

Preface

Essential Points Of The Wutang Sword Techniques

Principles of the Sword Techniques:

The tactics of the sword are entirely based upon the spirit of vitality. Only when the spirit of vitality is sufficient will there be success in The Way.

The ching (the body's sexual fluid, i.e. sperm), is first refined into ch'i (an inherent oxygen in the body for stamina and vitality), then the ch'i is refined into shen (the spirit of vitality). The spirit of vitality can then be refined into Tao (The Way). If the sword and the spirit of vitality can be unified, then the Tao has been nearly attained.

The principles of the Wutang sword technique involve incorporating all the fine points of the other martial arts externally, and balancing the ch'i of yin and yang internally.

Preserving and quieting the spirit of vitality, nourishing the ch'i, and integrating the mind and body into one unit constitutes the foundation of internal development. Once this foundation has been established, then the techniques of the sword can be practiced. This method yields twice the result with half the effort.

Wutang combines all of the internal systems. When using the sword the method is the same as using the hand - the sword becomes an extension of the hand. The use of mind intent and ch'i is most important. All the rest, the techniques of eyes, hand, steps, body and waist, are all subordinate to it. The spirit of vitality is maintained at the top of the head; the chest is drawn in and the back straightened (Han Hsiung Ba Bei) the waist is relaxed and the wrist is activated; the ch'i sinks to the tant'ien (3 1/3 inches below the navel); energy is issued from the back. All of these characteristics are like the practice of T'ai Chi Ch'uan.

When neutralizing, jumping, and spreading out, the movements are done with a swiftness, nimbleness, lightness, and alertness that are like the way the postures are performed when practicing Pa Kua Chang.

The spirit of striking with the sword is like the shooting of an arrow from a bow - the movement is direct and straightforward. It is like the principle of starting second, but arriving first, and in this way resembles the method of Hsing Yi Ch'uan.

The Five Precepts

From ancient times to the present, theories of the techniques of the martial arts have been subjected to experimentation and have been refined through a laborious process of trial and error. So too with the art of the sword. Before practicing with the sword, however, we must strictly observe the five precepts, or prohibitions that have come down to us. If even one of these five principles is violated, not only will there be no benefit gained from practice, but harm may even result.

1. Lust

The lust for sexual gratification, and the lust after wealth are strictly prohibited.

When practicing we must place first emphasis on the spirit of vitality. To do this, we must preserve the sperm and cultivate (or nourish) the ch'i (Bao Ching Yao Ch'i). If the sperm is lost through sex, then nothing can develop. If, on the other hand, the sperm is sufficient, then there will be enough ch'i. If the ch'i is sufficient, then there will be enough strength. If the strength is sufficient then there will be enough energy. If the energy is sufficient, then there will be enough spirit (of vitality). If the spirit is sufficient, the Tao will be attained. From ching (sperm), to ch'i (the inherent oxygen in the body for strength and energy), to shen (spirit of vitality), to Tao; the progression is natural. We must strive to make the spirit tranquil and embrace the Tao (Ning Shen Bao Yi).

The two underlined principles must be worshipped like religious commandments for one's entire life. They are also an important channel for the promotion of human health.

If the desire for wealth is not restrained or conquered, the pursuit of riches will take too much time and energy away from what is needed to develop a tranquil spirit so that the Tao can be embraced.

2. Cruelty

Vindictive or otherwise injurious behavior to others should be curtailed.

Since ancient times famous generals and heroes have placed primary emphasis on virtue. On the large scale, that meant defending the country from its enemies without, and creating happiness for the people at home. On the personal level, through the exercise of body and mind, the virtues of wisdom, bravery, and benevolence were to be nourished.

3. Skipping Stages

Whatever the style of martial arts one practices, one starts with the simple principles and proceeds to the more complicated "from the shallow to the deep," each stage must be mastered in turn. The art of the sword is the same. In the first stage we must practice the techniques of eyes, body, hand and steps. These are called The Four External Essentials. At first the postures should be wide open and spread out; as competence is gained, they will become closer and more compact. The second stage comprises the development of courage, intrinsic energy speed, and impassivity (calmness, or steadiness). These are called The Four Internal Essentials.

