



The Sixteen Stances of Stav

Stav is a 1500 year old tradition of mind/body/spirit training handed down from generation to generation by the Hafskjold family in Norway.

Stav is the study of reality, learning to see and seek to understand the nature of Orlog, the primal-law of the universe.

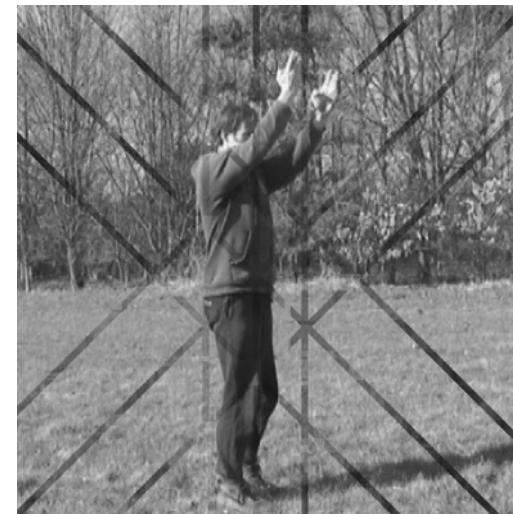
Stav literally means: 'knowledge of the rune staves' the runes being archetypal symbols which have been used in Northern Europe for thousands of years. The runes have many forms and uses, the Hafskjold-Stav teachings are a living tradition of using the runes in everyday life.

This Booklet will show the reader how the sixteen stances of Stav are performed in their simplest form. This will be useful both to those with a general interest in mind/body/spirit training and the student of Stav needing a clear and comprehensive guide to performing the stances.

\$6



The Sixteen Stances Of Stay



As Taught in the Hafskjold-Stav Tradition

by Graham Butcher
based on the teachings of
Ivar Hafskjold





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The Sixteen Stances of Stav By Graham Butcher

Photographs taken by Phil Brough

First Edition July 2001 by: Stav Marketing and Publishing Ltd.

Now published by Stav Books. Kidlington, UK

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<http://www.iceandfire.org>

Distributed in the US by Ice and Fire USA

PO Box 2179; Fairfax VA 22031; USA

<http://www.iceandfire.us>



Stav Training in the USA

Courses are held throughout the year and details of current and forthcoming events can be obtained from the websites (see details inside front cover) or by sending a SAE to Ice and Fire; PO Box 2179; Fairfax VA 22031 or phone 703 447 7310

Other Publications from Stav Books

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Book: Stáv the Fighting System of Northern Europe The martial aspect of Stáv. By Graham Butcher \$9 plus \$.50 P&H

Booklet: This is Stáv A comprehensive introduction to the Hafskjold-Stáv tradition by Graham Butcher

Booklet: The Principles of Stáv The terminology and concepts of Stáv explained by David Stone

Booklet: The Festivals of Stáv An Introduction to the festivals and natural cycles important in the Stáv tradition by David Stone

Booklet: A Book of Runes a guide to the meanings, associations and mythological connections of the runes by Graham Butcher

Booklet: Stáv for Health and Well Being The health benefits of practising Stáv by David Stone and Graham Butcher

Ordering

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The Sixteen Stances of Stav

Rune	Meaning
	Means Ice. Is symbolises Winter, the hunt, or a state of stasis.
X	Means a good Year, fertile land and a plentiful harvest. Ar symbolises plenty, the earth and the bounty of nature.
S	Means the Sun. Sol symbolises the peaceful warrior who brings harmony and justice.
↑	Means war and justice. Tyr symbolises victory, self sacrifice and honour.
B	Means Birch Tree. Bjork symbolises female energies, magic, childbirth and family life.
◊	Means mankind and the moon. Mann symbolises sexuality, witches, humanity and death.
↖	Means Water, bath or lagoon. Laug symbolises washing, bathing, coastal areas, wealth and gold.
Y	Means the Yew tree, male energies, a bow and arrow and shield. Yr symbolises archery, single combat and protection.

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Foreword

Stav literally means "knowledge of the rune staves" and is thus a tradition of learning the runes and how they may be used. The form of Stav described in this booklet is derived from the tradition of using the younger (sixteen rune) futhark as passed down over many generations by the Hafskjold family.

The origins of Stav are lost in the mists of time but the Hafskjold family have been living in the same part of Norway for well over a thousand years and have been practising the stances, as described in this booklet, as well as many other aspects of Stav for many generations.

