

Magical Craft Secrets

Ages and Stages: 2-5 Years

Discovering Sewing (Ages 2-5):

Creative and fun! Let go of expectations and see what happens next. These children make beautiful projects.

- **Cut the patterns for them.** Most children do not have the fine motor skills to hold fabric and cut with scissors.
- **Always double the thread and knot.** Pull the thread even and knot both ends so children cannot pull the needle off of the thread. Teach children to stop with enough thread to knot (they'll go to the very last bit if you let them).
- **Hold the fabric.** Children sew with both hands. Children at this age usually do not have the fine motor skills to hold the fabric and the needle. When you hold and guide their progress, they focus on the needle.

They may use the same hand to push the needle halfway through, reach over, then pull it out. This way you can also help keep the fabric flat when they try to pull the string as tight as possible. Children usually let you know when they're ready for the next step by asking or taking the fabric from you.



Magical Craft Secrets 2-5 Years Continued

- **Tie the knots:** Tying knots is tricky for young children. The fine motor skills emerge around seven years old. Until then, keep the project from falling apart by tying off strings for children.
- **Be flexible.:** If you want a perfect craft, sew it yourself. A child wants to sew ten beads on a gnome hat? Sure! Criss-cross around and around? Sure! Many of our great discoveries happened when children made 'mistakes'. As long as the fabric can lie flat, and the decorations are visible, let their personality shine! We've seen a lot of design choices that felt awkward to us as adults, yet they turned out great for the children. Be sure to use positive language and highlight successes for children.
- **Have fun:** When a child tires, put it away for another day or finish it up for them. Keep it engaging. The goal is to inspire and empower, not to finish perfectly in a given timeline.
- **Be patient:** Children can spend lots of time picking their decorations. Slow down and enjoy the crafting.



Magical Craft Secrets

Ages and Stages: 6-9 Years



Confidence and Independence

Ages 6-9

- **Trace or Cut Patterns:** With larger groups, cut the felt ahead of time.
- **Be available:** Stay nearby in case help is needed. Children at this age may be emotionally attached to their project. They may get frustrated and melt down. Learning patience and problem-solving are great life skills taught through crafting.
- **Tie knots:** Children still find knots tricky. Projects falling apart are no fun.
- **Give Creative Boundaries:** If you dropped a pile of felt in front of children this age, they would have a thousand ideas and a thousand scraps when they mess up. Help their creativity by listening to their ideas, then cutting capes or decorations for them. Provide guidance. Too much freedom becomes overwhelming.
- **Love the results:** Children this age love their creations. They thrive on validation from you. Cherish any mistakes or imperfections. A Magical Craft captures a child's personality. Enjoy your crafts!



Magical Craft Secrets

Ages and Stages: 9-109 Years

Taking Off

Ages 9-109

- **Inspiration:** Invite children to create their own patterns and crafts based on pictures or their own ideas.
- **Organization:** Teach them to organize their own supplies. They will be grateful adults!
- **Help as Needed:** Wait to be asked for assistance. It can be easy to jump in at the first sign of frustration, or take over when a project becomes complicated. Children will learn persistence, resilience, and creative problem-solving if you let them work it out.
- **Above and Beyond:** Take crafts to the next level. Paint, glue, create beaded crowns, add props, and enjoy the process!

