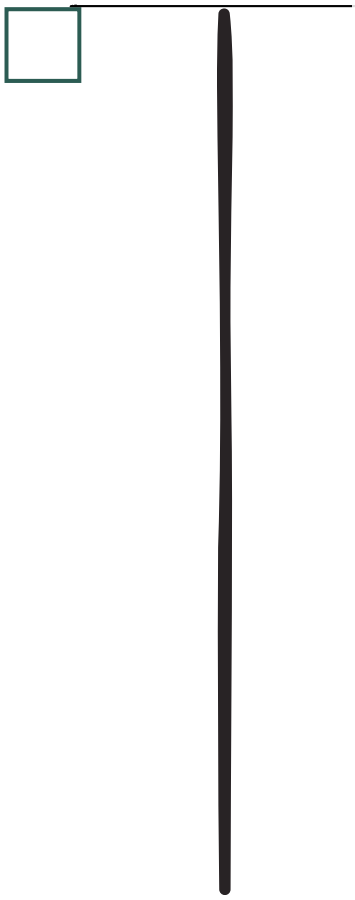


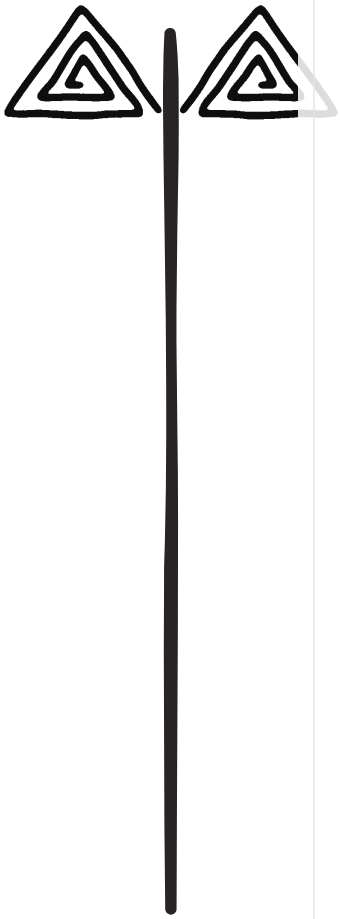
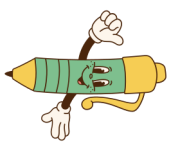


V34 · Patterns on the Sticks PEN

Trace the pattern at the top with both hands at once - stick by stick.