One must practice each step in turn. One must not pass over the shallow to go quickly to the deep. Stages must not be skipped. Only by advancing step by step will you acquire the highest standard in these techniques.

4. Excess

The depth of knowledge possible in studying the practical use of the sword techniques is unlimited (infinite) you can study it for your whole life and still find something to learn. The body's energy is limited (finite), however. Therefore, one day's practice should be in proportion to a person's need for rest and sustenance.

Food, drink, and rest are necessary to replenish the body's energy food restores the ching, rest restores the shen (spirit of vitality). When the ching and shen are full, then the improvement will automatically follow. Therefore, it is no good to exercise either if you are over hungry, or too full.

When you become tired from practice, you should take a walk (inhaling and exhaling slowly) to change and refresh the body's energy rhythm. This calms the spirit and harmonizes the breathing (Ni Shen T'iao Hsi). By adjusting this way, you will avoid the pitfall of a sudden rapid advance followed by just as sudden a collapse.

5. Inconsistency

Laziness, or lack of perseverance shows up in the student who practices today but stops tomorrow. When you learn the sword you must possess a generous, brave, and determined mind.

Confucius has said that if a man has no perseverance he cannot become a sage. In learning the sword the same rule applies. You must not stop studying and practicing because you think that you are too weak to be any good; or because you think that you aren't clever enough to get it; or because you are too busy with other things; or because there is difficulty in the other aspects of your life. "Where there is a will, there is a way." These words of wisdom are indeed true the student must repeat these words to himself and persevere.

The 13 Postures

The method Li Ching Lin has passed on to us for Wutang Sword Fencing comprises 13 basic sword movements:

1. Ch'ou: to slice (palm down); to whip
2. Tai: to slice (palm up);
3. T'i: to lift, or raise
4. Ke: to resist; to attack
5. Chi: to strike
6. T'su: to stab; to pierce
7. Tian: to point
8. Peng: to cut upward by flicking or snapping the wrist
9. Chiao: to twist
10. Ya: to press down
11. P'i: to split
12. Chieh: to intercept; hinder; or block
13. Hsi: to wash

The Foundation and Spirit of Sword Practice

The Four Internal Essentials

- » Courage
- » Intrinsic Energy
- » Speed
- » Impassivity

Note: In precarious situations with danger coming upon danger, one must have the impassivity to remain calm and assess the situation, and the courage to prevail.

Intrinsic energy is different from external muscular force (brute force). Through practicing the 13 postures, the intrinsic energy will reach to the tip of the sword. At this point, body and sword will act as one single unit. Without long, diligent practice and correct guidance your art cannot reach this highest level.

The Four External Essentials

Spirit of the Eyes

Sword use relies entirely on responding to the changing actions of your opponent. This involves using the spirit of the eyes to observe the changes (the eyes indicate what the mind intends).

Hand Techniques

At the slightest stir of your opponent you must move first. This involves using hand techniques.

Body Techniques

If you move the hand you must readjust the body alignment so that hand and body are one unit. This involves using body techniques.

Stepping Techniques

When the hand and body move the legs must be adjusted so the entire body is in proper alignment, and the feet placed in the proper position to reach your opponent. This involves using stepping techniques.

Note: The sword should be held firmly but relaxed in the hand. Then it can be wielded with speed and dexterity.

The sword is king among the short military weapons since it has three sharp surfaces (the two edges and the point). Its practice is therefore different from the single edged knife because of the different techniques that can be employed, and its use and method should never follow the techniques used for the knife.

The Triangle Method of Wutang Fencing

- » If my opponent uses Chieh my response will be T'i to form an upper triangle (with the elbow of the sword arm).
- » If my opponent uses T'su I will respond with Peng to form a downward triangle.
- » If my opponent uses Chiao I will respond with Tai to form a leftward triangle.
- » If my opponent uses P'i I will respond with Fan Ke to form a rightward triangle.

