



## Left-Handed Tips and Advice

Adapted from [www.lefthandedchildren.org](http://www.lefthandedchildren.org)

From the moment a left-handed child is able to explore his environment, he will find that toys, clothing and tools have a right-handed bias, and part of his development will be to learn to find an efficient method of using them. Simple tasks such as working a wind-up toy, tying shoelaces or using scissors can prove very difficult. But it's important to stress that there is no learning or developmental difficulty associated with being left-handed – only the need for adaptability in a biased world.

Remember too that there are degrees of left-handedness, ranging from total left dominance to virtual ambidexterity. Although all lefthanders hold a pen in their left hand, they will have a mix of right- and left-hand preferences for other tasks.

There is a positive side to being left-handed: it's an advantage in sport and the creative arts. Theories point to a left-handed person's heightened sense of spatial awareness and imagination, but also to their ability to adapt. Melody, pitch and tone receptors are located in the right hemisphere of the brain, dominant in most lefties.

Ways to help your left-handed child:

- If you are right-handed, face your child when demonstrating a new technique – such as tying a tie or shoelaces – to create a mirror image of the actions.
- When you connect a mouse to the left of the keyboard, reconfigure it to make left and right clicking easier. Go to Control Panel, Mouse, in Windows, on the Buttons Tab tick the box for “switch primary and secondary buttons”. Download free software to switch easily between settings when left handers and right handers share: [www.swapmousebuttons.com](http://www.swapmousebuttons.com)
- Buy left-handed kit for your child, such as scissors, rulers, pencil sharpeners. Stabilo has a range of left-handed pencils. [www.stabilo.co.uk](http://www.stabilo.co.uk)
- Buy your child a left-handed pen with specially designed nibs that don't tear the paper, and a shape that encourages a proper three-finger grip.
- When writing, show your child how to put paper to the left of their mid-bodyline, and then slant it by tilting the top of the page clockwise by 30 degrees. Watch the video at [www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk/writing](http://www.anythingleft-handed.co.uk/writing)