

Efficient, Adaptable Home Programs for Fine Motor and Gross Motor Practice

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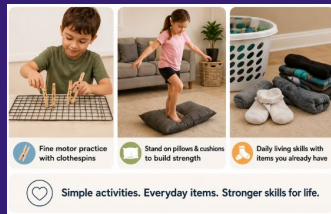
OOTA



Efficient, Adaptable Home Programs for Fine Motor and Gross Motor Practice

A home-based fine and gross motor program designed to: keep skills growing all year long using everyday items you already have at home.

For Parents, Caregivers
& School-Based
Therapists



Ms. Terri, PT

Ms. Terri has been practicing as a Physical Therapist for over 30 years and earned her Doctorate in Physical Therapy in 2018. She has spent the majority of her career working in school settings, with additional experience in hospital-based care. Her extensive background allows her to support students with a wide range of physical needs.

Ms. Denise, OT

Ms. Denise has been a practicing Occupational Therapist for over 20 years. She has dedicated her career to working in schools, where she has developed and implemented a variety of programs to support student success and independence.



Ms. Terri, PT & Ms. Denise, OT
Co-Founders of Skill2Thrive

Objectives

After this session, participants will be able to:

1. apply a structured, low-prep framework for developing home programs using pre-designed worksheets adapted to individual student needs.
2. implement strategies to improve family engagement/carryover through video modeling and consistent program formats.
3. utilize customizable home program sheets with students with multiple ability levels.
4. use the developmental checklist to create achievable IEP goals and activities for therapy and classroom use.

Why Carryover Matters

- **Prevent Regression:** Practice maintains hard-earned gains.
- **Build Independence:** Repetitive practice builds confidence.
- **Return Stronger:** Students come back ready to grow, not catch up.
- No extra practice= loss of skills.

This toolkit bridges the gap with activities that fit naturally into daily routines.

Barriers to Carryover

- Parents or Students not understanding how to complete the activities
- Lack of materials
- Therapists not having the time to create programs
- Parents feeling overwhelmed with lack of time at home
- Lack of engagement

Low-Prep: High-Impact Activities

- Every activity uses common household items — no special equipment needed. Socks, cups, paper, pillows, and more become powerful therapy tools.
- Use of QR codes to demonstrate video modeling
- Quick and easy resources
- 4 Levels to address students of all ability levels
- Customizable home program sheets
- Fun seasonal activities to keep students motivated and engaged

Video Modeling

Each activity includes a short video demonstration so students and caregivers can see exactly what to do — reducing confusion and building confidence for independent practice.

See It First

- Students watch the modeled activity before attempting it themselves

Guide Caregivers

- Parents and caregivers learn how to prompt and support without over-assisting

Repeat Anytime

- Videos can be rewatched and practiced over any breaks (e.g. summer) for consistent carryover

Research supporting Video Modeling

The findings support occupational therapists' use of VM during interventions to positively enhance and promote desired skills among children and adolescents with special needs. Also, it can be incorporated into technological devices to suit a client's specific needs.

Abd Aziz N, Kadar M, Harun D, Mohd Rasdi HF. Implementation of video modeling in the occupational therapy intervention process for children and adolescents with special needs: A scoping review. *Occup Ther Health Care*. 2021 Apr;35(2):227-244. doi: 10.1080/07380577.2021.1876967. Epub 2021 Jan 29. PMID: 33511894.

Research supporting Video Modeling

This study shows that the participants gained something from the intervention and demonstrates that it is possible to learn a new skill from Video Modeling (VM). The review of the literature on VM suggests that it is an effective method of teaching students with ID or DD to correctly complete life skills tasks. Studies also found that videos were more effective when they were shorter in length.

Dudek, R., Wilbanks, S., Grief, A., & Bonk, S. (2024). Effects of a video modeling intervention to improve hand washing independence in children with disabilities. *Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation*, 105(4), e170.

Research supporting Video Modeling

Both video modeling (VM) and static picture (SP) prompts improved independence in daily living skills for autistic children and adolescents. Most participants required fewer cues and demonstrated more independent task completion, showing clinically meaningful progress. Findings support the use of visual supports, including both video and picture prompts, as effective occupational therapy strategies for teaching daily living skills in the ASD population.

