

## Posture 1. ATTENTION

Feet are placed heels shoulder width apart facing comfortably forward, toes gripping the ground lightly, weight evenly balanced between the feet and within each foot. Standing naturally upright. Lightly stretch the head up and ant fingers and legs down. Attention should be paid to all parts of the body:

1. **neck:** head balanced above the spine not in front of the spine, not tipped forward/backwards (head suspended as though suspended from the crown of the head), relaxed jaw, eyes look forward
2. **shoulders:** relaxed down/open - extend the fingers to help open the arm joints
3. **chest:** relaxed down – fill your back slightly but don't pull your chest in
4. **lower back:** loose and upright - most people are tight here without realising it
5. **abdominal region:** relaxed front and back, a full feeling inside,
6. **pelvis:** level, not tipped forward or side to side
7. **hips:** loose in their sockets
8. **knees and ankles:** loose not locked, don't bend them too much.

This is possibly the most important posture of the form and is frequently overlooked. Without this being correct no other posture will be correct: it is the foundation for all of them. If I cannot loosen my body while it is stationary then I will certainly not be able to do it while I am moving.

The Taiji classics use the word *fang song* to describe this state of the body. This is usually translated as relaxed. I prefer the term loose. Imagine if you will the ocean on a calm day. The water could be described as song.



## Posture 2. BEGINNING (6 Parts)

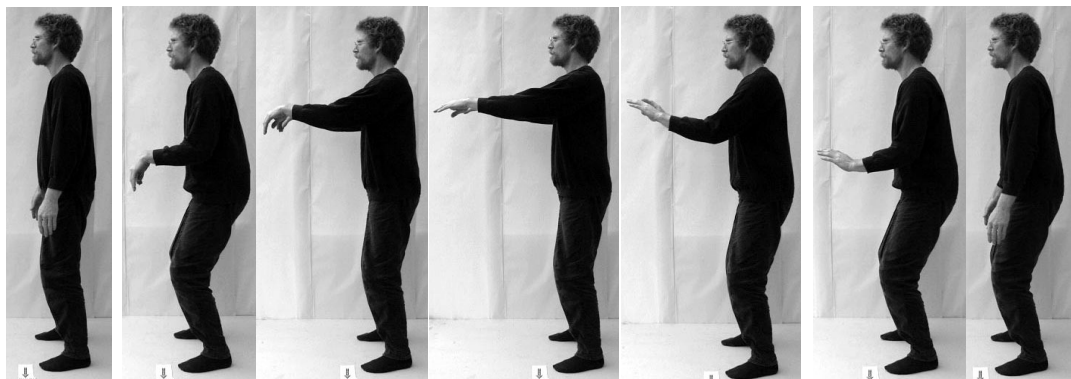
1. I close my body, bowing/slumping my back (sitting down slightly) to push my hands (wrists) forward in front of my hips with my arms bent.
2. I push up with my legs and straighten my back to extend my wrists up to shoulder height, keeping my shoulders relaxed, (fingers facing down)
3. I extend my arms forward, fingertips forward, palms down. I check that my shoulders have not stiffened and that my back is not arched. The middle/upper back should feel full.
4. I sit down slightly to pull my elbows and wrists down, my back bowing slightly, (fingers up slightly)
5. I close my body to pull my palms down and in towards my body, to end in front of my hips, palms facing the ground.
6. I keep my body straight and extend or relax down with my arms, fingertips down, arms by my sides. I check that my body feels like it did in posture 1 – balanced and loose.

Throughout this posture I don't let my shoulders rise. Use the least amount of effort and only that postural muscle effort needed to keep the arms in position. Make sure not to lean backwards or stiffen my back, particularly as I bring my hands up



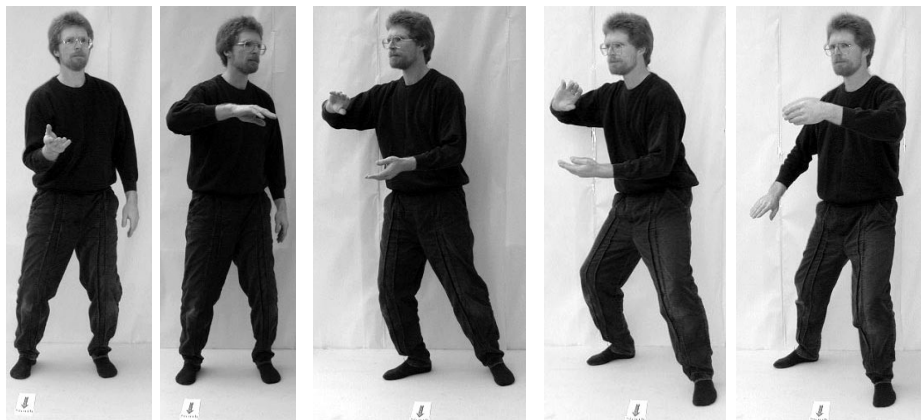
Above are front view pictures,

below are side view pictures.



