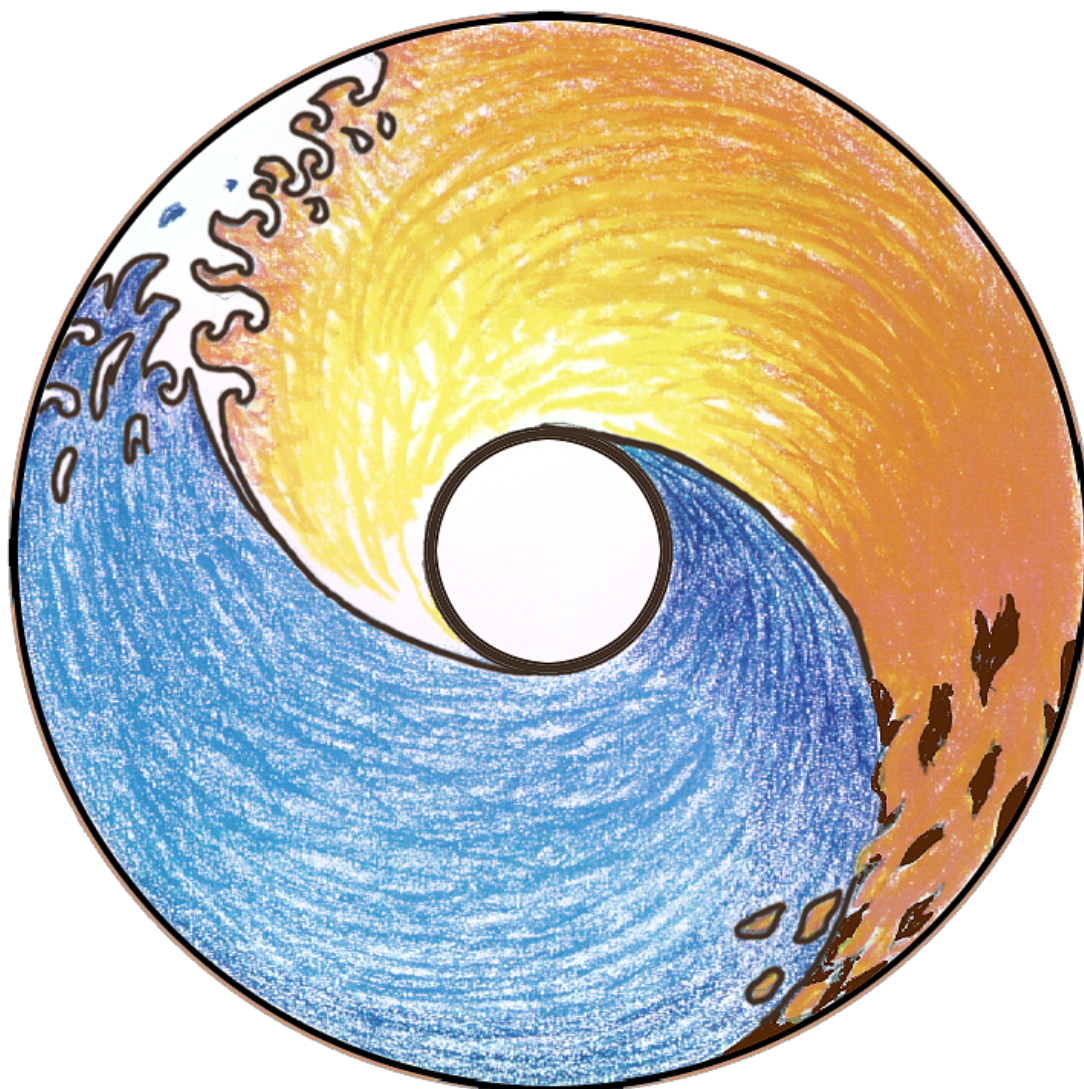


Tai Chi Basic Notes for Yang Style Classes



Tai Chi Classes

I - General

A - Definition - Tai Chi translates as “grand ultimate” and refers to the balance of major forces such as Yin and Yang. To balance the body properly and avoid extremes is the basis of Tai Chi meaning in regards to the health benefits. Sometimes you will see the term Tai Chi Chuan. Chuan refers to fist and gives reference to the fact that the creator of Tai Chi was a martial artist. You will also see the art spelled Taiji or Taijiquan.

