

CG Martial Arts Academy

Twelve Tao Yin Qigong Set

The Goal of this set is intertwined into its name. Tao (pronounced DAO) Yin means the way of becoming soft. Promoting pliability and softness within the body is essential to Tai Chi. Master Li says, “Softness does not mean being like spaghetti, it means being like a whip made of pliable but connected steel”. Relaxing and sinking while letting go of muscular tension and keeping the body centered in postures that start to expand one’s comfort zones of balance is one of the “targets” of Tao Yin training. Stretching out the body in movement allows one to discover where structural weakness and “energy blocks” are so one can work on opening up those energy gates and strengthening those weak links in the chain.

Repetitions: This depends on the starting level of health but generally 5-10 full repetitions (both sides) are recommended for health while 30-50 repetitions will build martial strength and energy. Breathe as long and as slow as possible.

1. Heavenly Circles:

- Feet shoulder wide (natural stance) at 12:00. Knees slightly bent.
- Bring hands up to holding a large ball.
- Raise your fingers up over your head turning the palms facing away from you.
- Keeping your hips still – rotate your hands and upper body in circles – alternate directions.

2. Opening Gate:

- Natural stance, facing 12:00.
- Hands down at sides – fingers pulled back.
- Shift all your weight to your right foot – step out with your left heel to 9:00 turning into a bow stance to 9:00 while reaching forward in a swimming motion with your arms, inhaling.
- Pull hands back towards your chest – elbows facing out to 6:00 and 12:00 - while moving back on your left heel bringing your left ball of left foot off the ground and exhaling. (Contracting).
- Repeat movements on each side.
- Note: Movements can also be performed with arms moving in the opposite direction as described above.

3. Closing Gate:

- Natural Stance, facing 12:00.
- Start in “hourglass position” (knees bent 30% and touching).
- Inhale, rising on toes while bringing arms straight out shoulder level to 3:00 and 9:00.
- Exhale, bring arms forward in swimming motion in front then compress back into “hourglass position” bringing arms up to middle chest – elbows out - while breathing out.
- Alternative: Movements can also be performed with arms moving in the opposite direction as described above.

4. Rolling Ball:

- Wide stance, facing 12:00.
- Hold wide ball (arms outstretched to 3:00 and 9:00).
- Sitting back on your right leg, turn your left foot so it faces 9:00; exhale while rotating the “ball” over to 9:00 so that the left forearm rests on left leg; left leg is straight, right leg is bent. 70% of body weight is on right leg.

- Inhale, rise to face 12:00, still holding a large ball, then right leg extends to 3:00; roll the “ball” to 3:00.
- Repeat.
- Note: Open and expand the lats and stomach as rotate side to side. One side opens; one side closes. Relax and sink. Work without arms focusing on hip movements.

5. Fa Ching (To send forth the mind or energy):

- Feet together, facing 12:00.
- Shift weight to right leg; left leg steps out to 9:00 as left arm also extends out to 9:00 with wrists leading at shoulder height. Extend outward to 9:00 so that 70% of the body weight is on the left leg and right leg is straight.
- With feet remaining in place, shift body backward toward 3:00 while at the same time retracting the left arm, still at shoulder height, until hand comes back nearly to the side of the head.
- Shift weight toward 9:00, extend right arm to 9:00, wrist leading at shoulder height. Shift weight back, right arm retracting, as was done on left side. Rotate wrists so that fingers point up, palms in; briskly flicking fingers to 9:00. Arms and hands descend and stop only when they are well behind the body, toward 3:00. Palms are facing 3:00; rotate wrists so that palms face 9:00.
- Exhale, descend, body and weight shift toward 9:00; arms rotate toward 9:00; fingers may nearly touch ground during rotations; arms continue to rotate upward.
- Inhale, body rises, body begins to shift to right leg as body and weight shift toward 9:00; exhale as body and arms descend; fingers may nearly touch the ground.
- Inhale, body rises, arms extend downward, shrug shoulders. Palms downward, fingers facing 9:00, exhale and sink sharply.
- Inhale, rise and rotate clockwise to face 12:00. Exhale and relax.
- Shift weight to left leg; repeat previous movements on opposite side of the body.

6. Swimming Dragon:

- Feet together, facing 12:00.
- Raise arms overhead and join hands at palms, finger point upward. Feet are close together. Shift joined hands to 9:00; shift hips to 3:00.
- Sinking slowly, hands and hips shift to opposite sides; hands remain joined, descending to below chin; fingers point to 9:00 when hands shift to 9:00; fingers point to 3:00 when hands shift to 3:00; hands and hips continue to be opposite as “Dragon Swims” and continues to descend.
- Bring your hands to the center and turn the wrists over – fingers facing down. Move feet into hourglass position.
- Move your hands to the 3:00 while turning the hips and head to 9:00
- Switch moving your hands to 9:00 and your hips to 3:00.
- Continue to “swim” slowly rising. Bring arms above head (shooting an arrow into the sky) and rise up on toes. Breathe up and down, but try to remain balanced, strong and stable with the heels off the ground.
- Sink and harmonize.
- Repeat on the left side.