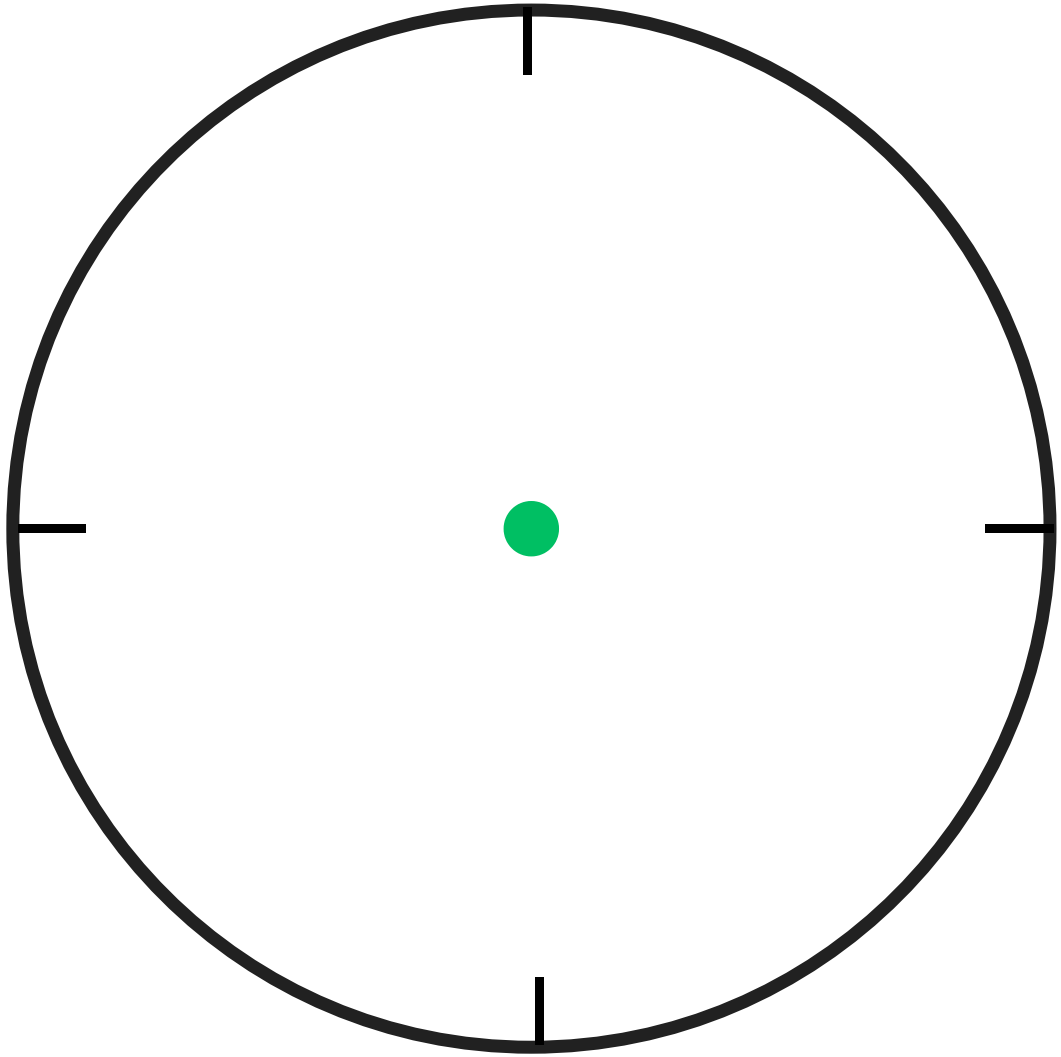


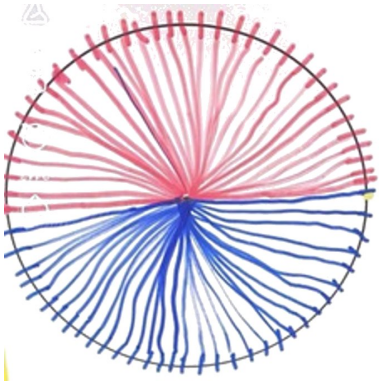


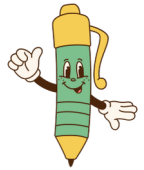




V35 · The Mandala PEN

Both hands draw the little marks around the edge at the same time. Then connect them from the center.