B - History - We will not give the history of Tai Chi here but will say that five Chinese families were involved heavily in the last 300-plus years of development. They were Chen, Yang, Wu, Wu/Hao, and Sun Family. You will find that different groups will give history in different ways. The arguments of who was first or who is best are not very helpful for anyone because Tai Chi is a great art, and the goal should be the discovery of what is good Tai Chi practice regardless of the style.

C - Benefits - Tai Chi has many benefits. On the health side, *better circulation* may be the biggest. *Balance* is also a benefit. For Martial arts, Tai Chi was a battlefield art that used weapons as well as empty hand technique. For those interested in a martial art that does not fight force and is particularly effective at close range, Tai Chi is excellent art.

D - A Synthesis drawing from:

Chen Wang Ting, the founder, combined:

- *Martial art* Movement from Ming Dynasty done slowly and smoothly.
- *Tao Yin* - refers to exercises that lead and help move the chi or energy
- Tuna (breathing exercise)
- *Chinese Medical Theory* - which teaches that energy flows through the body in circuits and things that help the energy flow is healing, and things that don't are destructive. Therefore, Tai Chi focuses on keeping the body straight and relaxed so that circulation will be maximized.
- *Taoist Philosophy* - Taoist Philosophy encourages a balance between Yin and Yang for harmony and unity, and this general idea influenced the development of Tai Chi.
- *Silk Reeling Unitary Movement* - The whole body moves in a gentle spiraling action beginning at the Dan Tian or Ming Men point.

II - Basics

A - Fang Song - refers to loosening the body... We loosen the body through three methods. *Rotation, Static Stretching, and slinging or swinging*. Each method plays a role in loosening the body. When the body is loosened, it is better for the circulation of blood and chi. Sometimes we use a little massage to help the body loosen as well. Sometimes instead of our standard Tai Chi warmups, we will do what is called a *Qi Gong* set. This term refers to many methods of exercise sequences that have been practiced for many centuries in China for the purpose of health. Tai Chi is one method of Qi Gong that happens to also be a martial art. Qi gong systems can be based on very simple exercises in order to stimulate Qi through the body.

The Qi Gong sets we use in the classes for warm-up are *Eight Pieces of Brocade*, *Master Li's sequence*, Zhu Tian Cai's Moving Tai Chi set, and Chen Bing's warm-up sets. We use these from time to time to warm up in place of our usual fang song exercises.

B - Wuji - Wuji means empty, nothingness, no movement. It is the easiest place to develop the straight body that is required in Tai Chi. The stance is simple in that it is a shoulder-width basic stance. It does have a number of requirements.

C - Turning - When one learns to sit in the legs fully in the Tai Chi postures, he/she will be able to turn the torso left and right without causing the knees to cut or turn in and out. This protection of the knees is essential for health of the knees. A straight body and correct posture is the most important thing for a Tai Chi student.

D - Shifting Weight - Awareness of the body is an important basic and how to shift the weight from the right leg to the left and back, *keeping the body straight*. After stepping lightly or empty, one sinks and establishes the foot. As you turn during the sink, the body will naturally shift its center from one side to the next.

E - Stepping - In Tai Chi, we take steps by placing the foot lightly with very little weight. Then we shift the weight or pour the weight into the foot that we stepped. We avoid dropping all the weight as the stepping foot touches the ground. When stepping forward, touch with the heel, and stepping backward is with the toe touching first. Sideways can vary between the toe and heel.

F - Silk Reeling - Silk reeling or pulling silk is the core of the movement in Tai Chi. The entire body spirals with various rules or restrictions on certain parts of the body, such as the knees. The spiral movement is created in the center or "dan dian" area, and then, like a wave, it flows up and down from the center. The spiral twist in one direction and then reverses before reaching extreme states. This movement stimulates the circulation of blood and chi when done properly. There are many silk reeling exercises to develop this core movement.

G - Peng - Peng is the body tension state involving tension and relaxation. It is inner flexibility created by a perfect mix of stretch and relax. Stretch, but don't go tense or rigid. Relax, but don't go limp. One is always developing the Peng or proper body state and this should be maintained throughout the body during the Tai Chi exercise or form.