This booklet is one of a series covering the basics of Stav. These publications will be of interest both to anyone with mind, body and spirit training and to students of Stav requiring a guide for personal study.

Introduction

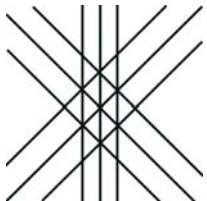
I began training with Ivar Hafskjold in the autumn of 1991. The first aspect he taught me was how to do the stances. I was lucky enough to be able to train with Ivar on a regular basis. Not everyone has easy access to a Stav teacher so this manual will at least provide a guide as to the correct practise of the stances.

If possible try to attend at least one course with an experienced teacher. I have done my best to convey the essential information for practising the stances but there is never any real substitute for direct instruction. So hopefully this booklet will arouse enough interest to tempt the reader to attend a course. Having received such instruction this booklet should provide a useful aide-memoire for continuing practice.

If, having studied this booklet, you have further questions or comments then please do not hesitate to get in touch by the means to be found inside the cover.

Graham Butcher July 2001

The Sixteen Stances of Stav



The Stances and the Runes

Each of the runes (see full futhark above) is taken from the Web of Orlog (see left). The web represents the essential structure of the universe. Although represented in two dimensions on paper it exists physically on 3 dimensions. It can also represent time but that is beyond the scope of this booklet.

Each rune thus represents an aspect of this fundamental reality.

Each stance involves placing the body in the shape of the rune and thus aligning the body correctly with the web of orlog. The stances also provide a very effective way of learning the runes and actually incorporating them into the self.

Benefits of Performing the Stances

Working with the stances can provide many benefits to the well being of body, mind and spirit.

On the physical level the stances align the skeleton and develops correct posture. Performing the stances also strengthens the muscuature essential to holding the spine correctly while gently stretching the sinews and toning the muscles. Deep and natural breathing is promoted using both the lower (diaphragm) and upper (intercostal) parts of the lungs. Good balance and body awareness will also develop with regular practice.

On the mental level the mind is calmed and focused with practice of the stances. When balance and concentration is a problem we both become aware of the unbalanced state of mind and are provided with a means of becoming centred again.

In the Stav tradition we use the term Megin for the intrinsic energy which the Chinese call Chi. The stances enable us to cultivate the flow and purity of this energy which is very beneficial to general health and a heightened sense of

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Meanings of the Runes

Rune	Meaning
ᚠ	Means Animals (in particular, cattle). It can also mean gold. It symbolises riches, success but possibly of a portable or transient nature.
ᚦ	Means Slag (from smelting ore) and it symbolises the primal forces of nature. It also suggests the processes of purification and refinement necessary to strength and perfection.
ᚦ	Means thunder, war or thorn and is symbolised as protection and the famous Thor's hammer. (Which rejoiced in the name Molinjor and in turn symbolised bolts of lightening).
ᚩ	Means mouth as in that with which we speak and estuary, as in mouth of a river. As symbolises knowledge, wisdom and kingship.
ᚱ	Means wheel, road or ride. It symbolises the wild hunt and the process of death and transformation.
ᚢ	Means canker or cancer. It symbolises malignancy, fire, deviousness and evil.
ᛘ	Means hailstones. It symbolises the Rainbow between heaven and earth, also the unexpected and sudden transformation.
ᛏ	Means need, necessity or crisis. It symbolises fate, compulsion and destiny.

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Other Aspects of Stáv

Stav is a complete mind body spirit training system for which the stances provide a foundation. Upon this foundation can be built various skills and abilities.

Martial arts training is a popular method of exploring the possibilities of Stav. The stances teach the correct posture, strong breathing and develop balance, all essential to successful martial arts training. From this basis the stances provide methods of handling and using a variety of traditional, European weapons. Unarmed combat and self defence applications of the stances can also be developed to good effect.

As well as improving one's own health and well being the stances also provide an education in how the body works. As this knowledge develops healing skills can be learned and practised. Teaching someone to relax, improving their posture and enabling them to breath freely will alleviate many common conditions of dis-ease. Going further, various manipulation and massage type treatments can be derived from the stances. Also knowledge of the runes provides a method of accessing the unconscious mind and thus relieving hidden sources of anxiety and stress.

Craft skills are another important aspect of Stav and the stances equip the body for the rigours of physical labour. Being able to see the web of orlog in all things is a great asset when constructing anything from a stool to a multi storey building.