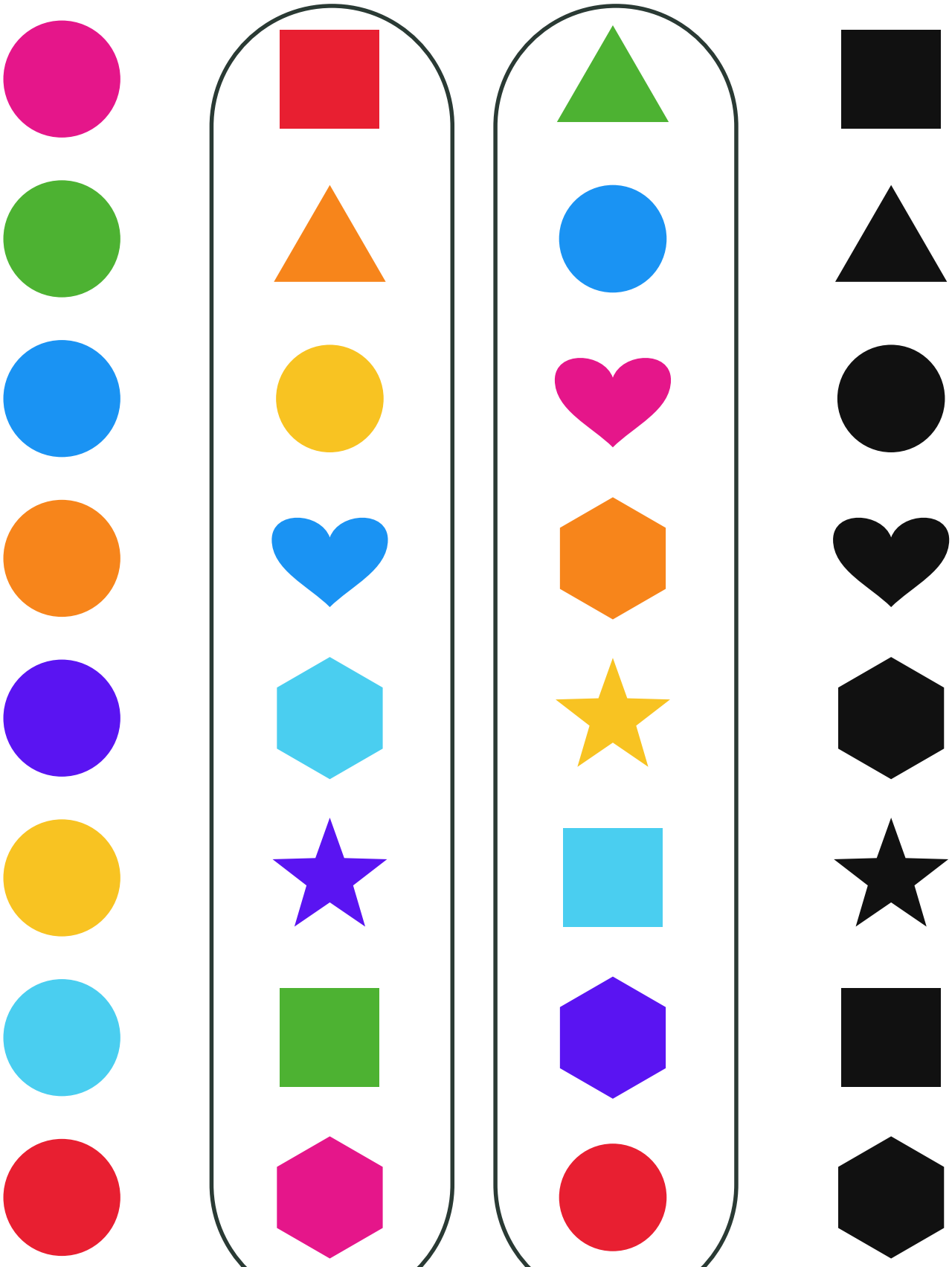




First draw the little lines, then connect them from the center

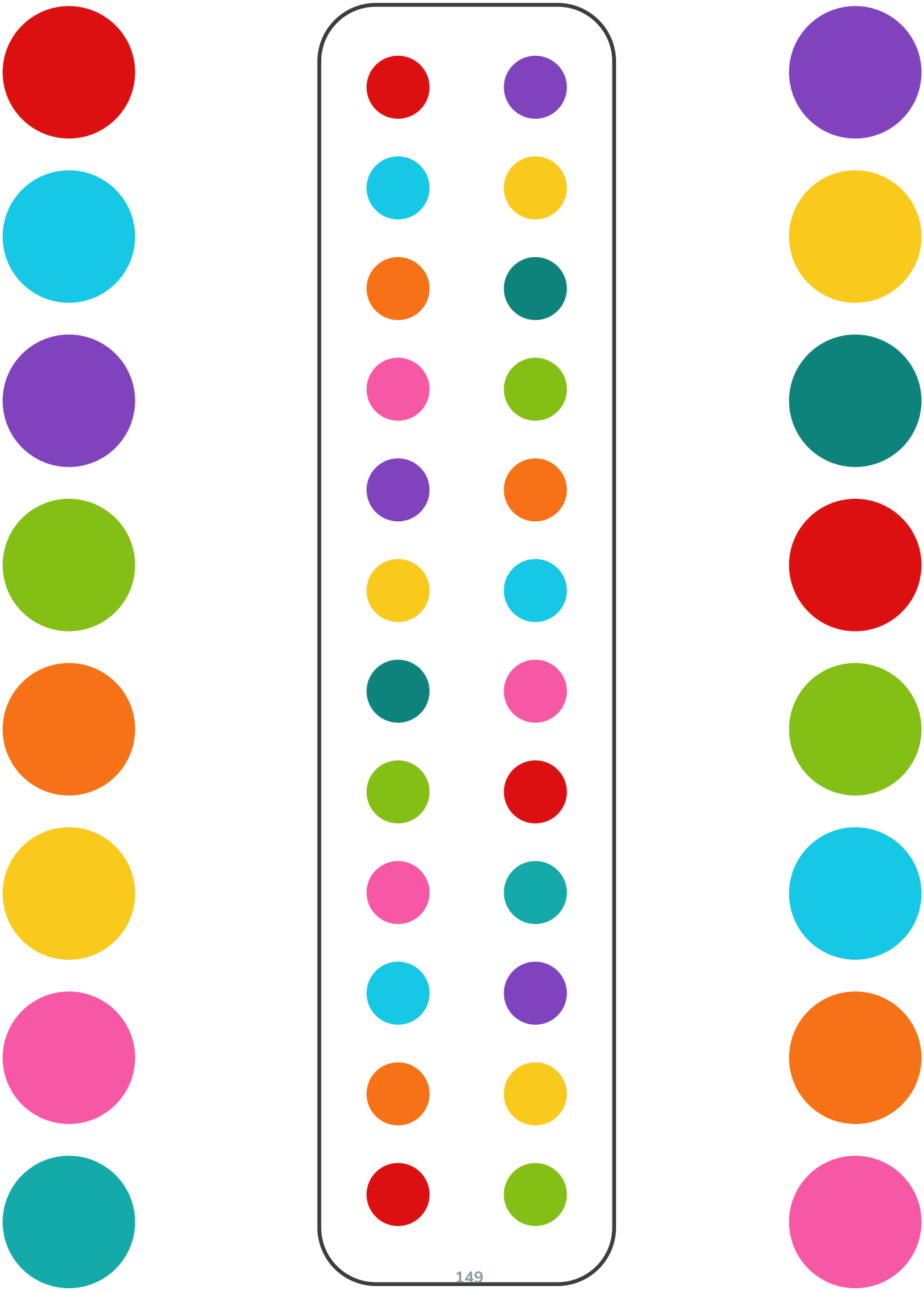
Color-Shape Double Focus

Left hand: find the matching color | Right hand: find the matching shape



Color Double Focus

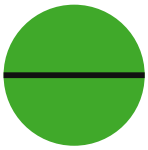
Left hand: matching color on the left | Right hand: matching color on the right

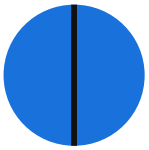


Color-Line Double Focus

Green = horizontal line | Blue = vertical line

Draw the lines with both hands at the same time.