Note: The advantage in the triangle techniques of the Wutang Sword Method lies in the fact that my opponent occupies only one line, while I occupy two.

Once the triangle techniques have been mastered, the next step is learning the yin and yang circle. After mastering these two methods, then you can begin to practice freestyle sword fencing.

The Yin/Yang Sword Circle Method of Wutang Fencing

- » When the palm of the hand is down, it is called the yin circle. In doing the yin circle, first use Ch'ou and then T'su.
- » When the palm is up, it is called the yang circle it is the opposite of the yin circle. First use T'su, then Tai.
- » When the palm faces to the right and the hand is angled downward, the position is called shao yin.
- » When the palm faces left and the hand is angled upward, it is called shao yang.

Note: The Yin/Yang circles must be practiced until mastered.

The essential feature of this posture is that when the body retreats the sword goes forward to stab. When doing Yin/Yang circle cutting, the yin cut is called Ch'ou, the yang cut is called Tai.

The Yin/Yang Hand Positions in the Wutang Sword Method

T'ai Yang Chien

Palm faces up; the edges of the sword are aligned horizontally.

T'ai Yin Chien

Palm faces down; the edges of the sword are aligned horizontally.

Shao Yang Chien

Palm faces left; the edges of the sword are aligned vertically; the point is directed up at a 45° angle.

Shao Yin Chien

Palm faces right; the edges of the sword are aligned vertically; the point is directed down at a 45° angle.

Chung Yang Chien

Palm faces right; the edges of the sword are aligned vertically; the point is directed straight ahead, level with the ground.

Chung Yin Chien

Palm faces left; the edges of the sword are aligned vertically; the point is directed straight ahead, level with the ground.

Lao Yang Chien

Palm faces right; the edges of the sword are aligned vertically; the point is directed up at a 45° angle.

Lao Yin Chien

Palm faces left; the edges of the sword are aligned vertically; the point is directed down at a 45° angle.

The Method and Practice of the Four External Essentials

Eyes

The eyesight in the method of the sword involves not fixing on any one thing too long, but quickly looking from one area to another. Make your eyes move up and down, left and right so they can be “bright;” and let them be focused so that your sword will arrive at the place where you aim.

By “bright” we mean that when we look at something, whether we see it clearly or not depends on whether the pupil expands and contracts properly so that the concentration point of the line of vision is in accordance with the object we are aiming for. If not, the object we see will be warped in perspective and our aim will not be true.

You should sit quietly in order to cultivate your spirit of vitality this will make your eyes “bright.” Thus, the student should nourish his body and cultivate his spirit of vitality. This will infuse the eyes with the spirit of vitality, making the eyes “bright.” Success in this method is dependent on practicing every day in the sunshine, focusing the eyes in all directions. You should write words on signs and put them around you should move the eyes to read them.

In the beginning make the words large and place them near. Gradually make the words smaller and place them farther away. Eventually you will be able to see clearly what the word is even at a distance. Use the sword to stab at the signs as soon as you see the words. This exercise should be done 100 times morning and evening without stopping or reducing the number.

Constantly reading small print or eating onions and hot peppers and drinking strong wine should be avoided; so should anger and sexual activity.

Hand

This involves the method of mobilizing the whole arm. The shoulder should be relaxed and dropped. The elbow should be flexible so that it can change position very quickly. The wrist should be strong and flexible, active and rounded out. Training these three joints is crucial to development of skill with the sword.

The techniques employed in the use of the sword are not like using a spear, lance or halberd in which joint development can be neglected. Here, joint development is crucial. However, talk is easy, but in order to put your words into practice you must undergo long and rigorous training before the hand can immediately respond to the mind’s will.

If the sword is held too tightly (as beginners usually do) we call it a “dead grasp.” The advantage of this grip is that the sword can’t easily be knocked out of your hand. Its defect, however, is you can’t move the sword quickly and actively.