Abd Aziz N, Kadar M, Harun D, Mohd Rasdi HF. Implementation of video modeling in the occupational therapy intervention process for children and adolescents with special needs: A scoping review. *Occup Ther Health Care*. 2021 Apr;35(2):227-244. doi: 10.1080/07380577.2021.1876967. Epub 2021 Jan 29. PMID: 33511894.

Customizable Home Program Sheets

- We created customizable home exercise sheets for varying ability levels.
- Sheets include variations for the different levels
 - Your therapist will assist you to decide which variation works best for your student
- Included with the leveled activity sheets there are a materials list, this is a suggestion, but items can be modified as needed to fit your students needs

LEVEL 1

Customizable Home Exercise Sheet

Name: _____

2 times/week

3 times/week

4 times/week

Clothespin

☐ Cup

☐ Matching sheet

☐ Baking Rack

Gross Motor Level:

☐ Seated

☐ Standing

☐ Seated on a pillow

Fine Motor

☐ Socks only 1/2 together

☐ Place socks into bin close

☐ Stand up/move to put in bin

Gross Motor

☐ Gross Motor Adaptations:

☐ Crawl under forward or backwards

☐ Walk back to start

☐ Walk on knees back to start

Ball/Sock

☐ Gross Motor Adaptations:

☐ Seated

☐ Reaching in Midline

☐ Reaching Across Midline

LEVEL 2

Customizable Home Exercise Sheet

Name: _____

2 times/week

3 times/week

4 times/week

Clothespin

☐ Cup

☐ Matching sheet

☐ Baking Rack

Gross Motor Level:

☐ Standing Ball

☐ Walk across the room

☐ Obstacle Course

Fine Motor

☐ Pin bear strips

☐ Put in a cup (wide opening)

☐ Put in a waterbottle or 2 liter bottle with a smaller hole

Gross Motor

☐ Gross Motor Adaptations:

☐ Step on and off cushions

☐ Step over towel rolls or blankets

☐ Walk along towel rolls or blankets

Ball/Sock

☐ Gross Motor Adaptations:

☐ Standing

☐ Overhand Throwing

☐ Underhand Throwing

LEVEL 3

Customizable Home Exercise Sheet

Name: _____

2 times/week

3 times/week

4 times/week

Clothespin

☐ Cup

☐ Matching sheet

☐ Baking Rack

☐ Clothespins on the couch

Gross Motor Level:

☐ Standing on cushion or pillow

☐ 1/2 kneel on boso ball or pillow

☐ Hopping, skipping, jumping

☐ Other _____

Fine Motor

☐ Place pieces on the table

☐ Place pieces on the ground

☐ Walk a distance on the spot

☐ Use tweezers/spoon to pick up

Gross Motor

☐ Gross Motor Adaptations:

☐ Jump over towel rolls or blankets

☐ Jump down from couch/ cushion

☐ Walk forward or backwards

☐ Hopping, Skipping, Gallop back

Ball/Sock

☐ Gross Motor Adaptations:

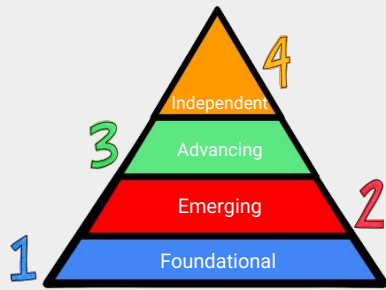
☐ Catch the sock with 2 hands

☐ Catch the sock with 1 hand

☐ Overhand Throwing

☐ Underhand Throwing

Four Levels of Student Abilities



1 Level 1: Foundational

These students benefit from:

- Simple movements
- High support
- Increased repetition
- 1 step directions
- Seated or moving shorter distances

*May require adult support to complete tasks/activities

Home Program: LEVEL 1

Gross Motor



- Start with 5-10 socks rolled up.
- Have the student use two hands to pull the sock apart and then put them into the laundry basket.
- Have your child sit on the couch and reach down to grab the sock.
- You could walk across the room (one gross motor ball? also) or simply reach forward to put sock in.

Fine Motor



Ball/Sock



- Get student on the floor with a laundry basket nearby.
- Place a rolled sock inside them as a visual boundary.
- Position 5-10 socks on either side for in front/hand one at a time for increasing reaching motion.
- Toss sock into the basket.
- Practice both forward and backward throws.
- Increase challenge by moving the basket further away or changing to pillow to target accuracy, strength, and coordination.