H - Breathing - The most basic instruction about breathing is to not hold your breath while you are practicing the warm-ups or the Tai Chi basics. Next, we want everyone to learn to breathe using their mid-section muscles, etc. We want to avoid just using the chest and upper body to breathe. The purpose is that deep, soft, continuous belly breathing will help a lot in the goal to relax the body and mind. We start often with Natural Breathing which is expanding the mid-section on the inhale and pulling the mid-section inward on the exhale. We also developed the opposite, which is called Reverse Breathing. It is still using the midsection but on the inhale, you pull the stomach inward, and on the exhale, you let the mid-section expand. Timing the breath with Tai Chi movements are not a priority, but when one can move well enough, it is best to do the basic one-arm silk reeling movement timed with the breath. It is not a hard rule, but in general, one inhales when the arms go up or out, and you exhale when the arms come down or inward. Timing the breath with movement or, rather the movement with the breath can be done eventually but will take a while to develop.

III - Form

This is the sequence that, throughout history, was passed down in order to transmit the art. It contains choreographed movements that are practiced with the principles in order to achieve the many benefits of Tai Chi. There are many forms even within each style, and there are many Tai Chi Styles that have their own sequence. The important thing is that one maintains the principles of Tai Chi. Which form or style pales in importance to learning what the basics and essence of Tai Chi is all about. Form is done slowly and smoothly and can take from 5 minutes to 1 hour to perform, depending on the number of movements and the speed. Often the teacher will teach a mini-form before teaching a longer form. In Chen style, we usually have two pre-forms before one attempts to do the long original form. So we have the Square Form, the 13 Form, and then Laojia (Old Frame). The square form has four movements repeated times for 16 movements altogether. The 13 form has 12 unique movements, and Laojia has 72 movements. In Yang style, we do the square form, which is the first section done in four directions. The main form is 64 movements. There is a longer original Yang form. We practice the 64 as we feel it has all the ingredients, and of course, it can be repeated for a longer practice. There are also many weapon forms in Tai Chi as well. None of these are necessary to know Tai Chi. The most important thing is good alignment and then training the basics.

IV - Breakdown Of Each Area

Class Preparation

Please come to the class, being fully nourished and hydrated. If you have high or low sugar issues, make sure you have done what is necessary to be balanced as you come to class. Please do not skip a meal before coming as it is not best to work out when hungry or full. Please know that you can sit at any time to rest during the class. We have a brief break for water in class, and some sit during Wuji, which is restful, but at any time you are not feeling right or weak, please feel free to sit and watch for a few minutes. If you are new to the class and the hour is too much physically, you may certainly rest during portions of the class.

Warm Up

Loosening the body is critical for all internal arts. There are three types of loosening exercises. The first is **Rotation**. Rotation controls the movement and normally uses a circular motion designed to find a pattern of stretch that does not go to the extreme in any direction. A wise pattern is selected, and then repetition is done to help warm and loosen the body. The second kind of loosening is **static**. This is when you stretch a muscle and just hold it while stretching. This is best done when one is already warming up. The third type of loosening is **swinging or slinging**. This should be done gently and carefully and usually after warming a little bit.

All three types will work in different ways to help the process. In general, Rotation is the safest at all times, and the older the person, the rotation will always work. Static is best after you are warm, and swinging or slinging movement is best when you are warm. The latter two are at higher risk of injury, but if done smartly, they will definitely enhance your body looseness. Looseness allows the chi to flow better through the body for health benefits.

The following warmups are only a few of many.

Wrist Circles - Clasp hands together, fingers interlocking but loose. Keep the wrist loose and form a smooth figure eight motion with one wrist higher while the other is lower. It is important to work toward a smooth round motion with the wrist.

Double Shoulder Circles start with the fingers pivoting from an acupuncture point in the chest. This is called the Zhong fu point in the chest. When you do this exercise, try and have an equal arc to the rear of the body as you do to the front. This will determine the circle size. Remember not to go to the extreme during the stretch.

Single Shoulder Swinging Motions - Depending on your shoulders condition, you may do this a number of ways. If you have shoulder clicking or injuries, start with the circle in front of the body before gradually moving it to the side of the body. When your hand is at the top, make sure you rotate your arm so that the thumb is facing down as it begins to descend. This is a very important point for this exercise. Build the stretch

gradually. This exercise can be done as a rotation or as a slinging one if you drop your arm at the top with the speed of gravity.

If you are able to get your shoulders pretty much to the side, then you may want to develop this exercise with both arms simultaneously. This one must follow the same general rule regarding the thumbs down when descending. Make sure to turn the body when the arms move to one side. This exercise is good for loosening the chest once you have a free rotation.

Double Inward Circle is a rotation. It is a large Circle and will get the Circulation moving quickly. Put practically all your weight on your rear leg during this exercise.