When you practice, the sword should be held loosely. This is called an ‘active grasp’. The advantage of this grip is that the sword can be moved very quickly. However, without long practice and mastery of the secret method of the sword grip, the sword can be knocked from your hand.

The secret method of the sword grip is to use the thumb and 3rd and 4th fingers. The index finger and the pinky should be kept a little off the handle. There should be a slight gap between the palm and the handle of the sword. The active use of the sword using this special grip is far superior to the dead grasp.

Step

It is important in sword play to occupy the most advantageous position. If the method of stepping is not accurate, though the method of body, hand and eyes has reached a high standard, you will still be unsuccessful in obtaining your desired results.

In the method of steps there are three important factors: quickness, stability and lightness. At the beginning of each practice session you should walk on the outside edges of the feet; don't let the whole sole touch the ground. The reason is that if you step with the whole foot on the ground the body wastes a lot of time and energy going up and down so the resulting movement cannot be fast. When you practice this new way, the bottom of the foot will be painful and you will be unsteady at first. You should persevere, going forward, backward and sideways. Practice every day morning and evening so that gradually the edge of the foot will become strong and you will be able to walk without pain, quickly, lightly, and with stability.

The leg is divided into three sections: from the thigh to the knee, from the knee to the ankle, and from the ankle to the sole of the foot. These three sections must be absolutely soft. Every day, morning and evening, you must exercise these three sections by bending down from the hips, flexing the toes up and stretching the back of the leg. After three years your legs will naturally become soft and you will walk very lightly.

Body

There are four parts to the method of the body. These make up for any insufficiency in the methods of the hand and steps.

The most important part is Han Hsiung Pa Pei - hold in the chest and straighten the back. In this way the spine is perfectly erect and the waist will be active when the body turns. The ch'i should be sunk to the tantien. This is called the method of the body. When doing martial arts either with weapons or empty handed you must adhere to this principle or else you will be unable to obtain a superior position. If the chest is thrust forward and the back is bent, the movements will be clumsy and restricted and a superior position can never be obtained.

The spine must be perfectly erect so your posture will be accurate. If the spine inclines the four appendages will not align correctly and your movement and direction will not be accurate.

When the body turns, the waist must initiate the turning movement. Energy is issued from the waist, and unless it is active, energy cannot be issued when you counterattack. If you use the waist the energy will be very strong. If not, you only use the force of your two arms, which will never allow you to reach the highest level.

The ch'i must be sunk to the tantien. If the ch'i isn't sunk to the tantien your endurance will quickly wane, and you will be unable to last. The breath will come in pants and gasps, the eyes will become dizzy, the throat will become clogged with phlegm, and the stance will become unsteady. How can you prevail under those conditions?

These four parts make up the important elements for the method of the body. The method of the body is closely interconnected with the methods of the eyes and steps.

It is easy for beginners to neglect these principles. They don't realize that the most important element in the method of swords is the method of the body. Therefore, this part must be repeatedly emphasized because of its fundamental importance.

Note: The above mentioned methods for eyes, hand, step and body is set down as an independent, supplementary method within the method of the sword. The learner should not neglect it. It comprises the most important part of a student's training for sword study.

Method of Practice Taking One Step At A Time:

1. The first step is single practice doing the solo sword form one posture at a time to get each posture correct.
2. The second step is to connect all the postures into one continuous form.
3. The third step is the practice of active step sword fencing forms to learn the principles of timing and distance, and how to apply the moves from the solo form.
 - » The fencers should change postures in accordance with the circumstances. That is, a person's moves must be based on what his opponent is doing; they must be in response to his opponent.
 - » No matter what the posture requires you to do, the point of the sword should, for the most part, be directed toward your opponent.
 - » Always be in control of the action; never be controlled by your opponent.

This stage cannot be reached, however, unless the fencer acquires the genuinely correct techniques from a master of the art. When the sword techniques have reached the highest standard, then the practitioner can engage in free style fencing.