Home Program: LEVEL 1

Gross Motor



- Place five rolled socks at the starting point and laundry basket at other end.
- Drape a blanket over two chairs for a tunnel.
- Pick up one sock, crawl through the blanket tunnel, and place or toss the sock into the laundry basket.
- Repeat until all the socks are done.



2

Level 2: Emerging

These students:

- Benefit from increased repetition
- May benefit from standing or completing shorter distances
- Follow 1-2 steps directions for activities

Home Program: LEVEL 2

Gross Motor



- Place five rolled socks at the starting point and laundry basket at other end.
- Place several rolled towels or blankets on the floor with pillow in between at evenly spaced intervals.
- Put up one sock, walk through the obstacle course by stepping on and off the cushions and walking along the towel rolls as balance beams. Place or toss the sock into the laundry basket.
- Repeat until all the socks are done.

Fine Motor



- Make a pile of junk mail for your student.
- Have your student use two hands to tear up a piece of mail into 4-6 pieces (can pre-tear a spot for them if needed).
- Once you have the torn pieces, have the student pick up one piece in each hand and then crumple the pieces smaller into a ball.
- Have the student pick up the crumpled pieces off the table and put them into a cup.
- They can "pour" the pieces onto a family member's head, then hold the cup and pick up the pieces 1 at a time to repeat.

Ball/Sock



- Place the child stand facing a laundry basket.
- Place a rolled towel on the floor at a boundary or stopping marker.
- Get stepping over the towel with the opposite foot when stepping (Place 2-3" socks on the floor for hand them out at a time).
- Practice both forward and backward stepping.
- Increases challenge by moving the basket further away to build accuracy, strength, and coordination.

Home Program: LEVEL 2

Fine Motor

- Make a pile of junk mail for your student.
- Have your student use two hands to tear up a piece of mail into 4-6 pieces (can pre-tear a spot for them if needed).
- Once you have the torn pieces, have the student pick up one piece in each hand and then crumple the pieces smaller into a ball.
- Have the student pick up the crumpled pieces off the table and put them into a cup.
- They can "pour" the pieces onto a family member's head, then hold the cup and pick up the pieces 1 at a time to repeat.





3

Level 3:
Advancing

These students:

- Complete 2 step activities
- May be able to move longer distances or 3-5 obstacles
- May be able to complete tasks with modeling and less direct supervision

Home Program: LEVEL 3

Gross Motor



- Place five rolled socks at the starting point and laundry basket at other end.
- Place several rolled towels or blankets on the floor with pillow in between at varying spaced intervals.
- Pick up one sock, move through the obstacle course by:
 - jumping over towel rolls
 - walking across the towel roll at balance beam
 - stepping on cushions and jumping off
- Place or toss the sock into the laundry basket!
- Repeat until all the socks are done.

Fine Motor



- Make a pile of post mail for your student.
- Have your student tear one piece into 4-6 pieces (start a tear if needed).
- Have your student pick up one piece in each hand and crumple into small balls.
- Have your student sit in a spoon to crumple the pieces into a cup.
- Use one your hand on the table and repeat for 1 more time or put a timer on for 1-10 minutes to complete their bag.

Ball/Sock



- Child stands facing a laundry basket.
- Place a rolled towel on the floor as a boundary or stepping marker.
- Cue stepping over the towel with the opposite foot when throwing.
- Use 5-10 socks; toss to child for catching (start close, move back).
- Progress from two-hand to one-hand catches.
- Practice overhand and underhand throws into the basket.
- Increase challenge by moving the basket farther away to build accuracy, strength, and coordination.

Home Program: LEVEL 3

Ball/Sock



- Child stands facing a laundry basket.
- Place a rolled towel on the floor as a boundary or stepping marker.
- Cue stepping over the towel with the opposite foot when throwing.
- Use 5-10 socks; toss to child for catching (start close, move back).
- Progress from two-hand to one-hand catches.
- Practice overhand and underhand throws into the basket.
- Increase challenge by moving the basket farther away to build accuracy, strength, and coordination.



