

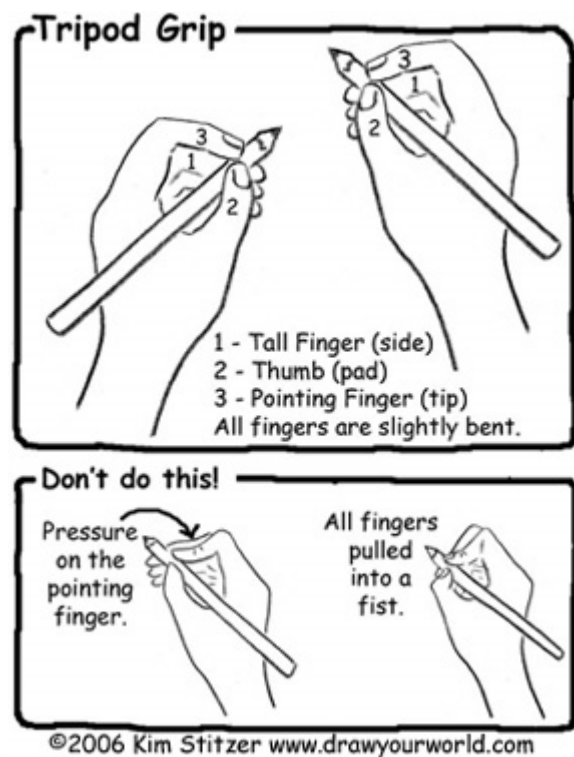
The best way to hold a pencil.

How to Hold a Pencil

Show children how to hold a pencil in the tripod position, and check to see that they use this grip while they draw and write with you. The first few days may be challenging, because the new grip feels funny and your child may have less pencil control, but it won't long before you see improvement. Whatever the age of the child, they can change to the tripod grip, just remember that it may take longer to change the habits of an older child.

The Tripod Grip

The pencil should be positioned so that there is equal pressure between the thumb, the side of the middle finger and the tip of the index finger. All fingers are bent slightly. This is called a "tripod grip" or "tripod pencil grasp".



Explain the Reason

Some children respond well when they are given the reason for using the tripod grip:

- The tripod grip allows a person to write more quickly and easily, while a tight or awkward grip can slow writing.
- The tripod grip avoids physical problems and pain to the hand and wrist. The continual aggravation of clenching a pencil -- a habit that can form in childhood -- can cause the ligaments in the wrist of the hand to become inflamed. This could lead to conditions such as carpal tunnel syndrome. Some people have found that symptoms stopped after they changed the way they gripped a pencil.