4. The fourth step is free style fencing. If this stage can be mastered then you can practice with two opponents, then three, etc. At this stage you can also practice the sword vs. other weapons, such as spear and halberd. Gradually you will raise your sword technique to the highest standard.

Method of T'ai Chi Sword Fencing with Active Step:

- » Open: the two opponents step toward each other with the left leg and point at each other.
- » [a] cross steps his r. foot over the l. and presses [b]'s sword down (T'ao Pu Ya Chien); then cuts up to [b]'s ear (Shang Pu Kuan Ehr).
- » mutual raise the sword (T'ui Fan Ke).
- » mutual cut the waist and walk around (T'ui Tui Yao Zuo).
- » [a] strikes the ear (Chi Ehr).
- » [b] strikes the wrist (Chi Wan).
- » [b] strikes the ear (Chi Ehr).
- » [a] strikes the wrist and walks around (Chi Wan Zuo).
- » mutual strike for the ear (T'ui Chi Ehr).
- » mutual stab for the wrist (T'ui T'su Wan).
- » mutual stab for the head (T'ui T'su T'ou).
- » mutual horizontal twist (T'ui Heng Chiao).
- » [a] intercepts the leg (Chieh T'ui).
- » [b] strikes the wrist (Chi Wan).
- » mutual palm up circle (T'ui Yang Chien Ch'uan).
- » mutual palm down circle (T'ui Yin Chien Ch'uan).
- » mutual vertical twist {like sansei} (T'ui Tse Chiao).
- » [b] stabs the wrist (T'su Wan).
- » [a] slices the wrist (Tai Wan).
- » mutual stab (T'ui T'su).
- » [a] pushes with left hand (Zuo Shuo An).
- » [b] sweeps the leg (Shao T'ang T'ui).
- » [a] jump step and strike the head (Tiao Pu Chi T'ou).
- » [b] withdraw and strike the wrist (Hui Chi Wan).
- » [a] horizontal cut across the waist (P'ing Tai Yao).
- » [a] turn body and strike the wrist (Ch'uan Shen Chi Wan).
- » [b] strike the ear (Chi Ehr).
- » [a] stab the wrist (T'su Wan).
- » mutual step back and stand on guard (Pao Cheng Men).
- » withdraw sword and conclusion (Ke Shou Chien Wan).

The Method of Free Style Fencing:

The method of free style sword play is divided into three categories:

1. Fixed Position (Yuan T'i):

This category involves use of the wrist only, with the opponents mutually striking each other without moving. The wrist is used freely and actively in stabbing and striking your opponent. This exercise combines the three components of mind, eyes and hands.

2. Active Step (Huo Pu):

This category involves moving as you stab and strike. This exercise combines the methods of hand and steps.

3. Combining Method

This category combines the method of body (shifting and turning suddenly forward and suddenly backward) with the movements of the hands and steps. This allows you to feint with the body one way to induce your opponent into one position, and then make the real attack from another direction: feint east and attack west; feint upward and strike downward. Running, jumping, floating and whirling, the movement of the sword is like electricity; the movement of the body is like a dragon.

Note: Freestyle fencing is just like freestyle sparring; it trains the proper movement for practical use. If you cannot master freestyle fencing you will be unable to match swords with others in practical use situations.

You must spend a long time mastering steps [1] and [2] before beginning step [3]. Each step must be mastered before going on the next. You are forbidden to skip stages.

Beginners in freestyle fencing should use a cane whose end is wrapped in cotton. They should use colored chalk on the cotton and should wear light colored clothing so the chalk can be easily seen if a hit is made. This way, who wins and who loses can be easily ascertained.

Combining Practice

When it comes down to practical use, the combining of the eyes, hand, body (including hips and waist), and steps into one unit, is easier said than done. Practicing to accomplish this, is the basis for "light" techniques. Yang Luchan could reach the top of a roof in one jump; Sun Lutang in combat was able to move from in front of his opponent to behind him faster than the eye could follow. These are examples of "light" techniques.