Single Whip to Back is an exercise to do with caution. It is a swinging exercise. Extend an arm upward high in front of you before letting the elbow fold so the palm can slap the back. Be careful, but you will find yourself loosening nicely after a few days.

Double Whipping back and forth. This is a similar stretch but at a little different angle. Again be careful. This swinging exercise lets the arms fall down with gravity speed before swinging back up and around to the opposite shoulder.

Teacup is a famous movement belonging to many styles. It is good for the shoulder, wrist, and chest. Be careful learning the pattern, and make sure you turn your waist with the movement at the right time. Focus on your shoulder so you will not take it to the extreme. You can reverse the pattern as well.

Double Teacup is a terrific stretch for your back. So, according to the shape you are in and allow all these exercises to build gradually.

Rolling Forward. This is a circular motion in front of the body. Keep the kua open and let the turning of the waist control the speed of the arms.

Reverse Rolling. This is the reverse exercise of the one above. The wrist are turning on the liver point in the opposite direction.

Outer Circles is used in about every art in some way. Focus on unitary movement. Start by keeping elbows close to the body or a smaller circle.

Wuji

Why is Wuji So Important for Improving Health?

by Gaofei Yan and Jude Smallwood

I - In Chinese philosophy, Wuji means absolute quiet, void of any movement, thought or activity, complete nothingness? Wuji is the quiet before the very beginning or after the very end. Tai chi comes from Wuji and returns to Wuji and is represented by the center circle within the large circle of the Tai Chi symbol.



The Wuji is in the center part of the circle.

The exercise discussed in this article is based on this philosophy.

II - The Wuji exercise immediately reduces tension, even deep unconscious body tension which usually goes undetected. Often we are unaware of these “background” tensions but by the time we discover their unhealthy effect on us, it is too late. By then, they have contributed to minor discomforts like headaches, indigestion, high blood pressure and other ailments common in our high stress society. When these deep tensions continue unchecked, eventually they can result in serious illness, disease or injury.

Chinese Medicine teaches that tension (stress) will block the continuous smooth flow of chi. Because chi is the “leader of the blood, poor chi circulation will negatively influence the blood circulation causing the body to grow improperly. Without the nourishment provided by a strong chi/blood movement, our body becomes “dry” and stiff, unable to optimize organic performance. Good chi and blood flow enable the body’s systems to be “fluid” and soft in order to be successfully functional. Without good chi/blood circulation the total body, its organs, and its systems (nervous, circulatory, digestive, etc.), falls out of natural harmony resulting in sickness, weakness, systemic breakdowns, stress related illnesses and disorders. Chi flow stimulates blood flow which is vital for a good interchange of the internal energy necessary for good health.

When you develop the ability to relax completely and go into a deep “quiet,” in time, you will reduce and eventually reverse the damage produced by pressure and emotional or physical strain. Initially it may appear that nothing has changed outwardly but, in fact, much has changed internally. After practicing Wuji, many people discover that their face and hands become warm and red, and the flesh (as in the hands) appears more “puffy” and softer to the touch than usual. These traits are evidence of good “chi” circulation.

III - Today, we are more aware of how unhealthy emotions like anger, worry, fear, sadness and insecurity affect our physical well-being. Modern medicine emphasizes that stress and tension are the largest contributing factors for the alarming increase in heart disease, nervous disorders, weakness, mental failure, and general health

breakdowns. The greatest killer in this country is stress and related illnesses or conditions.

According to the theory of Chinese Medicine, each emotion is directly related to a specific bodily function or organ, and that “quietness” or harmony helps the kidneys to heighten the hormonal system. It considers the kidney the most important organ of the body and directly connected to the hormone system. When the mind is quiet and relaxed, the kidneys become stronger and more stable, and stimulate hormone production. Due to this increased hormonal surge, more energy/chi is manufactured. Then all bodily systems and organic material like bones, organs and skin in their turn feast on the chi and blood (refer to figure 3). If the kidney is denied quiet and stillness, energy decreases producing ill side effects like loss of strength. As a result, each organ and system, like the “domino effect” is adversely affected one after the other.