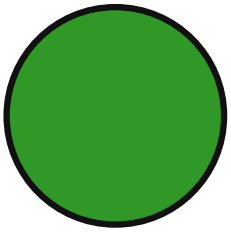


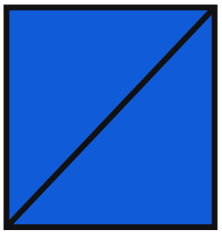


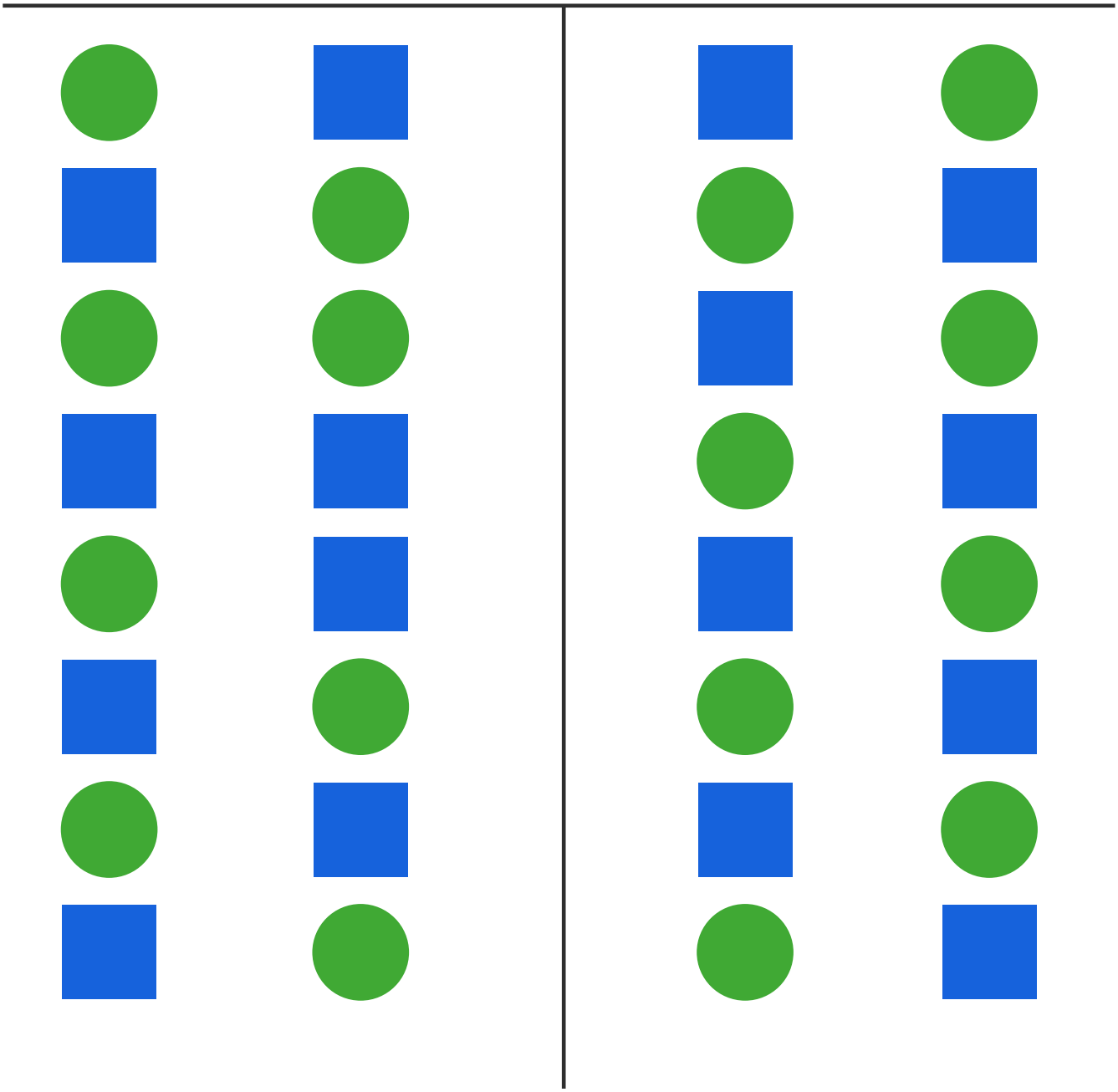
Shape-Line Double Focus

Green circle = trace the circle | Blue square = draw a diagonal line

Draw with both hands at the same time.