When you walk according to jiu gong pu (a pa kua stepping technique), you can insert all the hand techniques of T'ai Chi Ch'uan.

The stepping techniques should be done forward and backward so that the hand techniques can be employed with great swiftness. If you practice only going forward, it will be no good. The two legs should be slightly bent, the whole body relaxed, the ch'i sunk to the tant'ien. The steps should be slow, steady and solid. Gradually they can be made faster, but they must still be steady and solid, and the waist and body should act as one unit. In order for this to occur, practice must be done on a daily basis, with no stoppage.

After mastering the walk on your own, practice doing it with another person standing within a meter of you so that one must follow the other, neutralizing step for step (and blow for blow in free hand).

Song of the Four Methods (Eyes, Hand, Body and Steps)

If the hand arrives but the legs haven't arrived yet, your position will be troublesome

If the head is bent down and the waist is bent forward, your art cannot reach the highest standard

If the stomach is full when you meet your opponent you will be as nervous as if caught in a fire; you cannot be relaxed

If the eyes arrive at the same instant as the foot arrives, you have understood the mystery

Song of Emptying the Hearts

If the heart of the hand (the palm) is empty (relaxed), the sword will be active

If the heart of the foot (the sole) is empty, the stepping will be swift

If the heart of the head (the crown) is empty, the body and the eyes will act as one unit (be unified)

Song of Practicing the Sword

The head, heart, and eyes are the commanders

The hand, foot, waist and hips are the subordinates

The intrinsic energy is stored in the tant'ien

Sperm, Ch'i, Spirit of Vitality, and Courage should be full to overflowing

The internal and external methods should be practiced diligently

When the body and the sword are unified, you will arrive at the Tao

Characteristics of the Sword

From ancient times, the famous generals and heroes favored many different kinds of weapons big or small, light or heavy, long or short. When face to face with an enemy, however, their ability to prevail depended entirely on their technical skill, and whether the position (of the terrain) was favorable or not. It was not necessarily so that the big weapon conquered the small, or the heavy the light. Those who have deep understanding of the history of the martial arts know this quite well.

The body's natural endowments are not the same for all. Some are tall, others short; some fat, others thin. From this point of view, the weapons used depend on the characteristics of the individual; big uses big, short uses short, etc.

Generally speaking, the weapon must be used alertly and actively and handled at the wielder's will. Therefore, size and shape depend on an individual's natural characteristics. If the sword is too light, you can not increase the energy of the wrist and the sword cannot be wielded with authority. If it is too heavy, it will make the arm and wrist slow, and clumsy to respond.

When practicing sword, if you are about 6' (Chinese measure) and weigh about 60 kilos, you should use a sword about 3' 6" (Chinese measure) in its entirety. The handle should be 68" (Chinese measure), and the weight of the sword should be 1418 oz. (Chinese measure). The balance point should be a little beyond the sword guard. The length of the entire sword should reach from the floor to your navel.

The beauty of the sword and how finely appointed the scabbard and other military equipment is, has no bearing on how the weapon will function, and is therefore superfluous. What counts is the quality of the weapon, itself. Whether the raw material is coarse or fine; whether the workmanship is of good quality or poor are the important things to consider.

The Wutang sword is divided into two types; the practice sword, and the sword for practical use. When practicing with an opponent, use a sword of hard wood (use of real swords could result in fatal injury). Chestnut or sandalwood are two good types.

For practical use, the sword should be made entirely of flexible (spring) steel. In Chekiang Province there is a sword made called Lung Ch'uan which has been famous from ancient times. These swords are manufactured there to this day. These are the best swords for Wutang and T'ai Chi sword use.

