

3. Tai Chi : The Foundation Postures & Principles

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The Basic Stance : *Wu Ji*

The saying: "Build your house on a strong foundation" holds true with learning Tai Chi. We master basic "forms" (that is postures and movements) in order to flow through the set of movements we are studying.

The first form is the basic stance called "the wu-chi position." It is also called standing like a post. This stance is the foundation for all the other forms we will learn.

Every one knows how to stand, but the wu-chi stance has specific ingredients which help the tai chi player experience body and mind feeling of being centered. When done correctly, the wu-chi stance permits the player to experience the meditative state,

To stand quietly and experience the meditative state of relaxed alertness is the key goal of all way of energy classes. Following are the instructions for achieving the calm body/mind state the wu-chi form can produce.

Preparation.

Set aside time for this practice. Turn off the ringer on your phone, no interruptions, choose a quiet place, and focus on the goal of achieving peace of mind. You are comfortably dressed, wearing flat shoes, stockings or are bare footed.

- 1. The feet are parallel and shoulder width apart.**
- 2. The hands are at your side, palms face back, and the arms are relaxed, hanging limply from the shoulders.**
- 3. Knees unlocked (soft) and on line with the ankles (you can peek down and see your toes).**
- 4 The tail bone is tucked a bit. This places the sacrum plumb erect.**
- 5. The head is relaxed, and a slight tilt down to make the neck vertebrae "long.) The eyes are straight ahead, soft focus.**
- 6. Visualize the spot in the center of the crown of your head. This is a power point in acupuncture. Imagine a string from that spot up to a helium filled balloon. Feel the head floating.**
- 7. The shoulders are relaxed; imagine you are carrying pigeon eggs in each arm pit. This opens the shoulder joints and allows the energy to "run."**
- 8. Now stand quietly for a period of time (you choose how long). At least 5 minutes daily will help you master this stance. Ten minutes are even better. The traditional masters have their students stand at post for 20 minutes or longer!**