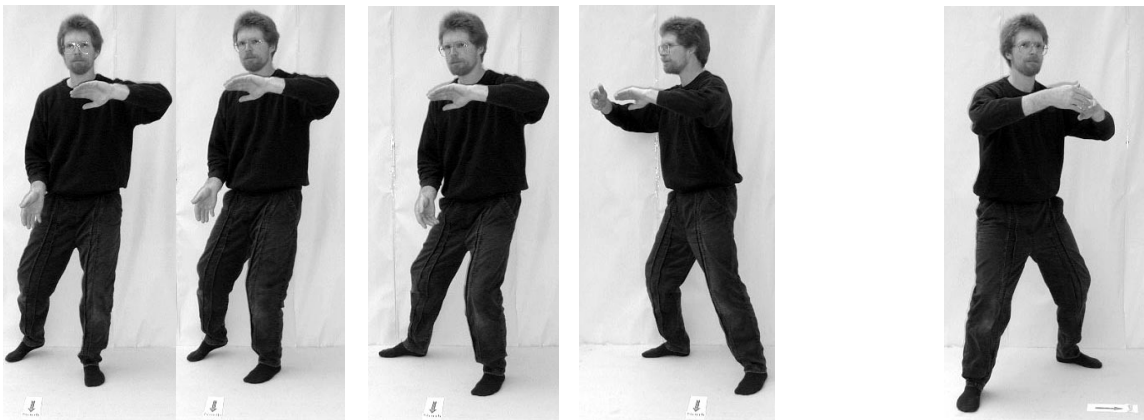
### Posture 3. WARD-OFF (LEFT) (6 Parts)

1. I shift weight slightly left, turning my waist left and pull (close) my right arm in, forward and up in front of my chest, right fingers facing forwards
2. I continue to turn left, pushing my right forearm up to a horizontal position in front of my chest, palm down, right elbow extended to my right side. Don't let your right shoulder stiffen or your right armpit collapse.
3. I turn right and shift weight onto my right leg turning my right toes out to the corner with my waist. My right arm remains up in front of my chest, palm down and out slightly, as though pulling to the right. My left hand closes in front of my left hip palm up and in slightly. Don't let your right shoulder stiffen or collapse.
4. I check that I have shifted weight cleanly by picking up my left foot. I do this by pushing my left knee forward so that only the tip of the left toes touch the ground with no pressure. This makes sure the foot is completely empty before stepping. I ensure I don't stiffen my left hip. Hips facing diagonally.
5. I step forward diagonally with my left foot by bending my right leg and relaxing my back, pushing my left leg forward so it ends up in front of its starting position, putting the foot down heel first and with no weight in it. (You can bring your left foot in beside your right foot and then out again if you wish. Don't worry about the length of your step, a small step (a few inches) forwards is fine to begin with.)
6. I shift my weight onto my left leg (70%) by pushing with my right leg and straightening forward. As I do this I push my left arm up and my right hand down with my waist. My left palm ends facing my body, palm in front of my chest. My right palm ends in front of my right hip palm down. Hips finish facing the right diagonal. I check my shoulder and back are still loose.



#### **Posture 4. WARD-OFF (RIGHT) (4 Parts)**

1. I shift the rest of my weight onto my left leg turning my waist left, left hand turning slightly palm down and out, right hand is pulled up (closed) towards the body, forearm extended horizontally in front of my right hip. (A pull to my left)
2. I adjust my left toes to the right as necessary so that they face diagonally. (This is an adjustment for beginners so that no strain is put on the left knee as I step in the next part. This can be dispensed with as hip knee looseness and co-ordination increases.) My left knee should face in the direction of my left toes
3. I step diagonally East with my right foot, so it ends up shoulder width apart in the East direction, putting my foot down heel first with no weight in it. (You can bring your foot in and then out again if I wish: Don't worry about the length of your step, a small step (a few inches) forwards is fine to begin with.)
4. I straighten my left leg to shift weight (70%) onto my right leg, pushing up my right forearm with my waist to end palm facing my chest, with my left hand facing palm forwards behind my right. The palms end up almost facing each other.



