

Zaltsman Exercises for Improving Attention and Organizational Abilities*

Supplies needed: Several sheets of unlined, blank 8 1/2 x 11 paper. Use brightly colored construction paper to vary the activity. Each child will need two pens, pencils or colored markers, one for each hand.

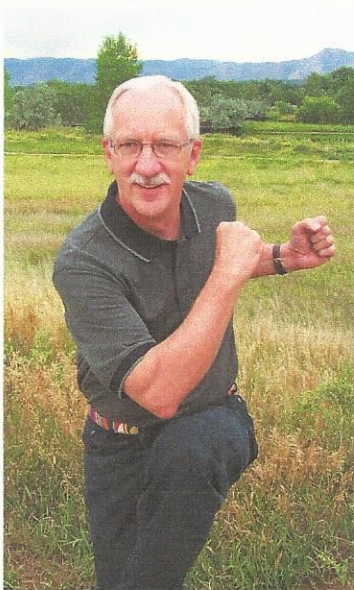
The activity can also be done at the board, or standing at two easels or even on a rug or outside in soft sand using hands and fingers to do the drawing.

Start with the first exercise and let children practice until it becomes easy before moving to the next one. Have templates drawn so children can follow the visual cues rather than reading the instructions.

1. Place a blank sheet of paper on the left and one on the right. With a pencil, crayon, or marker in each hand, simultaneously draw a vertical line on the right sheet and circle on the left sheet. Repeat three times. Alternate figures with each hand—vertical line on the right, then on the left. Circle on the left, then on the right.
2. Draw a triangle on one sheet while drawing a square on the other. Switch figures. Repeat three times.
3. Draw a circle on one sheet while drawing a triangle on the other. Switch figures. Repeat three times.
4. Draw two circles on one sheet while drawing one square on the other. Switch figures. Repeat three times.
5. Draw two squares on one sheet while drawing one triangle on the others. Switch figures. Repeat three times.
6. Draw a triangle on one sheet while drawing a square on the other and also tracing a circle on the floor with one leg. Switch hands and to the opposite leg. Repeat three times.
7. Draw a circle with one hand and triangle with the other while tracing a square on the floor with one leg. Switch hands and to the opposite leg. Repeat three times.
8. Draw a triangle with one hand and two squares with the other while tracing a circle on the floor with one leg. Switch hands and to the opposite leg. Repeat three times.
9. Draw a triangle with one hand and a square with the other while tracing a circle on the floor with one leg and nodding your head twice forward and twice backward. Switch figures. Repeat three times.
10. Draw a triangle with one hand and a square with the other while tracing a vertical line with the leg on the same side as the hand that is drawing the triangle, and a horizontal line with the leg on the same side as the hand that is drawing the square. Switch all. Repeat three times.
11. Make up your own, using other figures, combinations, and physical movements with legs, feet, and head. Do the exercises to music. Try it with bare feet.

* adapted from Edward Hallowell, M.D. and John J. Ratey, M.D., *Delivered from Distraction* (Ballantine Books, 2005), p.223.

Cross-Crawl



How to Cross Crawl

While standing or sitting "march" in place, alternately touching one hand or elbow to the opposite knee. It's most effective when you do cross crawl slowly. Be sure to raise your knee as high as you can and twist your body as you cross crawl.

What Cross Crawl does

Cross crawl helps with bilateral integration not only of the right and left brain but also right and left arms and legs.

After a few weeks of cross crawl you'll see an improvement in core postural awareness, muscle proprioception, and vestibular balance. In other words, cross crawl improves not only the ability to cross your body's midline easily and rhythmically, but also your balance, your sense of where you are in space, and your posture. Improves posture and learning is easier.

When to do Cross Crawl for yourself

- When you want more energy
- During any activity that requires visual, auditory, and kinesthetic integration, such as listening, reading, writing. Want to read with both eyes, listen with both ears, move your whole body? cross crawl is the answer.
- If you'd like to improve coordination
- When you'd like better spatial awareness. Try cross crawl before dancing, ice skating or playing tennis or golf.



When to do Cross Crawl with kids

- When they seem tired and need more energy.
- If they need to improve right and left coordination
- Before reading, writing, and anything else than requires crossing the midline.
- During soccer practice or any other sports activity

Homolateral Correction for Cross Crawl

Sometimes for a variety of reasons (such as recent trauma, trauma at birth, serious accident, depression) cross crawl isn't energizing at all. In fact, walking, the most natural of all cross crawl activities, wears kids out. The body reverts to a homolateral pattern which means the body's energies aren't crossing as they're meant to. In other words, it feels easier to walk with the left leg and left arm moving at the same time and vice versa.

If your child has trouble doing the cross crawl, seems uncoordinated, or is exhausted by a short walk, you'll want to do the following exercise.

1. Stand in place, and perform the walking motion. But this time, lift the same arm and leg, first on one side of the body, then on the other side while counting to twelve. If your child would rather do this sitting down or even lying down that's fine. Make sure children aren't holding their breath. Encourage taking deep breaths. And don't struggle with it. When they get tired, stop. If your child is sick or injured, you can lift arms and legs for them.
2. Next, do the cross crawl: Lift the opposite arm and leg while counting to twelve.
3. This is one set. Do three sets. (12 cross crawls and 12 homolateral movements equal one set)
4. Finish with twelve cross crawls.

Alternate cross crawl with the homolateral movement a couple times a day for at least a month.