

THE SPIRAL CHI CENTER

HELPING PEOPLE TO CULTIVATE ENERGY AND VITALITY



T'ai Chi Ch'uan Definitions:

- **T'ai Chi Ch'uan** – Literally translated, this means grand ultimate boxing. The practice of t'ai chi includes the form (the set of movements we study) and can include weapons forms and two person exercises such as push hands or sparring. The more current translation is actually taijiquan; but most people know it as t'ai chi.
- **Chi** – Literally translated, this means energy or breath. Chi is the energy in our bodies which must flow freely throughout our system for good health. T'ai Chi helps us cultivate chi and ensure it flows freely. The more current translation is actually qi; but most people know it as chi.
- **Tan T'ien** – This is a major center of energy in the body located just below the navel. It is a critical point for development of chi. The more current translation is dantien.
- **Chi Kung** – Literally translated, this means energy work. The term developed in the 1970s to cover all the various forms of breath, movement, and healing in Chinese medicine. T'ai chi is a form of chi kung. There are myriads of different chi kung exercises and some chi kung forms. We will often practice some chi kung exercises during the study of t'ai chi. The more current translation is qigong.
- **Peng, Lu, Ji, & An** – Literally translated, ward off, roll-back, press, & push. These are some of the most important postures that are sometimes untranslated in t'ai chi texts.

Form Background:

- **Yang Style Short Form** is the collection of movements we study. It is a modification of a longer form from the Yang family.
- **Cheng Man Cheng** developed this form after years of studying with various t'ai chi masters including Yang Cheng Fu. His form and study is still respected by the Yangs who continue to teach a longer form.
- **Lineage** is important insofar as it ensures that you are getting a pure/quality teaching. While we may prefer what we study for specific reasons, there is no "best" t'ai chi. Different styles are different ways of attempting to embody the principles of t'ai chi.

Principles:

- **Relax** – The most important principle, relaxation gives you ease of movement, awareness, better energy flow and a lower heart rate.
- **Breathe** – A relaxed and long breath allows you to move energy and to stay relaxed.
- **Separate Weight** – We strive to be more substantial in one foot than the other to avoid the fault of being double weighted. It gives us greater balance and mobility.
- **Alignment** – This allows you to be integrated. Suspend the crown of your head; Knee over toe; Lower back relaxed; Torso plumb erect (not leaning forward or back).
- **Tan T'ien or Waist is the Center of Movement** – All movement is g
- **Keep Beautiful Lady's Hands** – Hands are relaxed/floating, not cocked at the wrist.
- **Reeling of Silk** – Move as though you are pulling silk, continuously so as not to break the thread. This grace ensures that you move momentum & energy throughout the body.

Further Resources:

- www.SpiralChiCenter.com – This website offers additional information on t'ai chi, several free documents, a practice CD, and other book recommendations.

Yang Style Short Form T'ai Chi Postures (Earth)

First Third	Second Third	Third Third
1. Preparation (from Wu Chi)	18. Embrace Tiger—Return to Mountain	37. Ward Off Right or Boxing the Ears
2. Beginning	19. Roll Back	38. Roll Back
3. Grasp Sparrow's Tail—Ward Off Left	20. Press	39. Press
4. Grasp Sparrow's Tail—Ward Off Right	21. Push	40. Push
5. Grasp Sparrow's Tail—Roll Back	22. Diagonal Single Whip	41. Single Whip
6. Grasp Sparrow's Tail—Press	23. Fist Under Elbow	42. Fair Lady Weaves at Shuttle (Four Corners)
7. Grasp Sparrow's Tail—Push	24. Step Back & Repulse Monkey (5)	43. Ward Off Left
8. Single Whip	25. Diagonal Flying	44. Ward Off Right
9. Lifting the Arm	26. Wave Hands Like Clouds (5)	45. Roll Back
10. Shoulder Strike	27. Single Whip	46. Press
11. Crane Spreads Wings	28. Snake Creeps Down (Descending Single Whip)	47. Push
12. Brush Knee—Twist step	29. Golden Pheasant Stands on Left Leg	48. Single Whip
13. Play the Pi Pa (Guitar)	30. Golden Pheasant Stands on Right Leg	49. Snake Creeps Down (Descending Single Whip)
14. Brush Knee—Twist Step	31. Separate Right Foot	50. Step Forward—Seven Star Dipper
15. Step Forward, Deflect Downward, Parry, and Punch	32. Separate Left Foot	51. Step Back to Ride the Tiger
16. Withdraw and Push	33. Turn and Kick with Heel	52. Sweep the Lotus
17. Crossing Hands	34. Brush Left Knee—Twist Step	53. Bend the Bow
	35. Brush Right Knee—Twist Step	54. Step Forward, Deflect Downward, Parry, and Punch
	36. Step Forward, Low Punch	55. Withdraw and Push
		56. Crossing Hands
		57. Closing