Front View

### Posture 5. ROLLBACK (2 Parts)

1. I turn slightly right, both palms turning over - left palm pushed to face chest, fingers pointing at right elbow. Right forearm is spiralled vertical, palm facing forward at head height, my forearm in front of my right shoulder
2. I turn left, shifting weight to my left leg (70%) as my arms get pulled left and down so that the left forearm finishes parallel to the ground palm up and the right diagonally upwards, fingers pointing North East (to the left corner). (Imagine pulling down to your left with your left arm.)



### Posture 6. PRESS (4 Parts)

1. I relax my left arm down and I open my chest on the left side (elbows move closer to my body)
2. I push my left palm up (elbows move away from my body)
3. I close my left palm onto my right palm, my elbows being pushed away from my body. My left palm ends facing forward on the right hand which has been pushed away from my body slightly (palm towards my body.) My right forearm is mostly horizontal and my left forearm more vertical. I finish with my hips facing the corner (North East)
4. I press directly forward by straightening my back and left leg to shift weight forward (East) onto my right leg (70%), keeping the hands palms pressing together in front of my body pushing up and out finishing at my chest height. (Imagine pushing from your left foot to your right forearm.)



## Posture 7. PULL DOWN AND PUSH (4 Parts)

1. I prepare to pull back and down by extending my arms, palms down wrists relaxed in front of my chest
2. I bow my back and shift weight back, opening my chest slightly, pulling down. (I shift as much weight back as I comfortably can, (say 70%) bowing my lower back and bending back leg without letting my knee collapse in, pulling my elbows down, as though I were pulling something down in front of me. Try to use your torso and not your arms to do this.) My hands end palm down in front of my chest.
3. I get underneath my palms, pointing my fingers up so my palms face forwards.
4. I push forward, extending my left leg without fully straightening it to finish on my right leg (70%) and straightening my back into my arms as I close my chest. (Try not to let your back stiffen or arch as your weight is pushed into your right leg, extending your elbows and hands forward (East). Be careful not to over extend.)



Front View picture above,

Side View pictures below



## Posture 8. SINGLE WHIP (8 Parts)

1. I pull to my left by pushing my weight to my left and turning my waist left; my arms are pulled around to my left with my waist: I pivot on my right heel so that my right toes turn in to face North. (Try to ensure your knees are not twisted and that they face in the same direction as your feet.) My hands remain in front of my shoulders, left palm away from my body, right palm up.
2. I pull to the right by turning my waist right and shifting weight to my right leg (70%) as I do, pushing my right elbow to my right. As I do this my right hand forms a hook (wrist relaxed down, tips of all fingers touching the thumb as though picking something up with all the fingers and the thumb.) My hook ends positioned in the middle of my chest, right forearm horizontal, right elbow points to my side, as though striking something standing to my right side with my elbow. My left hand circles down and palm up underneath my hook.
3. I turn left, shifting the rest of my weight (100%) onto my right leg, extending my right wrist out to the corner (North East). (Your waist will probably end up facing North West.)
4. I check that my left foot is empty. To do this I turn slightly more left without shifting weight, letting my left heel be pulled in by my waist so only the ball of my left foot touches the ground
5. I step to my left (West) with my left leg. To do this I turn my waist slightly left, bowing my right leg and back to push my left leg out, opening my left hip to turn my left foot to face left. (Stepping to the corner or whatever direction I can manage is fine.) I keep my weight in my right foot.
6. I pull my left arm in and up, to end horizontal in front of my chest, close to my right hook. Weight still on my right leg.
7. I shift weight left, opening my chest and turning left.
8. I extend my arms out and relax my elbow down. My right arm ends over my right leg in a hook and my left hand ends extended over my left leg, palm forward pushing.



