

Visual Perceptual Skills – Under 5's

What is it? : Visual perception is the ability to understand, process and make use of visual information.

Why is it important? : Visual perception is needed for nearly every task we carry out. This includes recognition and identification of shape, colour, etc. and to be able to use the information to make judgements of size, shape, relationship of one object to another.

How you can help:

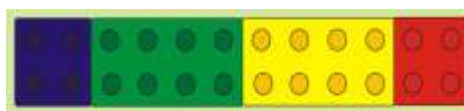
- Offer you child plenty of every day opportunities to participate in the activities below.
- With small children, whilst we should be working towards gaining independence, it should be introduced gradually in a controlled and non-threatening situation
- Make sure any targets set are achievable and they should be tackled via a series of small manageable goals

How to help develop visual perceptual skills

- Ensure your child is sitting with a comfortable and supported posture (e.g. feet on the floor, and elbows resting on the table at a 90 degree angle) or is standing up at a vertical surface.

The following is a list of games and activities to help develop visual perceptual skills:

- Post-a-shape – to the matching opening.
- Select an object from a sorting box. Place it at the most distant point in room from child. Child must find same shape from box.
- Copying a shape pattern or picture 2D to 2D
- What's missing?- complete a 2D shape picture
- Guess what? - ask the child to guess the object when only part is visible. A picture of an object could be cut into four pieces and only one part given at a time until the child has guessed what it is.
- Jigsaw puzzles – of varying degrees of difficulty to suit individual child
- Matching shape to silhouette – using the correct orientation.
- Draw a person – ask the child to copy the features of a real person, then compare.
- Colouring – symmetrical patterns of varying degrees of difficulty to suit individual pupils.
- Kim's Game - 4-5 familiar objects or pictures hidden beneath a cloth. The objects or picture are uncovered for 5 seconds and the cloth replaced. What did you see? Later increase the number of objects and decrease the time.
- Shut your eyes and describe what is in the room.
- Take a good look at someone, shut your eyes and describe in detail what that person is wearing. If there is a group of people ask one person to change their appearance in some way and ask the child to identify who that person was and what has changed.
- Turning cards up and trying to match cards (similar to "Snap")
- Show a detailed picture i.e. a farm. Look at it carefully and when the picture is removed describe it.
- Ball sequences e.g. bounce; throw in air and clap then catch.
- Clapping rhythms.
- Encourage the child to sort out objects or things such as socks or plates by colour type and shape.
- Ask the child to find a small object hidden within a picture, as with "Where is the owl?"
- Cut a piece of fruit in half and point out how the halves match in shape. Use them to print.



- Search for objects on command (look for all the blue objects, look for all the square shaped objects).
- Run to certain objects that are similar, for example, run to something that is the same shape as the door.
- I spy (something round, something smaller than the table or my book). Untangle a loose knot of different coloured yarns.
- While looking at a picture in a story book, say, "I see something that is yellow, green and red." Ask your child to identify what you are looking at.
- Rope games – jump in between two ropes, jump over the rope, crawl under the rope
- Stepping stone games - jump on the red stepping stone, jump next to blue stepping stone, jump on the right of the yellow stepping stone
- Throw a bean bag onto a target, left of the target, in front of target etc.
- Play Hokey Pokey - put your left arm in, put your right foot in etc.
- Play an arrow game - have the child tell you which way an arrow flashcard is pointing and then ask them to jump in that direction.
- Navigate through an obstacle course and have the child explain what he is doing, for example, crawling under the table, walking around the chair, climbing on the box, etc.