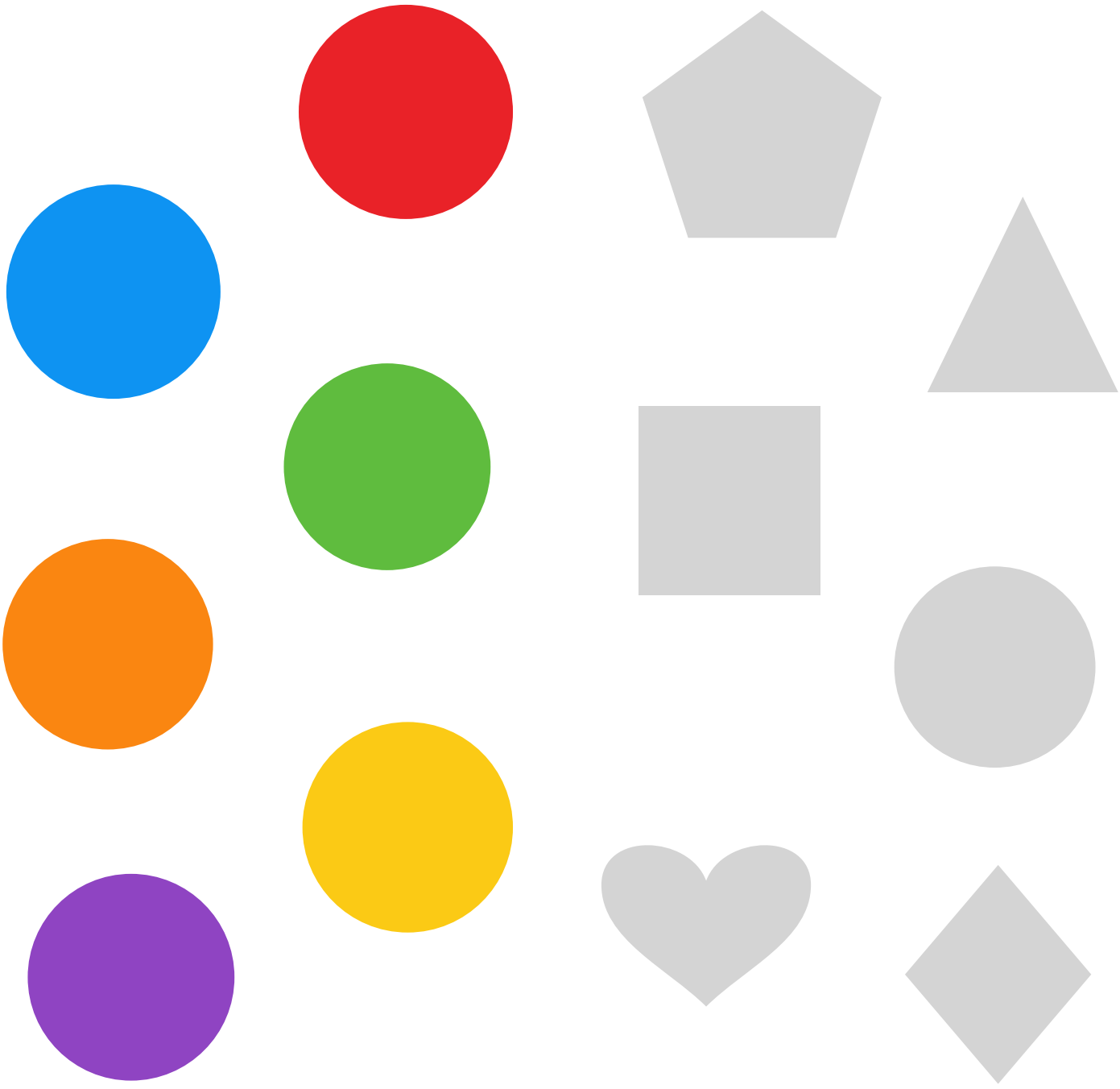
Code-Color-Shape Double Focus

Left: matching color | Right: matching shape | Solve the code in order

3A	2E	5C	4A	4F	2B	1F	2E	5B	4B

1 2 3 4 5 6

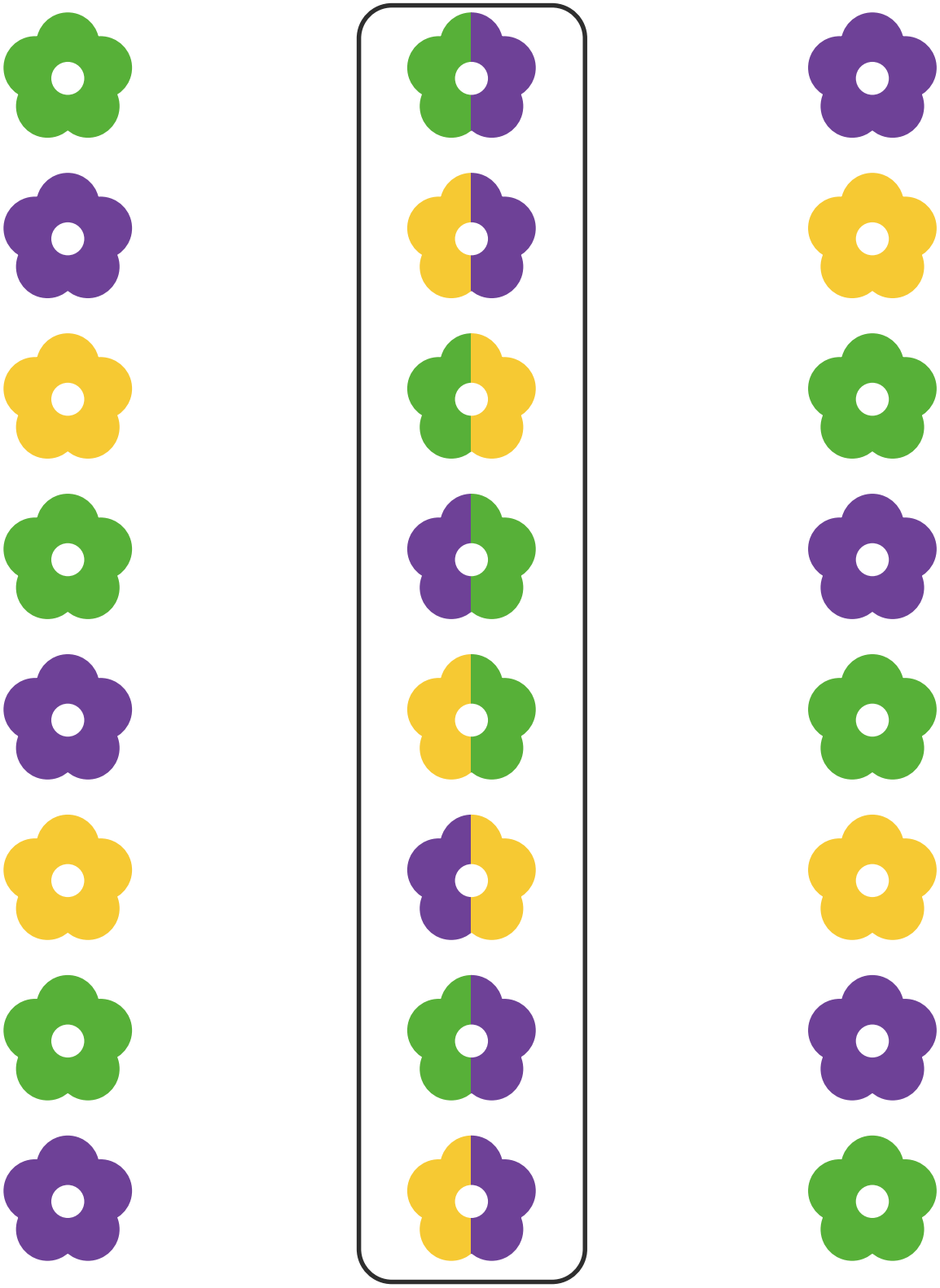