4 Level 4: Independent

These student are able to:

- Complete tasks with more independence
- May be able to roll a die or operate the wheel of names after modeling
- Complete tasks involving multiple steps
- Work on activities including gross and fine motor activities combined

LEVEL 4

- These students are often able to follow multiple step directions.
- They are able to complete activities more independently.
- The activity sheets are set up with QR codes for video instruction.
- Students can roll a die or spin the wheel of names to determine which activity they complete.

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Materials:

- Junk Mail
- Bowl
- Couch cushion or pillow
- Cereal or Cereal
- Socks
- Basket
- Spoon
- Blankets or Towels
- Tongs

Home Program: LEVEL 4



1

Crumble paper and throw it on the floor; Squat down; pick up paper; jump up and place paper in a bowl

Stand on couch cushion or pillow on the floor near table; stack coins or cereal

2



Have 5 socks on one side and matching pairs on other side; jump or hop across to match the socks

3



Wheel of Names — Make It Fun!

- Increases Motivation
- Easy to Reuse
- Ensures Variety

- Each level includes a customizable Wheel of Names loaded with that level's activities. Spin the wheel to randomly to determine how many repetitions to complete or select the day's challenge (4) adding excitement, variety, and a sense of play to therapy practice.

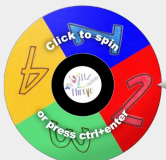


Varying trials depending on Levels

Level 1:
3 trials



Level 2:
4 trials



Level 3:
5 trials



Level 4: Focus on Independence



Level 4 is structured:

- For the student to either roll a 6 sided die
- Or they can scan to get the wheel of names with number 1-6
- They complete the activity that is associated with that number

Clothespin activities



LEVEL 1

The student will be sitting. Place the clothespin on the wire rack or on the floor. The student will move the clothespin to match onto the corresponding match on the circle.



LEVEL 2

Standing and placing items on the floor or lower surface, reaching across midline, or moving from one spot to another area in the room using a balance beam, skidboard over, stepping stones, etc. The student will move the clothespin to match onto the corresponding match on the circle.

LEVEL 3

Standing on an uneven surface such as the knee ball, balance pad, balance board, etc. or jumping, hopping, stepping, galloping, etc. From one location to another. The student will move the clothespin to match onto the corresponding match on the circle.



Wheel of Names of Summer



Building Strength at Home

- This toolkit is more than a home exercise program activity pack — it's a bridge between school and home. With low-prep activities, video modeling, the Wheel of Names, and data tracking, every child has the support they need to **maintain skills, build confidence, and return stronger than ever.**

Developmental Progression Framework

- Some students develop motor skills in small, meaningful steps that are not captured by typical developmental checklists.
- Created to break school-based motor skills into smaller, measurable increments to document progress more easily.
- By identifying incremental gains, the school based-team can: make informed instructional decisions, or recognize when a plateau has been reached.
- Guide further steps such as new skill areas, adjusting intervention strategies, or consider change in service delivery based on needs and level of participation.

Using this Framework

- **Guidance Only:** This framework is designed to support the identification, instruction, and documentation of incremental motor skill progress. It does not replace the clinical judgment of an OT or PT.
- **Individualize for each student:** Student abilities and performance can fluctuate. Always collaborate with the therapy team and adapt activities and goals to meet each student's unique needs.
- **IEP Goal Suggestions:** Sample goals are provided as examples. Modify the motor task, adaptations, level of assistance, cueing, and mastery criteria to align with the student's present levels of performance and IEP team decisions.
 - The following format was used for our IEP goal recommendations:
 - **Student will complete (motor task) using (specified adaptations) with (level of cueing/assistance) in 60% of documented opportunities.**

GM Framework

3 gross motor school-related skills:

1. Maintaining seated positions while completing academic tasks.
2. Balancing on one foot to access steps, playground equipment, and assist with putting on/off pants for toileting.
3. Mobilizing (walk, propel, run, roll, crawl, etc.) to keep up with peers (walk in a straight line, not veering from path, etc.).

Level 1:

SUGGESTED GOAL: Given appropriate adaptations (head support, pool noodle, lateral support, etc.) and/or adaptive seating (e.g. ribbon chair, tomato chair, etc.) Student will maintain a seated position for specified time (e.g. 30 seconds, 45 seconds, 60 seconds, etc.) with (full support, 75% physical assist, 75% physical assist or less, etc.) to participate in a functional school task, in 60% of documented opportunities.

