

THE SPIRAL CHI CENTER

Cultivate Vitality with T'ai Chi



T'ai Chi Ch'uan Definitions:

- **T'ai Chi Ch'uan or Taijiquan** – Literally translated, this means grand ultimate or great polarity boxing. The practice of t'ai chi includes the form (the primary set of movements we study) and can include weapons forms and two person exercises such as push hands or sparring. It also includes specific chi kung exercises. 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 developing and guiding 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. The t'ai chi form is a form of chi kung and the study of t'ai chi includes other chi kung exercises. There are myriads of different chi kung exercises and some chi kung forms. 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.
- **Cheng Man Cheng** developed this form after years of studying with various t'ai chi masters including Yang Cheng Fu. His contribution 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. Tension is like friction in our bodies.
- **Breathe** – A relaxed and long breath allows you to move energy and to stay relaxed.
- **Distinguish Empty & Full** – We strive to be more substantial in one foot than the other to avoid the fault of being double weighted. This gives us greater balance and mobility.
- **Integration** – Proper alignment allows your body to be connected in a way that energy and force can travel more efficiently. This begins with suspending the crown of your head; keeping knee over toe; lower back relaxed; torso plumb erect (not leaning forward or back).
- **Tan T'ien is the Center of Movement** – All movement is in some way governed or generated by the changes in our tan t'ien. The whole integrated body creates a movement--not a single limb.
- **Keep Beautiful Lady's Hands** – Hands are relaxed/floating for best energy flow.
- **Reeling of Silk** – Movement is 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** – Our website offers additional information on t'ai chi, several free documents, videos, a practice DVD, and book recommendations.

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Yang Style Short Form as Taught by Professor Cheng Man Ch'ing

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