7. Circling Expand/Contract:

- Natural stance, facing 12:00.
- Exhale and descend with knees; at the same time, hands hanging naturally at sides (palms in); perform a downward massage movement along the backs of the legs until reaching the ankles.
- Inhale, rise up with the knees, hands shift to the inside and front of legs, moving upwards along with legs as the body rises.

- This movement can also be done with the hands in front of the body during descent and at the back of the body during ascent.
- Repeat.
- Note: Work smooth, connected movements. Do not over-compress.

8. Vibrating Board:

- Natural Stance, hands at sides, facing 12:00.
- Visualize standing on a board that is vibrating.
- Begin vibrating body starting with feet and move up body.
- Vibration works on disconnecting everything and yet moving it like a connected wave though the body.
- Visualize a wave of energy moving through the body, vibrating and moving out to the world and those around you.
- A massage unit placed on the feet can help to understand this principle.

9. Sun/Moon/Palm:

- Natural stance, facing 12:00.
- Right hand positions in front of Dan Tien. Fingers upward.
- Hand rises vertically until hand and arm are nearly vertical; hand and arm describe a large circle as upper body shifts to face 3:00.
- As hand and arms descend toward 6:00, palm faces 6:00; as hand and arm descend further, palm faces upward in “Gathering” position.
- Upper body begins to shift to return to 12:00; rotation ends with hand, palm up, at the waist, body facing 12:00.
- Left hand positions to Dan Tien; fingers upward; hand rises vertically until hand and arm is nearly vertical; hand and arm describe a large circle as upper body shifts to 9:00. As hand and arm descend toward 6:00, palm faces 6:00; as hand and arm descent further, palm faces upward in “Gathering” position.
- Upper body begins shift to return to 12:00; rotation ends with hand, palm up, at the waist, body facing 12:00.
- Repeat.
- Note: Expand and contract. Relax and sink. Follow your breath. Ultimately you want each hand moving continuously with no pauses or stops.

10. Dragon Coils Around Pillar:

- Natural stance, facing 12:00.
- Switch weight to left leg, right foot rises and circles to where it is in front of left shin, then circles to the right to touch the ground, heel first, at 9:00; body weight shifts to right leg; movement is repeated with left foot and leg.
- As lower body performs “Dragon Coils Around Pillar” with right foot moving toward 3:00. Upper body performs “Sun, Moon, Palm”. As lower body performs “Dragon Coils Around Pillar” with left foot moving towards 9:00, upper body performs left hand “Sun, Moon, Palm”.
- Repeat.
- Note: Rotating the raised knee works on opening the pelvis and connecting the body since the knee movement will connect and move the foot on the ground. Stability is essential, keep the breath centered. Knees and upper body can be worked in an inward fashion. Legwork helps set foundation for inward and outward crescent kicks.

11. Snake and Crane Dispersal:

- Feet Together, facing 12:00.
- Shift weight to right leg while arms rise to cross in front of chest, left in front of right; left leg and arm extended outward to 9:00 with arms curved outward and upward, left palm facing toward body; right hand palm upward at right waist; body and weight shift toward 9:00.
- Body and weight shift back toward 3:00; both wrists rotate; left arm moves outward and slightly upward toward 9:00; right arm moves outward and slightly downward toward 3:00; body and weight shift toward 9:00; head turns clockwise and looks toward 3:00.
- Body rises and turns to face 12:00; weight shifts to left leg; arms rise to cross in front of chest; right in front of left; right leg and arm extended outward to 3:00; complete movement as performed to 9:00.
- Repeat.
- Note: Project the “feeling” of crane or snake as you move through this posture.

12. Reach for the Sky/Climb the Mountain:

Reach for the Sky:

- Natural stance, facing 12:00.
- Extend both arms upward; stretch entire body upward, then relax
- Stretch upward again, until body can reach no further upward.
- Repeat.

Climb the Mountain:

- Facing 12:00.
- Body descends to a semi-crouch, palms together, hands between knees.
- Begin climbing the “Mountain” by raising one heel, then lowering it; raising the other heel, then lowering it, as though “Climbing”.
- As exercise continues, move more vigorously by raising and lowering the entire foot.
- While performing the footwork, palms energetically rub together, the rubbing being caused by the upward and downward movement of the legs.
- Repeat.