### Posture 9. LIFTING HANDS (3 parts)

1. I sink all my weight into my left leg (100%), turning to the right slightly, pushing my left arm out and right and my right arm in.
2. Continuing to close my body, I turn slightly left, stepping up with my right leg into the corner (North West), right arm over my right leg, palm up, left arm in front of my chest palm down.
3. I turn my waist to push my right arm up and left arm down. My left palm ends facing my right elbow, left palm down, my right palm up. (Try not to lean backwards as you push up your hands.)



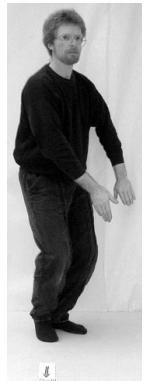
### Posture 10. PULL DOWN & SHOULDER STROKE (3 parts)

1. I turn my waist left and pull both arms down, left palm turning out past my left thigh and right palm turning in towards my left side. My right leg is pulled back towards my left foot, finishing with my empty right foot touching beside my left instep and my waist facing the side



2. I step to the corner (North West) with my right leg (heel down first) by bending my left leg. My waist remains facing the side (West) and all my weight in my back (left) leg.

3. I push my right shoulder / upper arm weight forward over my right leg (70%), turning my waist vertically up on my left side to circle my left hand up and across my body so my left palm faces right near my right elbow. Right arm remains down, palm facing my thigh (protecting my groin.)



### Posture 11. WHITE CRANE SPREADS ITS WINGS (3 Parts)

1. I turn my waist vertically up on my right side, opening my chest, to push my right arm up into ward-off, palm in front of my chest while sinking all my weight onto my right leg (100%): my left hand pushes down in front of my left thigh.
2. I close under my right arm, my left foot coming in towards my right heel, finishing toes down only, about shoulder width away from and beside and slightly in front of my right instep
3. I open my body to push my right palm up. This means I spiral left, pushing my right hand up by extending my right leg and pushing my waist up on my right side. Note my weight stays in my right leg. My right palm ends away from me in front and above my head. (Check to make sure your right shoulder hasn't lifted.) My left heel is pulled round so my waist and left foot finish facing the side (West). My left hand continues pushing down to end palm away from me, fingers pointing mostly down beside my thigh.





## Posture 12. BRUSH LEFT KNEE AND PUSH (5 Parts)

1. I turn my waist slightly left and close to pull (spiral) my right hand left and then down so my palm faces my nose (right elbow pointing down) and my left hand faces my left thigh.
2. I turn slightly right while rotating up on my left side and down on my right. This pushes my right hand down to end in front of my abdomen, forearm diagonally down & across my lower body palm facing down and pulling my left hand up to end in front of my chest palm up. Both elbows point down and to the sides.
3. I turn slightly more right. This sends my right arm to my right outside my right thigh and my left arm is pushed across my body, palm down and finishes a hands width in front of my chest.
4. I turn my waist to push my left side down and right side up, while stepping diagonally forward with my left leg. My left hand finishes palm down in front of my abdomen. My right palm ends by my right ear facing forward.
5. I turn left, shift forward and push. Turn full left so the waist ends facing the front (West), pushing my left hand across the top of my left knee/thigh. I push forward by straightening my right leg, pushing my weight onto my left leg (70%) while extending my right hand in front of my right shoulder to push. Make sure you don't over extend or lean forward. My front lower leg should be near vertical



### Posture 13. PLAY LUTE (4 Parts)

1. I shift all my weight forward into my left foot (100%), keeping the same upper body shape. Try not to lean forward. The right heel can come off the ground if needed.
2. I bring my right foot up along side and behind my left foot
3. I shift weight to my right foot (100%) and turn to the right bringing my right hand back to end palm out in the middle of my chest, right forearm parallel to the ground, fingers pointing forward. At the same time my left leg is pushed forward to end heel on the ground, toes facing forward (West); my right hand is pushed forward to finish fingers facing forward (West) palm facing across (North) in front of my left shoulder. My hips should end facing the corner (North West)
4. I close left to face the front (West) leaving my left hand where it is and pushing my right hand across the body to face forward, palm opposite my left elbow.



### Posture 14. BRUSH LEFT KNEE AND PUSH (4 Parts)

This is the same as **Posture 12** but starts from a different place. Consider its starting point as mid-way through part 2 of **Posture 12**.