The “Domino Effect” of Stress On Our Health

Step 1 - Mind is Out of Harmony

Step 2 - Kidneys become Weak

Step 3 - Hormone Production Decreases

Step 4 - Less Energy/Chi Manufactured

Step 5 - The Entire Organic Body receives insufficient Nourishment from Chi and Blood

The Best Natural Way to Improve Health

Step 1 - Mind is Quiet and in Harmony

Step 2 - Kidneys become Stronger

Step 3 - Hormone Production Increases

Step 4 - More Energy/Chi is Manufactured

Step 5 - The Entire Organic Body Feasts on the Chi and the Blood

Step 6 - We become stronger from the inside to the outside

Popular and professional opinions unanimously agree that a nutritious diet, proper exercise, fresh air and correct sleeping habits are necessary to preserve good health. Physical exercises like body building, aerobics and yoga can draw chi to specific areas and also increase circulation. However, this represents a “short term” solution for long term health. This concept is better explained by the analogy of the ordinary battery.

When the battery's circuit is properly connected and the voltage is increased, the tester bulb brightens. However, if the battery is not recharged or changed to a stronger one (represented by steps 1 through 4 from Figure 3), the bulb stays lit for a shorter period of time because the battery will be drained of power more quickly. Likewise, you can generate chi with exercise but if you do not include these steps, you are attempting to "light the bulb" without improving their battery. Based on this theory even people who make absolutely no effort to maintain a long healthy life and are "just easy going" can actually out live the proverbial health fanatic. This is because the efforts of these health conscious people start after step five (5) and although they will burn their bulb brighter, it will burn for a shorter time with the same battery. An easy going person will burn his bulb at a consistently lower voltage for a longer period with the same battery (longer life.)

Everyday we witness many situations which define the critical role harmony plays in maintaining good health. We often hear of a person, who, in spite of making all the right choices to maintain good health, unexpectedly suffers a severe injury or crippling disease, or even dies prematurely. And yet, we observe the opposite where people survive to an old age even though they abused their body or had physical habits which would normally guarantee an early disease or even death. But somehow they live a long time with little or no suffering despite their poor living. Why? It is simple. Quite often the latter, for one reason or another, was able to give minimal attention to their stress and emotional challenges. Therefore, without realizing it, they were able to reduce or eliminate their worry and anxiety tremendously benefiting mental and physical health. People who can relax do not "empower" their daily tensions and are better able to nourish their "internal" body and physically resist the potential bad effects from such negative pressure. They automatically enjoy better health.

An old Chinese saying, "kind people have a long life", has very sound physiological reasoning. By understanding the important role peace and quiet have on our health, we can see shy people in harmony (kind people) have a long life. They obviously and perhaps unknowingly, took good care of their peace of mind and were able to "let go" of internal obstructions. They experienced "quiet."

IV - Wuji really is a simple exercise and you just have to follow the **steps** listed.

1. Stand naturally with the feet placed apart to the width of the shoulders. Place your hands to your side with the palms facing inwardly.
2. Close your eyes and smile a little. The tongue should naturally touch the roof of the mouth. Make certain that your body is straight with minimal or no muscle tension.
3. Imagine taking a shower inside your body, meaning that warm water at the top of the head would slowly trickle down while cleansing the whole body and exit from the bottom of the feet. Repeat this mental exercise three times.

4. Gently focus your mind on the lower abdomen (Dan tian) but do not force the attention. Visualize a calm, peaceful place like the middle of the ocean, top of a mountain or deep in the forest. Keep your focus there as long as you can.
5. Finish with the Wuji closing exercise.
6. Walk around for one or two minutes.



This exercise is a wonderful exercise! The goal is reach a state of nothingness, a calmness encountered only when you completely relax and release all tension and internal stress. The correct Wuji standing posture can be learned easily and with minimal daily exercise, it will soon benefit you mentally and physically. Good Wuji does not require a strict scheduling or special timing. You can start with three or five minutes at a time and do it as often as you can gradually increasing your practice time at your own pace. There is no rush to excel; the main objective is the quietude.

Successful meditation can help you gain tranquility but some styles of meditation do not really produce serenity as intended. They can consist of a series of complicated movements, imagination activity, visualization exercises, breath control techniques, and various other aversions. Most people need to relax deeply but are unable to and so they tend to pursue these meditations and exercises to help them. However, it is possible to be misled by technique which defeat the main purpose which is the attainment of peace

and quiet. In addition, the extra expense and rescheduling might even contribute to their stress load.

