



## The 10 essentials of Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan

- 1. Feel the head suspended from the top**  
Raise your head naturally, without making your neck and body stiff, your eyes must always look forward to an imaginary opponent, head and body should move as one unit. When your head is carried erect and relaxed, your spirit (shen), intention (yi) and internal energy (chi) are directed out through your eyes.
- 2. Hold the chest in with the back straight**  
Relax your chest muscles, allowing your breathing level to drop closer to your lower abdomen (dantien). When you relax your chest muscles, you naturally round your back slightly, helping to keep your upper and lower back straight.
- 3. Loosen your waist**  
Relaxing the waist gives you more flexibility in the waist region. Waist and hip action together redirect the power produced in the legs.
- 4. Distinguish between full and empty**  
If the body's center of gravity, which carries most of the body's weight, rests over the right leg, that leg is FULL. Since the left leg has less weight and no center of gravity over it, it is EMPTY. If your body's weight is spread evenly between both legs, you are DOUBLE WEIGHTED, which is incorrect. A double-weighted person is easily pulled off balance and unable to move quickly and easily in any direction.
- 5. Sink the shoulders and drop the elbows**  
Relax your shoulders with elbows pointing down. If the shoulders are tense or the elbows stick out, your breathing and chi levels rise, making your breathing shallow and the entire body tense.
- 6. Use intention not strength**  
When you move use your intent (yi) to accomplish your action, not hard body force. This keeps your body relaxed and supple, yielding and redirecting, rather than exerting force against force.
- 7. The whole body moves as one unit**  
Upper and lower body follow each other. Energy is rooted in the feet, develops in the legs, then is redirected by the waist and expressed through the hands and fingers.
- 8. Internal and external are in mutual harmony**  
Internal energy (chi) and external power (muscle power) are both necessary. However, you should not have an excess of one over the other. Both should balance each other.
- 9. Movements are continuously flowing without interruption**  
All movements of the form must be connected and be performed without pauses or breaking the flow of the move. This effortless and continuous flow of movements allows the chi and blood to circulate and flow freely.
- 10. Attain stillness in motion**  
Although you are moving, your mind should be calm and quiet. This allows you to breathe easily, think clearly and move with agility. Tai Chi Chuan is often referred to as "Mediation in Motion".