1. I turn right, pushing my right hand down to end in front of my abdomen, forearm diagonally down & across my lower body, palm facing up and pulling my left hand over to end in front of my chest, forearm diagonally up and across the upper body, palm facing right and down. Both elbows point down and to the sides. I turn slightly more right to send my right arm up and out from the body to the right side, palm facing upwards and towards the body at throat height. My left arm pushes across my body, palm down and finishes a hands width in front of my chest.
2. I turn to the right slightly more, bending my right leg to push my left foot forward (West), stepping shoulder width apart, heel down first, right hand being pulled in and towards my head. My left hand continues to push down, finishing in front of my lower abdomen.
3. I turn left so my waist ends facing the front (West), circling my left hand across the top of my left knee/thigh. I push my weight onto my left leg (70%) while extending my right hand in front of my right shoulder to push forward. Again, make sure not to over extend or lean forward.



### **Posture 15. STEP UP, PARRY AND PUNCH (7 Parts)**

1. I form a fist with my right hand, palm down
2. I shift my weight back onto my right leg (70%) letting my left toes come up and turn to the left corner, turning the left toes as I do (South West); as I do I push my right fist palm down to hip height to finish extended in front of my right hip. My left hand gets pulled slightly backwards to end about 1 foot in front of my left hip, keeping space in my armpit and turning my left palm up.
3. I keep turning left while shifting weight 100% forward onto my left leg, circling my right hand up to end fist palm down in between chest and left shoulder about 2 hand widths from my body and my left hand circles up to my left arm up and out from my body to my left side, palm facing upwards and towards my body at throat height
4. Turn right, pushing my right fist up and away from me (to end palm towards up in front of my chest or throat) to parry an incoming blow and my right leg steps out to the right corner (North West) to finish heel only down, toes facing the corner (North West). At the same time my left hand is pulled back in to end palm forward beside my head
5. Shift weight forward to the right leg (100%), drawing my right fist back to my hip and extending forward (West) with my left hand
6. Keep turning right, to pull my left leg forward, stepping forward (West) shoulder width apart, letting my left hand follow with my body to the right to end palm facing the side (North.)
7. Shift my weight forward (70%), turning left to face the front (West): My left hand moves in towards my right hip (deflecting something to my right side) while my right hand forms a fist and punches up and forward to end in front of my right chest. My left hand ends facing my right forearm and elbow.



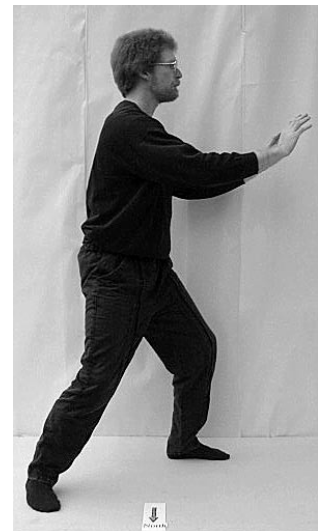
### Posture 16. WITHDRAW AND PUSH (4 Parts)

1. I turn my waist slightly left, closing my chest to push my left hand, palm down under my right elbow, opening my right fist.
2. I turn right, shifting my weight back onto my right leg and open my chest. This turns my left hand up and pulls my right arm through the palm of my left, shifting weight (70%) back onto my right leg as I do. I finish left hand palm up in front of my shoulder, left elbow pointing down close to the body, right arm palm up on my right hip, my waist facing the corner (North West.)
3. I turn to my left to face the front (West), pulling my left hand back and pushing my right hand forwards to end with both hands in front of my shoulders.
4. Push forward by extending my right leg without fully straightening it so my weight shifts to my left leg (70%). Keep my hips down and my back relaxed as my weight is pushed into my left leg, extending my elbows and hands forward (West). Be careful not to over extend.



Front view pictures above,

Side view pictures below



### **Posture 17. CROSS HANDS (5 Parts)**

1. Turn right slowly pulling my right arm to the side in front of my chest (deflecting) as I shift weight back onto my right leg (70%) pushing my left palm to the right; let my right hand continue to extend to my right side in front of I at head height. As I turn let my left toes be pulled to the front (North). My waist should end facing the front (North)
2. Push my left hand to my left corner (North West) at head height by pushing my weight back onto my left leg
3. Draw both arms down by singing my body so my palms end facing each other, elbows close to the body and step my right foot back to be placed parallel with the left, facing forward (North) and shoulder width apart
4. Straighten up to push my arms up and across my body, ending with the weight even between the legs and my arms in front of my wrists lightly crossed in front of my chest, right outside the left.