Working with the stances can open up many possibilities which are there for you to discover for yourself.

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well-being.

Once the stances can be performed well the student can begin to explore the other aspects of Stav training using the postures as a strong yet flexible foundation for martial arts training, healing and many other activities.

When, Where and How to Perform the Stances

The sixteen postures are performed as two sequences. One sequence emphasises the right hand side of the body and the other the left hand side.

There are no hard and fast rules regarding when and where to perform the stances. Some people prefer to do one sequence in the morning and the second in the evening. Maybe at sunrise and sunset if one's lifestyle permits. Or simply at appropriate times to mark the opening and closing of the active parts of the day. When teaching Stav the stances are often used to open and close the training session. This principle may also be used to begin and end one's own private training sessions. One must find the most appropriate time and place for one's own needs. The real benefits come from practising daily. It is advisable though to avoid performing the stances directly after a meal, after drinking alcohol or when too tired to focus properly.

The best place to do the stances is out of doors, preferably on grass and near trees if possible. If you do not have access to a garden then it may be worth walking a little way to a park or similar open space. Don't worry about being seen, most people won't notice at all or soon lose interest in what you are doing. If they do ask you have a chance to tell them about Stáv. In bad weather it is of course better to do the stances indoors rather than not at all.

Try to wear loose, comfortable clothing and light foot wear. Barefoot is even better if possible. Be relaxed and focused but don't worry if some days are better than others. As you perform the stances to the best of your ability they will work their magic on you.

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Performing the Stances

Begin facing North, relax and take a few deep breaths. Then bow and follow the instructions from here.

Bow and Nine Breaths



1. Bow

From the ready position facing North bow. Take the weight on the toes and balls of the feet as you lean forward as far as you can without losing balance.

2. Nine Breaths

Bend the knees very slightly and clench the buttocks gently to stabilise the pelvis and lower spine. Breathe right out using the diaphragm and allow the lungs to refill naturally.

Do this nine times as slowly as is comfortable.

After the ninth breath raise the hands in front of the solar plexus. Breathe in again as you do this

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Other Ways of Performing the Stances

The sequence of stances shown in this booklet is the simplest version using the best known order of the Futhorc, Frey's Aett, Heimdal's Aett and Tyr's Aett. The breathing is very simple with a breath into each stance and a breath out while returning to the ready position. As you might expect this is the version used by beginners and for opening and closing public classes and courses.

There are however, more advanced methods of practising the stances which create different effects on the practitioner. The postures are basically the same with just a few minor variations, the real differences being in the order of the aetts.

The Karl sequence uses the same order of aetts but with a different method of breathing. The breath is taken before each stance name of each rune is chanted as you move into the stance. Then, while holding the stance the name of the rune is chanted again as you move out of the stance. This develops the breathing and is an effective method of enhancing energy and general well being.

The Herse sequence begins with Tyrs aett, then Frey's aett and finishes with Heimdal's aett. The chanting is complex and demanding combining the consonant and vowel sounds of the runes. This develops the kind of energy and resilience needed by the warrior.

The Jarl sequence begins with Heimdal's aett, then Tyr's aett and finishes with Frey's aett. The chanting uses the name of each deity sung on a pentatonic scale. This creates a calm and meditative state of mind.

The Konge sequence begins with Tyr's aett, then Heimdal's aett and finishes with Frey's aett. The breathing is basically the same as for the beginners sequence but an extra breath is taken between each aett. The idea is that at this level you know how to breathe and focus properly and do not need the chanting. These versions will need the presence of an experienced teacher.

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To complete the left hand sequence you will find yourself facing North in Yr. Draw in the left and then the right foot. Take an extra breath and clap twice. Take nine slow, deep breaths and bow.



The Sixteen Stances of Stav

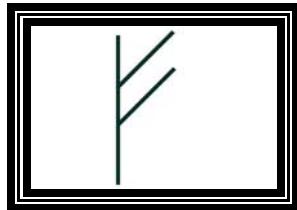
3. Clap Twice

With the elbows remaining by the sides swing the hands and fore arms as wide as possible and clap the hands together twice.

Then allow the hands to rest on the thighs as you breathe out once more ready to go into the first stance, Fe



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Fe

Raise the arms up in front of the body. Bring the hands up the centre line of the body. Finish as the elbows come level with the eyes. Breath should be synchronised with the movement, the in breath completed with the stance.