V - Chinese Medicine has taught for thousands of years that, for all intents and purposes, proper exercise and nutrition are good but the most significant factor in good health is to first have peace and quiet, internal harmony. This is the key point emphasized by Chen Xin, 16th generation Chen Family in his great works, Illustration of Chen Style Tai chi;

The mind is the director and control center of the body; the kidney is the source of life (the building and rejuvenating energy of the body.) We must clear our mind of all desires and distractions in order to build, protect and maintain a well developed foundation. When our foundation or root (mind and kidney is stable and strong, our body is also stable and strong like a well-rooted tree which produces flourishing leaves and healthy limbs. With a strong foundation, our body will perform well at anything we choose. This is the most important principal

No matter how many theories and concepts are practiced, there is none more important than clearing our minds of all distractions in order to build a good foundation. A good foundation increases Original Chi and is the source of our body's life force. As your body becomes stronger, your practice will develop much better than someone who doesn't understand and apply this primary principal.

When your mind is calm, you will experience conscious and unconscious changes. As you let go, you release muscle tension and distractions like pain and mental "chatter."

You then begin to enjoy the benefits of Wuji. Try it. See how deep into this quiet state you can go and what sensations you can experience.

Qi Gong - Qi refers to energy and Gong means exercise. This is a generic term that refers to all kinds of exercises that promote qi flow.

We practice four sets of Qi Gong - 1. *Eight Pieces of Brocade* 2. *Zhu Tian Cai's Set* 3. *Master Li Enjou's Set* and 4. *Chen Bing's Set*

Eight Pieces of Brocade

- 1) *Holding Heaven* - Improve digestion system. Good for weight control. Good for Heart (hands above head)

2) 2) Shooting A Bow - Works on the lung system. In traditional Chinese medicine theory, the lung is related to the skin. So it is good for keeping skin fresh and soft as well.

3) Raising One Arm - This exercise helps the spleen and stomach.

4) Turning And Looking Backward - Make people calm down and eliminate emotional problems.

5) Rotate The Body - Helps people recover from the overuse of their body.

6) Bending The Torso - It is good for the kidney system. In traditional Chinese Medicine, the kidney system includes reproduction and urinary systems.

7) Tightening Muscles - It will help you to build up strength.

8) Settling Down Whole Body - This is the finishing movement. Sink “qi” or “chi” - internal energy.

Zhu Tiancai’a Moving Tai Chi Set

1. Wuji Standing Pole Exercise
2. Supporting the Sky Exercise
3. Downward Pressing Palms Exercise
4. Grasping Qi Exercise
5. Spread Wings Exercise
6. Embrace the Ball Exercise
7. Opening and Closing Exercise
8. Turning the Waist Exercise
9. Beginning and Ending Exercise

Silk Reeling

Silk Reeling Exercises - The essence and Core of Tai Chi Chuan Silk Reeling has three components - 1. Turning (spiraling) 2. Stretch and 3. Relax. Peng in basics is stretched and relaxed and now by adding turning it becomes silk reeling. Silk reeling movement is suppose to produce internal energy in the body. The main silk reeling consist of the first two circles... outer and inner and then 4 combinations that can be done in reverse as well. Here are the main silk reeling exercises.

1. **Single Hand Outer on Top**
2. **Single Hand Inner on Top**

**SINGLE HAND CLOUD HANDS
RIGHT HAND**

	Structure	Hand Height	Palm Facing	Body Facing	Weight Position
Position 1	<i>Body straight Lift from top</i>	Dan Dian	Forward	25 D Right	Right Leg
Position 2	<i>Hand at crease and knees Tongue touches palate Hips relaxed</i>	Dan Dian	Upward	Square	Left Leg
Position 3	<i>Balances on bubbling well Has lighty grip Shoulders relaxed</i>	Shoulder	Down	30 D Left	Left Leg
Position 4	<i>Chest relaxed</i>	Shoulder	Outward	Square	Right Leg

These two are combined in 4 combinations:

1. **Mirror** - Double Inward and Double Outward
2. **Cloud Hands and Reverse Cloud Hands**
3. **Chasing Hands and Reverse Chasing Hands**
4. **Open and Close and Reverse Open and Close**

Tai Chi Chuan Form

Opening - Wu ji - Stillness standing

Section I

1. Beginning
2. Ward Off Right

3. Ward Off Left
4. Ward Off Right
5. Rollback
6. Press
7. Withdraw and Push 8. Single Whip

Section II

9. Lift Hands
10. Shoulder Bump
11. Crane Spreads Wings
12. Brush Knee
13. Play Guitar
14. Brush Knee
15. Step Forward, Parry, Punch 16. Withdraw and Push
17. Cross Hands
18. Carry Tiger to Mountain 19. Rollback
20. Press
21. Withdraw and Push
22. Single Whip