Performance Criteria	Tx Ideas	Classroom Suggestions
Level 1 (complexity level a): Sitting for specified time with full support	• Floor activities such as supine, rolling, prone • Sitting balance with full support and adaptations (bench, wedge, etc.)	• Ribbon chair • Wheelchair • Tomato chair • Tumbleton
Level 1 (complexity level a): Sitting for specified time with 75% physical assist	• Floor activities such as supine, rolling, prone • Sitting balance with physical assistance and adaptations (bench, wedge, etc.)	• Floor sitting with adult assist or positional support • Bench sitting with adult assist • Previous classroom chair suggestions: ribbon chair, etc.

Level 2:

SUGGESTED GOAL: Given appropriate adaptations (head support, pool noodle, lateral support, etc.) and/or adaptive seating (e.g. ribbon chair, tomato chair, tumbleton, etc.) Student will maintain a seated position for specified time (e.g. 45 seconds, 60 seconds, 90 seconds, etc.) with (50% physical assist, 25% physical assist, etc.) to participate in a functional school task, in 60% of documented opportunities.

Performance Criteria	Tx Ideas	Classroom Suggestions
Level 2 (complexity level a): Sitting for specified time with 50% physical assist	• Additional floor activities: prone on forearms, quadruped, etc. with adult assist • Sitting balance with physical assistance and adaptations (bench, wedge, etc.)	• Floor sitting with adult assist or positional support • Additional seated positions: floor sitting, bench sitting, etc. with adult assist
Level 2 (complexity level b): Sitting for specified time with 25% physical assist	• Crawling, rolling to complete activities • Sitting on uneven surfaces, bean ball, balance board, etc.	• Previous seated positions and floor activities with fading support • Sitting on bean ball sitting in cube chair with fading support

***Focus for Level 2 students includes: progression of movement of arms and legs in a variety of positions, tolerating a variety of positions with progression of movement and activities in these positions, remaining consistent with the approach with these students to assist them with maintaining range of motion, addressing trunk and head control, and active movement of their arms/legs, and body, progression of appropriate adaptive equipment that will best support them and challenge them in the classroom, continued staff education and training on positioning, transfers, and adaptive equipment.*

Level 3:

SUGGESTED GOAL: Given appropriate adaptations (head support, pool noodle, lateral support, etc.) Student will maintain a seated position while sitting in a classroom chair with arms for specified time (e.g. 60 seconds, 2 minutes, 3 minutes, etc.) with (stand by assistance, supervision, verbal prompts, tactile prompts, etc.) to participate in a functional school task, in 60% of documented opportunities.

Performance Criteria	Tx Ideas	Classroom Suggestions
Level 3 (complexity level c): Sitting in a chair with boundaries with stand by assist/supervision	• Increasing distance with crawling and rolling • Incorporate uneven surfaces with crawling • Incorporate ball, knee, half kneel, standing, etc. • Sitting on uneven surfaces	• Previous seated positions and floor activities with more independence • Sitting in chairs with arms with close stand by assist with adaptations as needed to ensure safety
Level 3 (complexity level c): Sitting in a chair with boundaries with verbal prompts, tactile prompts	• Incorporate uneven surfaces with crawling • Incorporate ball, knee, half kneel, standing, etc. • Sitting on uneven surfaces	• Sitting in chairs with arms with fading prompts (using adaptations as needed for safety) • Previous seated positions and floor activities with more independence

***Focus for Level 3 students includes: progression of movement of arms and legs in a variety of positions, progression of a variety of positions with progression of movement and activities in these positions, progression of weightbearing activities, progression of trunk and head control in a variety of positions in a variety of surfaces, progression of appropriate adaptive equipment that will best support them and challenge them in the classroom, continued staff education and training on positioning, transfers, and adaptive equipment.*

FM Framework

3 fine motor school-related skills:

1. **Grasping and manipulating classroom tools** (pencils, crayons, markers, paintbrushes, glue sticks, classroom manipulatives) to participate in academic, play, and self-help activities.
2. **Developing pre-writing and handwriting skills** to complete classroom assignments and communicate through written work.
3. **Developing foundational scissor skills** by learning to grasp and control scissors for participation in classroom activities.