Arms should be relaxed and naturally

START



HERE



curved. Then return the arms to the ready position as you breath out.



FINISH



HERE

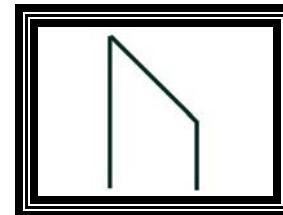
The Sixteen Stances of Stav



The Sixteen Stances of Stav



The Sixteen Stances of Stav



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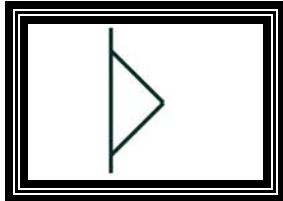


straighten up again.



FINISH

The Sixteen Stances of Stav



START



HERE



FINISH

HERE



allow right elbow to rise as far as is comfortable without bending the back. Breathe out as hands return to ready position.

THOR

Breathe in as you place the right fist into the palm of the left hand, clamp fingers of left hand around fingers of right hand, pull the left elbow into the body until it is over the solar plexus,

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The Left Hand Sequence

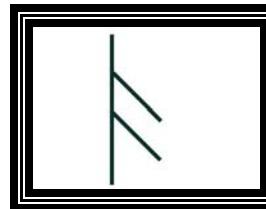
To perform the left hand sequence remember that this time a mirror image of the first sequence is seen from the North. So begin facing East and bow. Then move into Fe with the left hand higher than the right hand. Proceed through the sequence with the left hand and leg dominant where this is relevant.



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On the out breath raise the body until the legs are straight again. Then take the weight on the left foot and draw the right heel to the centre. Then shift the weight to the right foot and draw in the left heel to the ready position. Take another breath and bow. You have now completed the first sequence.



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As

Breathe in as the arms are raised along the centre line of the body. Right hand should not come higher than the navel. Keep the shoulders down and the back straight. Breathe out as the hands are lowered back to

START



HERE

the ready
position.



FINISH

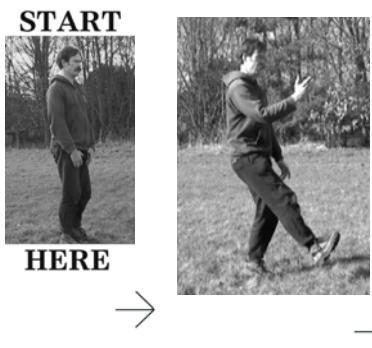


HERE

The Sixteen Stances of Stav



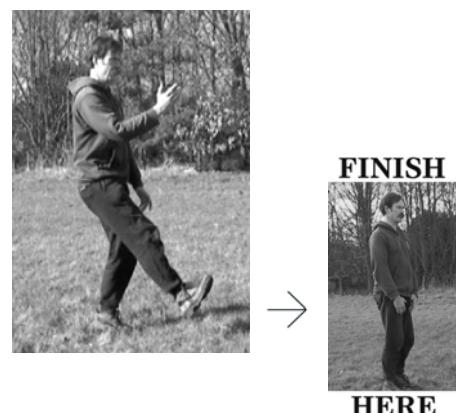
Rei As you breathe in raise the right hand and right leg up the centre line of the body. The leg should be kept straight and the base joint of the thumb should come to rest on the crown of the head. The right



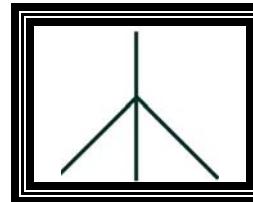
elbow should be tilted over to the left so you can see forward past the right side of the forearm. Breathe out as the arm and leg return to the ready position. Synchronise the movements of



both limbs.



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Yr In this stance the turn to the right is different. Look to the right and kick the right leg across into a deep "horse riding stance". On the in breath keep the back straight with the hands straight down between the thighs. Lower the body down as far as possible. Only go as far as you can without bending the back. At first you may only be able to lower the body



a few inches, don't worry your ability to take a lower stance will develop with practice.

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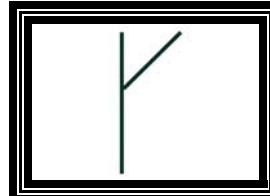
START



Laug

On the in breath raise the hands in front of the body. Keep the hands tilted slightly inwards and the fingers extended. On the out breath lower the hands back to the ready position.