Section III

23. Punch Under Elbow
24. Repulse Monkey Right 25. Repulse Monkey Left 26. Repulse Monkey Right 27. Diagonal Flying
28. Wave Hands Like Clouds 29. Wave Hands Like Clouds
30. Wave Hands Like Clouds 31. Single Whip

Section IV

- 32. Snake Creeps Down
- 33. Golden Rooster Stands on One Leg R 34. Golden Rooster Stands on One Leg L 35. Separate Foot Right
- 36. Separate Foot Left
- 37. Left Heel Kick
- 38. Brush Knee Right
- 39. Brush Knee Left
- 40. Punch Downward
- 41. Ward Off Right
- 42. Rollback
- 43. Press
- 44. Withdraw and Push
- 45. Single Whip

Section V

- 46. Fair Lady Works Shuttles NE 47. Fair Lady Works Shuttles NW 48. Fair Lady Works Shuttles SW 49. Fair Lady Works Shuttles SE 50. Ward Off Left
- 51. Ward Off Right 52. Rollback
- 53. Press
- 54. Withdraw and Push 55. Single Whip

Section VI

- 56. Snake Creeps Down
- 57. Seven Stars

58. Step Back and Ride Tiger

59. Lotus Kick

60. Bend Bow and Shoot Arrow 61. Step forward Parry and Punch 62. Withdraw and Push

63. Cross Hands

64. Close Tai Chi

Wuji

Short Yang Tai Chi Chuan

Note: We will use north, south, east, and west in our descriptions with the beginning of the form facing north for our standard direction reference. What will not be described in the movements is every sink or rise. Most of the sinks will be mentioned but fewer rises. Also the principle of turn left to go right and turn right to go left will not be mentioned most of the time. In addition, silk reeling is very near impossible to describe in a way that most people could follow. It has always been the case that one needs to have good teacher in person to get everything right. Having written material and video is the next best thing.

Opening

Many teachers do not teach this movement until later after finishing the form. I have thought that the reason

may be because the movement is difficult enough that I can understand why one would want to skip this movement. At any rate it is used in Chen style and Yang style by many teachers.

1Begin by standing with feet together touching at the heels and forming a fifteen degree angle with each foot facing north. Sink the weight into the right leg and foot. As the weight becomes heavy the left heel comes off the ground. 2Also as the right foot becomes heavy turn the body to the right which will cause the hip all the way down to the left foot to turn which will line up the left foot to face straight north. 3Step with the left foot to the left touching with the toe. As the foot touches it will still be lined up to face north. Sink into the right leg and shift the weight to the left foot. While sinking into the right foot begin to lift the hands a small distance upward. This movement is a double inward circle. The left hand moves clockwise and the right hand is moving counter clockwise simultaneously. Lift both arms as high as the solar plexus and then down. The palms turn upward as the hands rise and turn over as the palms descend. 4When the weight of the body gets to the left foot, turn the body left causing the right foot to turn on the heel to line up parallel to the left foot. Now the body shifts back to the center as one begins to raise and the hands finish

their descent. Hands end at the side of the body and one is in a traditional Wu ji posture. One can do Wu Ji for however long a time before beginning the movements.

Some do a “Quiet Standing” in the opening position before stepping out. Teachers differ on their emphasis on Wu Ji. There are some great teachers that emphasize a lot or very little. At the least one should prepare the mind and body for the form. One wants to be in the upper half empty lower half full body state. One wants to get away from the worries of the day and focus simply on Tai Chi.

1. Beginning

1The body sinks slightly, initiating as always in the middle of the body. Remain at the 50/50 weight distribution as the arms begin to rise. The arms are relaxed not allowing the shoulders to lift and having a natural

bend in the elbows. Even though relaxed, extend the arms outward as they lift. The wrist is slightly bent. As the wrist come to shoulder height, 2the wrist straighten and the fingers stretch completely unfolding from the original position. This action beginning with the wrist straightening, is done in a flow or chain reaction straightening every joint in the finger if possible. At the moment that the fingers are completely extended, 3the

wrist move backwards toward the shoulders as the elbows sink naturally. When the wrist get a few inches from the body, 4the hands begin to sink straight downward as the wrist will be moving and bending gradually. This downward movement is initiated by the body moving back upward as you move back into the Wu Ji posture. As soon as the hands move to the sides of the leg, 5the body relaxes as the palms turn to face the rear.