A B C D E F



Flower Double Focus

Left hand: left flower color | Right hand: right flower color

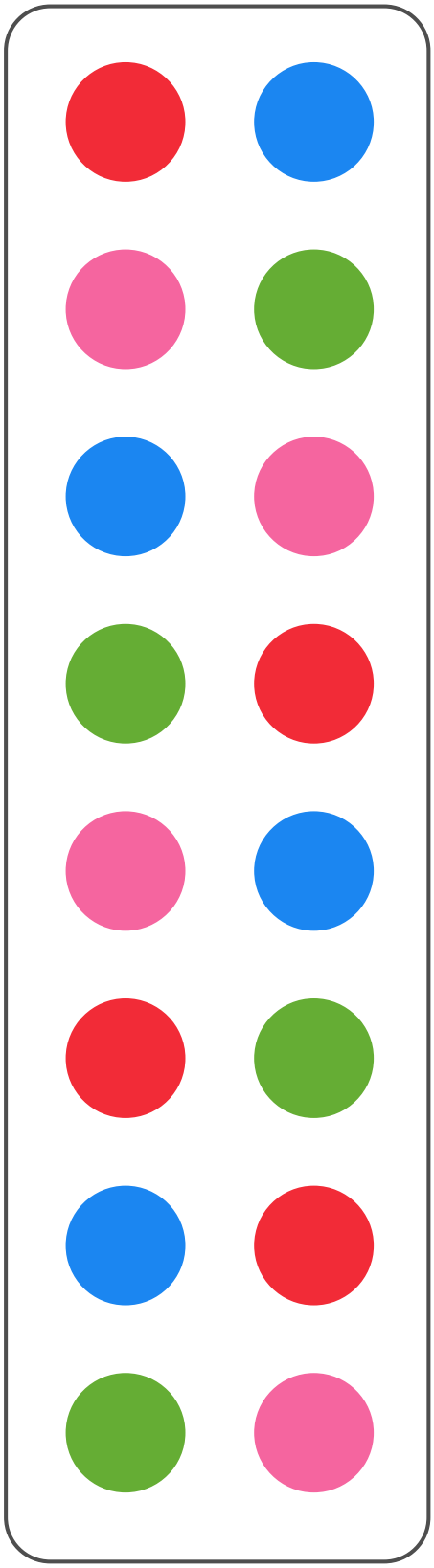
Point to both matching flowers at the same time.