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START



Kreft

Breathe in as the hands are brought back to back in front of the body. The backs of the fingers, knuckles and wrists should touch together. Raise the hands up the centre line until you can see between the elbows.

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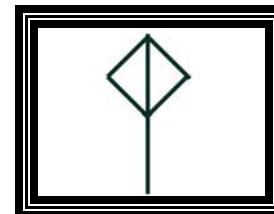


FINISH



HERE

The Sixteen Stances of Stav



START



HERE



the forehead. Join the tips of the little fingers and thumbs. The tip of the thumbs should rest on the top of the bridge of the nose. On the out breath



circle the hands back to the ready position.



TURN



LEFT

The Sixteen Stances of Stav



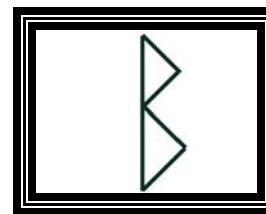
The Sixteen Stances of Stav The Turn to the Right



All stances in the first sequence create a profile that can be seen from the East. It is therefore necessary to turn to the right at the end of the first aett.

Look right and transfer all weight to the left foot. Reach forward with the right foot and describe a semi circular movement to the right. Transfer the weight to the right foot and draw the left foot around along the same line. You are now facing East ready to begin the next aett.

The Sixteen Stances of Stav



START



HERE



The Sixteen Stances of Stav

Bjork

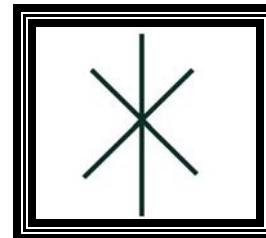
On the in breath raise the right arm and right leg simultaneously. Place the right heel on the left knee and the right thumb joint on the crown of the head. Tilt the elbow to the left so you can see past it with the right eye. On the out breath return the right arm and leg to the ready position simultaneously. If you have a problem with balance bend the left knee slightly and imagine the left foot rooted into the ground.

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**TURN
LEFT**

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START



HERE

about ninety degrees.

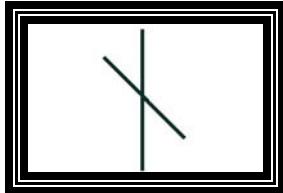
On the out breath fold the arms back to the ready position.



**FINISH
HERE**



The Sixteen Stances of Stav



Nod As you breathe in circle the arms away from the body with the right arm up and the left arm down, there should be a straight line from hand to hand.

START



HERE



On the out breath circle the arms back into the ready position.

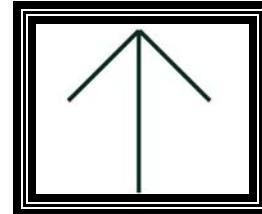


FINISH



HERE

The Sixteen Stances of Stav

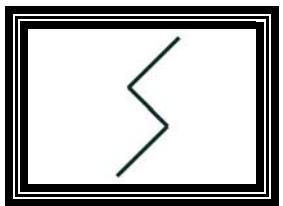


Tyr On the in breath circle the arms out and back as far as possible. Keep the hands at waist level. On the out breath circle the arms back to the ready position.

START



The Sixteen Stances of Stav



START



HERE



TURN



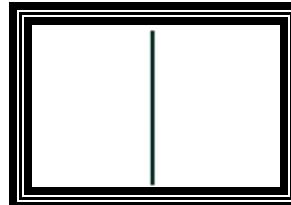
RIGHT



Sol On the in breath, bend the knees slightly and spread the feet about ninety degrees apart. Take the weight on the balls of the feet and lower into a squat making sure the back stays straight. Rest the palms on the top of the thighs.

On the in breath rise back to the ready position.

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START



HERE



FINISH



HERE

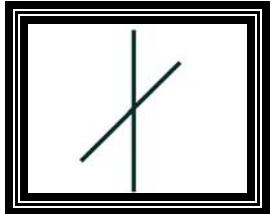
Is On the in breath bring the hands together in front of the chest in a praying position. Then reach up as high as possible keeping the hands together, rise up on the balls

of the feet.

On the out breath circle the arms outwards as you lower the heels to the ground.



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START



FINISH



Ar

This stance is the mirror of Nod.
Perform it in the same way but with the left
arm highest.

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The Turn to the Left



The left turn is simply the reverse of the right turn.

