

# FASTENING SHOE LACES

The ability to fasten shoe laces is an important aspect of dressing which is an essential life skill. This can sometimes be a bit tricky to learn as you need to develop a number of skills, you need good hand-eye co-ordination, fine motor control and the ability to use both sides of the body together, so here are some tips that might help you.

## Strategies which might help:

- When learning to fasten shoe laces allow plenty of time. Rushing on a school morning can turn the activity into a negative experience.
- To begin with allow your child to complete the task after you have got to the final step of tying the lace, this will help to build confidence whilst demonstrating. This can be repeated each time the child completing one more step.
- The child should practice with the shoe on a table or even surface in front of them so that they can clearly see what they are doing, it is important to have the shoe facing the way it would be when on the foot, as this reversal may confuse the child when fastening laces of shoes they are wearing.
- Always use the same technique for fastening laces to avoid confusion.
- When demonstrating speak the actions aloud, the child will also benefit from talking through the steps whilst practicing, this will reinforce the technique.
- Do the activity step by step, first get the child to make a knot, practicing with other materials as well e.g. ribbon, rope etc. Once they are able to do this get the child to tie a knot and make a loop on a shoe. Gradually building up the sequence.
- It may be easier to use laces with contrasting colours so the child can easily identify each lace.
- Using long laces will help, as this gives the child more lace to work with.
- Depending on your dominant hand it may be confusing for the child if your technique relies upon use of your left hand whereas theirs may be right or vice versa. It may help to face your child when demonstrating whereas if you both use the same hand it will be better if you sit side by side.

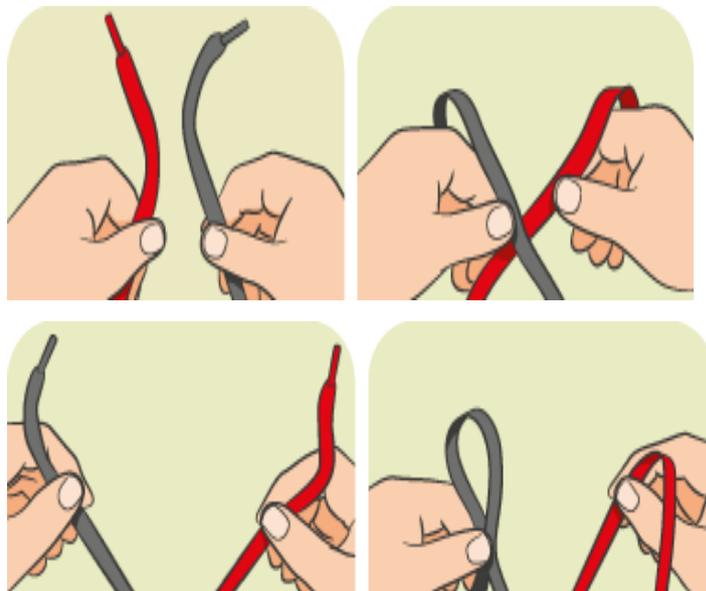


- Some children may enjoy using an oversized model, this can be made with help from the child using a cardboard cut-out and threading laces through.
- Shoes with velcro fastenings can be a useful alternative to laces. It is advised to give your child lots of opportunities to use laces before replacing these completely.
- Be patient and remember to praise effort as well as success.

## Technique

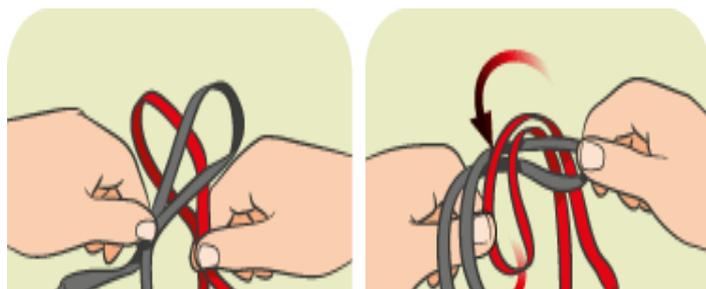
### Bunny Ears Method:

- Firstly secure a knot for the **“bunny’s head”**. Take the laces and cross them over to make an **“X”** pull one ear through the bottom of the **“X”** and pull tight.
- Make two loops (one with each lace) representing the **“bunny’s ears.”**
- Lastly you need to make sure the **“bunny’s ears”** are tightly fastened to the **“bunny’s head”**. Cross the two loops (**“Bunny ears”**) to make an **“X”**. Pull one ear through the bottom of the **“X”** and pull tight.



### Squirrel and the tree method:

- Start by making a knot. Take the laces and cross them over to make an **“X”**. Pull one ear through the bottom of the **“X”** and pull tight. This represents the **“tree roots”**.
- Make a long thin loop and ask your child to hold this in their right hand (or left if left handed). This represents the **“tree”**.
- The left/opposite hand holds the other lace. This represents the **“squirrel.”** “The squirrel then runs around the tree and jumps into the hole under the tree and comes out the other side.”



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