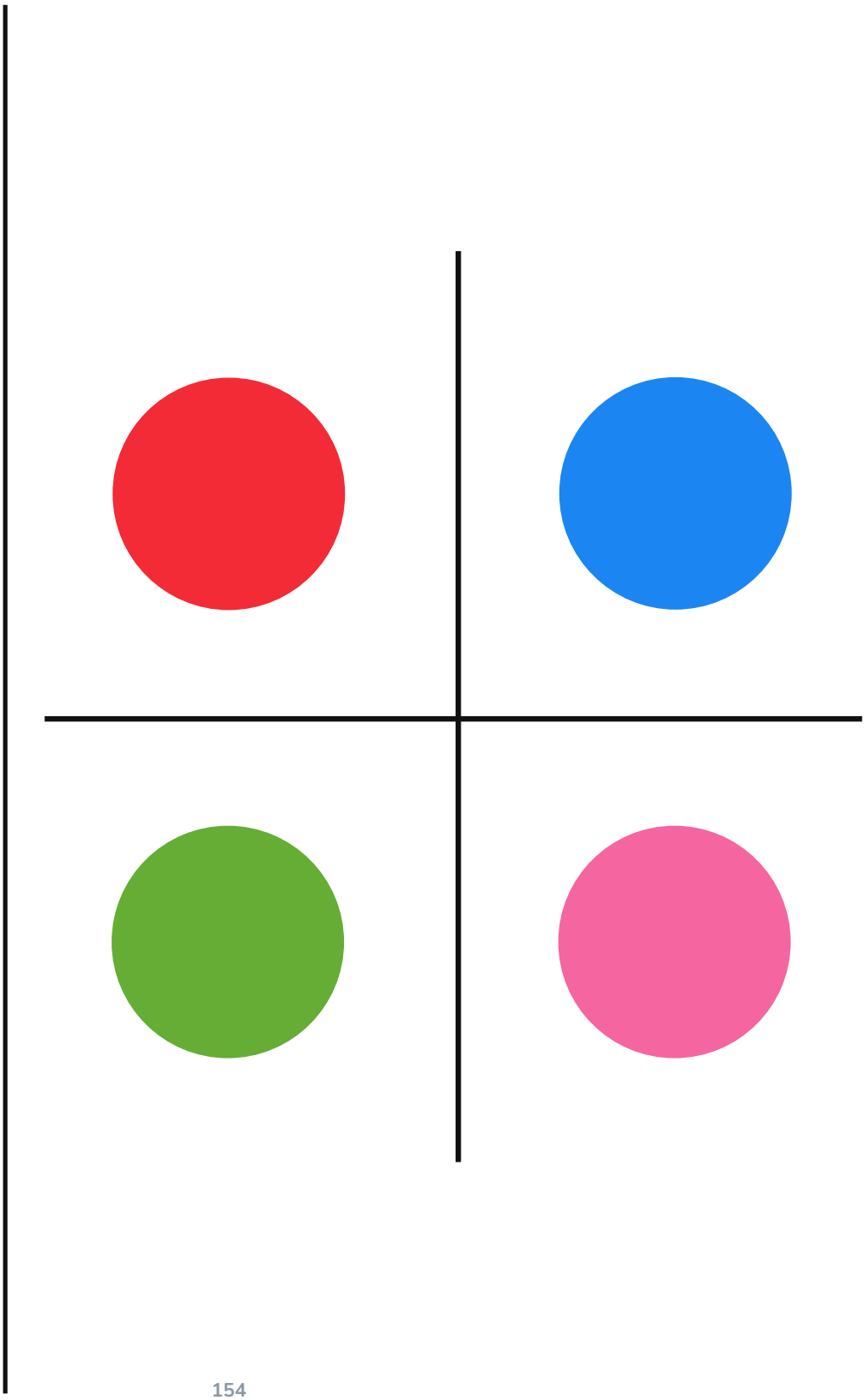


Color-Cross Double Focus

Left hand: matching color on the left | Right hand: matching color in the cross

Point with both hands at the same time.



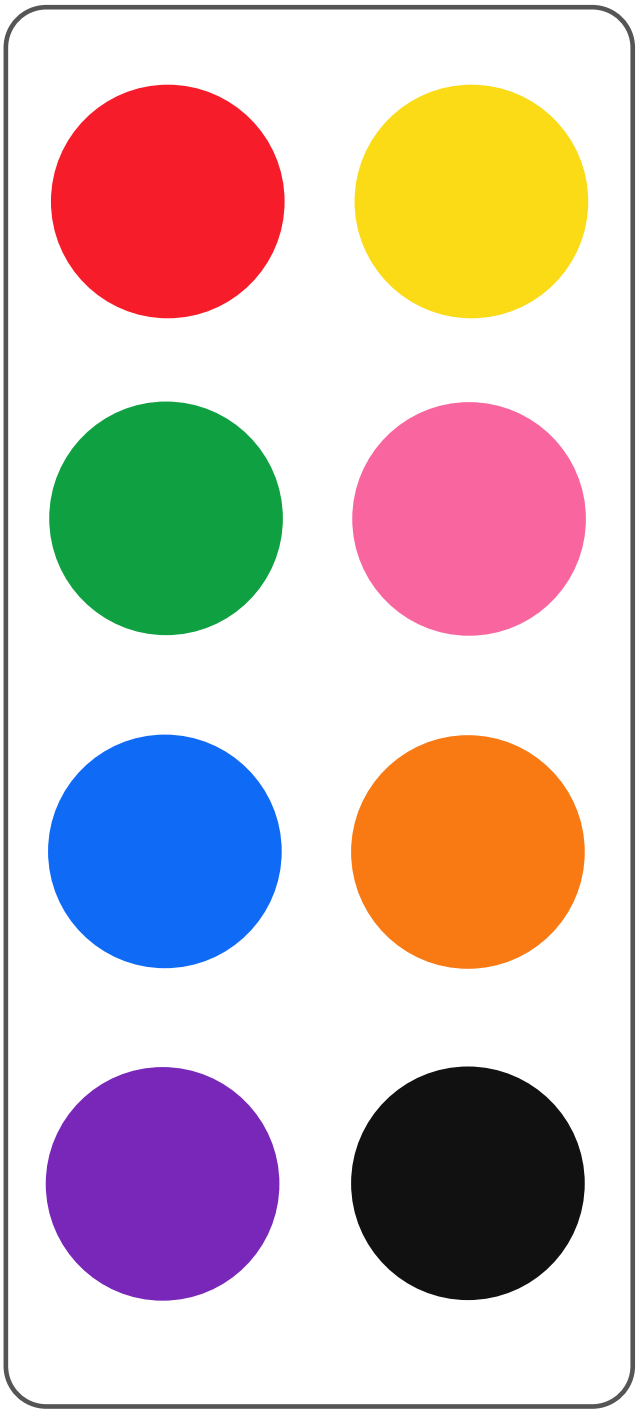


Color-Word Double Focus

Left hand: read the color word | Right hand: matching color on the right

Go by the word, not by the ink color.

