

## Why Children Should Work on a Vertical Surface

Children writing on a vertical surface, such as a writing wall, whiteboard or easel, develops strength in their shoulder, wrist, and core muscles, which are essential for proper handwriting and posture. This practice also enhances hand-eye coordination, visual tracking, and bilateral coordination (using both hands together). Vertical writing helps children understand directional concepts like 'up' and 'down' and can help fidgety children by allowing them to stand and move more freely.

Working on a vertical surface—such as a chalkboard, whiteboard, or Smart Board—offers children many developmental benefits. From building strength to improving coordination, here is why it is worth including in play and learning activities.



### 1. Shoulder and Elbow Stability

Using large vertical surfaces encourages children to make big arm movements, which strengthens the muscles and joints in their shoulders, elbows, and even their hands. Writing or drawing against gravity also boosts endurance and flexibility in the upper body.

### 2. Bilateral Coordination



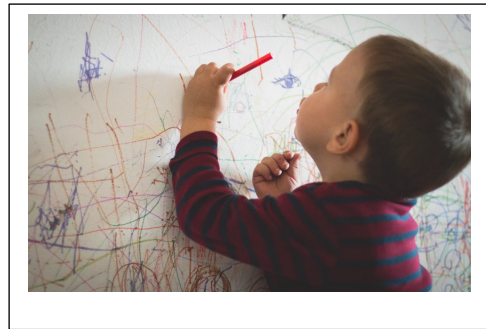
Tracing, stencilling, or even holding paper steady on an upright surface requires both hands to work together—one to hold, one to trace or draw. This builds coordination, strength, and body awareness.

### 3. Midline Crossing

Writing or drawing on a wide vertical space often requires children to reach across the centre of their body. This practice helps develop midline crossing skills, which support hand dominance and brain-body coordination.

#### **4. Wrist Extension and Pencil Grasp**

Working on a vertical surface naturally positions the wrist in extension, promoting a stronger, more efficient pencil grasp and better control of writing tools.



#### **5. Visual Attention and Hand-Eye Coordination**

Because the surface is close to eye level, children can better focus on their work. This improves visual attention and helps them coordinate what they see with what their hands are doing.

#### **6. Spatial Awareness**

Directional concepts like 'up,' 'down,' 'left,' and 'right' become easier to understand when children can directly relate them to their own body movements on a vertical surface.

#### **7. Sensory Benefits**

Many children, especially those who are fidgety, focus better when they can stand or change positions while working. Vertical surfaces allow for movement and sensory input while learning or creating.



#### **8. Core Strength and Posture**

Standing or kneeling at a vertical surface engages the core and back muscles, promoting better posture and strength—no slumping in chairs here!

#### **Fun Vertical Surface Activities**

Here are some engaging ways to help children build these skills:

Create a Writing Wall – Let kids write or draw freely.

Sticker Play – Have them stick stickers at various heights, then give directions like "touch the highest one!" for a fun, active challenge.

Create a DIY Lego Wall – Build vertically for added creativity and coordination.

Tracing and Drawing – Tape paper to the wall and trace shapes or stencils.

Painting – Use brushes, sponges, or other tools on a vertical easel or wall.

Magnet Play – Explore letters, shapes, or numbers on a magnetic board.

Chalkboard Fun – Draw, write, or erase on a chalkboard.

Smart Board Activities – Encourage interactive writing or drawing on digital boards.

Window Washing – Use sponges, spray bottles, or squeegees for a practical, strengthening task.

Car Washing – Another real-life way to practice arm movements and coordination.

Marker Board Cleanup – Erasing and cleaning promotes more fine motor and strength work.