Level 1:

Suggested Goal: Student will initiate purposeful upper extremity movement with (insert support level, 50-75% adult support) when completing a scissor's activity readiness activities (ie: reaching for a desired cut out answer, pushing items on paper that are pre-glued, pushing on table top scissors, etc.) in 60% of documented opportunities.

Performance Criteria	Tx Ideas	Classroom Suggestions
Level 1 (complexity level a): Reaching, pushing, and activating items given full support from adult	Adult HCH assist for all: -making choices from a field of 2 in front of the student -pushing cause and affect switch activated toys	- Pre-glueing answers to have student push down - Given a choice from a field of 3 - Use of table top scissors
Level 1 (complexity level a): Grasping school tool with adaptation given 75% adult assist	-previous activities -	- Previous adaptations

Focus for **Level 1 students includes weight bearing through upper extremities while also focusing on touching/feeling a variety of sensory materials in preparation for grasping school tools. Remember some of these students had very different sensory experiences than other children, so may need to go back and give some of those experiences. Lots of reaching for, knocking things over, and being seated in a variety of positions can be helpful. Co-treatment with PT may be appropriate for a student at this level.

Level 2:

Suggested Goal: Student will release an object into a designated container in 3/5 trials given verbal cues and no more than 25 or 50% physical assist, etc. in 60% of documented opportunities.

Level 2 (complexity level a): Grasping school tool with adaptation given 50% adult assist	-previous activities -placing towels, scarves, materials, etc. on student for them to pull off -high fives in many ways	- Previous adaptations - Egg crayons, large "cone" crayons with assist - Use with large stamps with build up handles
Level 2 (complexity level b): Grasping school tool with adaptation given 25% adult assist	-previous activities -grasping resistive items: tape, suction cup toys (squeez, etc.) -take out or take apart	- Adaptive materials described above with fading support - Use with Bingo Daubers - Working on vertical surface - Using slant board

Focus for **Level 2 students includes using hands functionally to reach, grab, and release items into a designated space. Peek a boo, or covering preferred items to help motivate students to reach and grab items may be successful.

Level 3:

Suggested Goal: Student will complete grasping tasks requiring bilateral hand use (e.g., pop beads, clothespins, stickers, Velcro activities) using appropriate adaptations and given verbal cues only in 60% of documented opportunities.

Level 3 (complexity level c): Grasping school tools with adaptations and set up	-completing a variety of grasping/put in tasks -clothespins, velcro items off folders/board -pop beads/bilateral tasks	- Adaptive materials described above with feeding support - Small bits of crayons - Tril use with appropriate pencil grips
Level 3 (complexity level c): Grasping school tools with adaptations and verbal cues	-grasping any previous items -grasping stickers/tape off table/board -grasping a variety of different markers, crayons, etc. when drawing/coloring	- Adaptive materials described above with feeding support - Using chalk, white board markers, etc. - Stickers with back peeled 1/2 off if needed to place for answers on worksheet

****Focus for Level 3** students includes using writing utensils with success in order to complete activities that slightly challenge that student. Modifying work materials, worksheets, and writing utensils ensures additional success and independence for these students.

Progress Over Perfection

- **Small gains matter.** Identify and celebrate incremental progress—not just mastery of school related skills.
- **Meet students where they are.** Match expectations and adapt activities to each learner's current skill level incorporating Level 1-4 when possible.
- **Use the Developmental Progression Framework flexibly.** Adapt activities, goals, cueing, and supports to fit individual student needs.

****Meant to be a guide to show growth****

Our Hope...

- This Framework will show student success more clearly while helping families feel more empowered to carryover activities.
- Therapists will spend less time reinventing resources and activities in order to have more time making an impact.
- Teachers will feel confident to incorporate therapist suggestions on a daily basis.
- The IEP team feel educated to relate IEP goals towards more functional tasks while working on underlying skills to meet specific student needs.

ALWAYS REMEMBER

- Progress is every little step forward
 - It isn't just mastery of a school related skill
- Celebrate small steps that lead to bigger school skills
- This is a tool to provide data but to remember to use your clinical judgement as well to make informed decisions of a change in therapy delivery or even dismissal of therapy in the schools when appropriate (plateau, data driven, etc.)



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