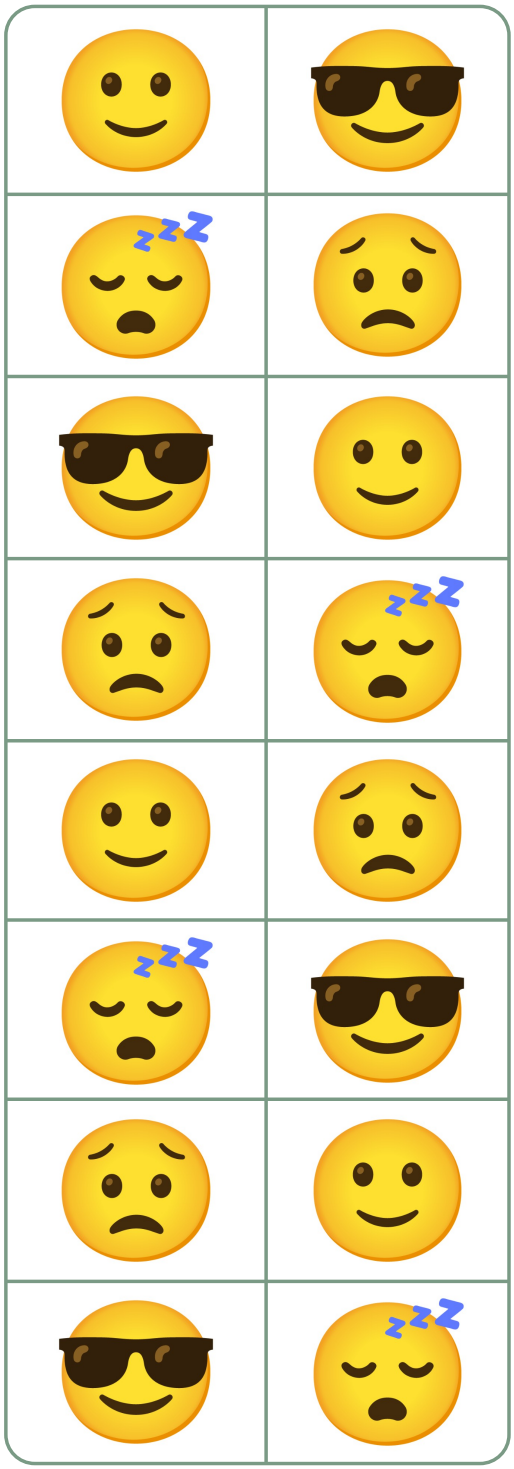
RED	YELLOW	GREEN
PINK	BLUE	ORANGE
PURPLE	BLACK	GREEN
BLUE	RED	YELLOW
BLACK	ORANGE	PINK
YELLOW	GREEN	PURPLE
ORANGE	BLUE	BLACK
GREEN	PINK	PURPLE

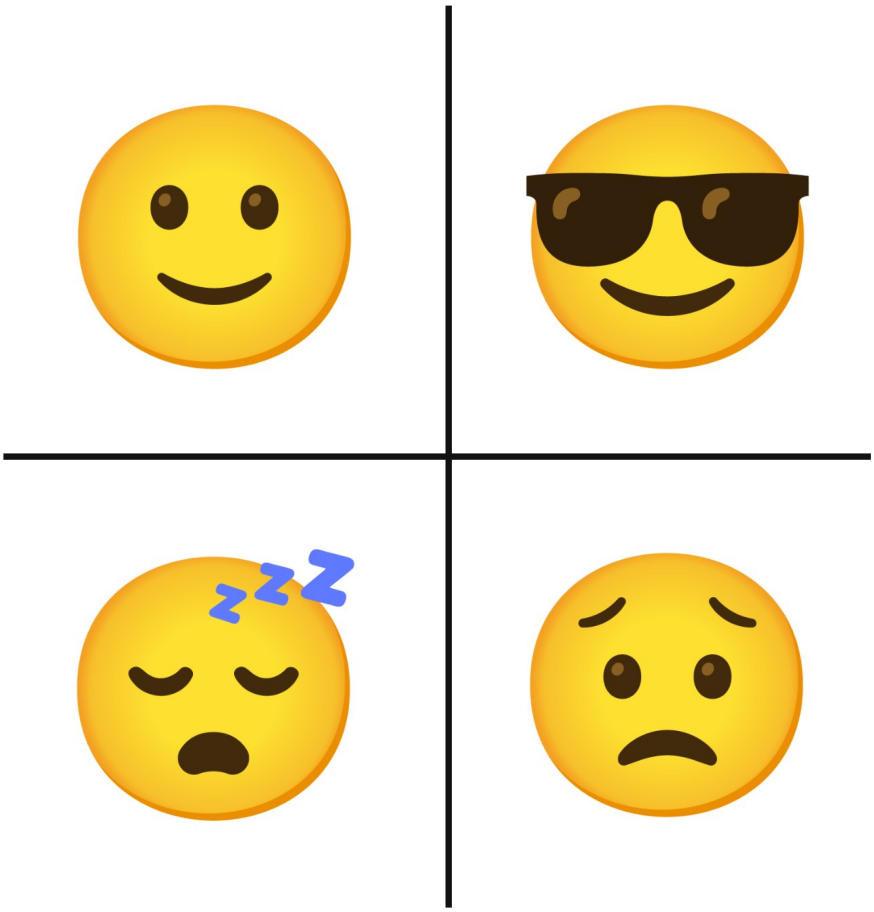


Emoji-Cross Double Focus

Left hand: matching emoji on the left | Right hand: matching emoji in the cross

Point with both hands at the same time.





Emoji-Pair Double Focus

Left hand: matching emoji on the left | Right hand: matching emoji on the right

Find both emojis from the middle at the same time.