2. Ward Off Right

1As the body relaxes from the end of the last movement, the sinking begins to shift to the left leg as the waist is turning right. This waist movement causes the arms to move. The right arm swings around clockwise and the hand lifts to about shoulder height as the left arm swings low and forms a palm up position. The right and left arm appear to be holding a ball the side of a basketball to beach ball. The elbows are relaxed. 2Before this arm movement is totally finished, the body relaxes into the left leg and then shifts to the right. The body is turning to the right the entire movement. As the weight gets heavy in the right leg, the left heel will come off the ground. Try to keep the arch between the legs during the end of this movement so that the left knee does not cut inward.

3. Ward Off Left

1 Step forward with the left foot. Step with the left foot directly forward to the north paying careful attention not to step inward to the right. In

order to step correctly make sure you have the strength to hold your weight in the right leg, otherwise, it will be difficult to softly step as described. **2** Sink into the right leg and the arms will move toward each other. Begin to shift to the left leg as the arms pull apart. The left will move forward at solar plexus height facing the left back-of-hand to the front, and the right will move downward and to the rear with the right palm facing the rear.

3 When the weight is fully on the left foot, the right side of the body will turn, pivoting on the right heel. The right foot will turn from due east to northeast or 45 degrees right of north. The body will nearly be square to the front in a left forward stance.

4. Right Ward Off

1 Pivot 90 degrees to the right on your right toe. The body is primarily facing east. The arms turn a little naturally as the body turns. **2** Step with the right foot lightly a few inches to the east touching first with the heel. As you step both arms drop and swing as a pendulum right to left toward your rear left side.

Keeping the kua open, the body turns left. **3** Sink on left

turning left as the hands rise pulling toward your chest. **4**Shift into right foot as the body turns right and the hands begin to move at chest level out away from the body toward the east. The stance is close to a right forward stance and the hands end with the right ahead of the left with the right hand horizontal palm toward you and the left behind the right in a vertical palm facing out. The last part of the movement has the palms moving as if a volleyball is between them. **5**As your weight gets into the right foot, the left heel and body will pivot to the right. The technique projects toward the east. Any projection does not overpower the up and down balance and vertical sink that is present throughout all the movement.

5. Rollback

1Remaining in the right forward stance, the waist turns right about 25 degrees. Your arms rotate (right one turns counter clockwise and palm facing out and left hand rotating counter clockwise) moving right under the right elbow. Body is projecting toward 25 degrees to the right of due east. **2**Sink into right leg and shift to the left leg as the right arm bends to a vertical position and the left arm stays under the elbow as the body turns left. **3**Toward the end of the turn and shift, the left arm drops in a pendulum swing toward the rear left.

6. Press

1Sink on left leg as the left arm folds at the elbow and rises moving closer to your center chest meeting the right arm. 2Shift to right leg turning the body right as the palms touch at the palm heels. 3Press forward in this position toward the east.

7. Withdraw and Push

1Sink on right leg shifting into the left leg turning the body to the left. The hands and arms separate during this shift to the left leg. The hands are rotating so that the back of your hands face outward close to your chest and apart about eight or ten inches. 2Sink on Left leg and shift to the right leg turning right and sending both hands out in front toward the east with a double palm out push.

8. Single Whip

1Sink on right and turn left shifting to the left leg. The arms move across parallel to each other and to the ground from right to left. 2Sink on left leg and shift to right turning to the right. The left arm drops during this shift and the right wrist hook pulls in close to chest. Be sure to keep shoulder and elbow down. 3Stay on the right leg with the weight and turn the body left sending the right hand outward toward the northeast.

As you make this turn left to send the wrist hook outward, pivot on the left ball of foot and the left arm stays near the right hip palm up. 4Step with the left foot toward the west touching down lightly with the left heel. Sink keeping the weight about 60/40 turning right. This makes the left arm begin a counter clockwise large circle moving from right to left in front of the face. After this sink and during the left circle, shift to left leg. It will feel a little like you are backing in ahead of the left arm moving across the face. When the weight in the left leg heavy, the entire body turns left as the right foot pivots on the heel taking the right foot to the northwest or 45 degrees. The body in in a left forward stance facing the west. The turn of the body causes the right arm to move around with the body so that it ends still extended out from the body facing the north at the end of the movement palm down in wrist hook position. The left arm ends in a more vertical position with the left elbow nearly bent 90 degrees and the left palm is facing the west. The arm is sitting on the left perimeter. Perimeter refers to the vertical should width lines of the body.