The sword guard used for T'ai Chi and Wutang style swords is different from ordinary sword guards. It curves away from the hand rather than toward it. For practical use this has a special function. When you block your opponent's sword in close, it won't be able to slip off. In addition, you can utilize the energy of your opponent's sword to attack him by being able to pivot around his sword with your own, using the guard as the base. This function is, of course completely dependent on the principles of the interplay of yin and yang. There must be no resistance; oppose yang with yin, and yin with yang. If the opponent attacks over, you pivot under (and visa versa). Beginners learning the martial arts must pay special attention to this if not their ability will be lacking and they will never be able to reach a high standard. Their minds may want them to do something, but the body will be unable to put it into effect.

Detailed Explanation of the 13 Techniques

1. Ch'ou: to slice; to whip

Ch'ou is used to make a horizontal cut from left to right using t'ai yin chien at the wrist (Sec. I #23), the waist, or the leg (Sec. II #11).

The cut can be made from either above or below the wrist; the point of the sword is always directed at the opponent.

The cut can be made either from the right bow stance, in which case the left arm is curved in a half circle with the hand (held in sword fingers) held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out; or from the right tiger crouching stance in which case the left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist.

2. Tai: to slice

There are two types: a horizontal slice; and a vertical slice.

- a) The horizontal slice (P'ing Tai), is made from right to left using t'ai yang chien. It is similar to Ch'ou; but is the yang counterpart to Chou's yin.

The point of the sword is directed at the opponent; the cut is made using the right tiger crouching stance (the left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist).

This move is used in Sec. IV #3 (Palm Upward Circling); Sec. IV #7 makes use of both Ch'ou and Tai.

- b) The vertical slice (Chih Tai), is used to deal with a high attack from your opponent's sword.

It is also done using the right tiger crouching stance (the left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist).

Your sword first moves under your opponent's wrist, and as your weight shifts back into the tiger crouching stance, your sword is pulled back (using chung yin chien), so that the point of your sword cuts up at your opponent's wrist from below as in Sec. I #13.

3. T'i: To Raise

There are two methods: with the weight forward; or with the weight back. Both use shao yin chien.

- a) Weight forward means a bow stance (either left or right). The wrist and elbow are high (the elbow is up), the point of the sword is down at a 45° angle; the left arm is curved in a half circle with the sword fingers held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out.
- b) Weight backward means a left foot forward tiger crouching stance; the left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist.

4. Ke: to resist; to attack

There are two methods: hsia ke; and fan ke. Hsia ke involves cutting upward from below, whereas fan ke involves cutting downward from over the top.

- a) Hsia ke is done from a right bow stance using chung yin chien to cut upward toward your opponent's wrist from below. Hsia ke differs from chih tai in that chih tai involves a quick, snapping, upward attacking motion, whereas this is a slower motion designed to catch the opponent's sword and redirect it rather than to attack the wrist directly.

Start on the inside of his wrist. After you block, turn your sword over into t'ai yang chien to press his sword down, and then cut his waist. The left arm is curved in a half circle with the sword fingers held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out.

- b) Fan ke is done from a right tiger crouching stance; it is used to neutralize a mid level attack.

Starting on the outside of your opponent's wrist you come over the top to cut down at the wrist using chung yin chien.

The left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist. This ploy is very dangerous. If the body isn't empty and alert, and if the hand and wrist aren't active, you can't use this technique.

5. Chi: to strike

There are two methods: cheng (direct); and fan (reverse).

- a) Cheng chi (direct strike) is done from a right bow stance using shao yang chien. It involves cutting down to the opponent's head or shoulder from above as in Sec. II # 1.
- b) Fan chi (reverse strike) is also done from a right bow stance using shao yang chien. It involves cutting upward (rather than across) to the opponent's ear.

In both cases the left hand sword fingers are held straight out from the body, pointing to the back left diagonal.

6. T'su: to stab; to pierce

There are two methods: flat (or horizontal) stab; and sideways (or vertical) stab. Both are done from a right bow stance. The only difference is in how the edges of the sword blade are aligned.

- a) With the vertical stab the sword is held in the chung yin chien position; the left arm is curved in a half circle with the sword fingers held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out as in Sec. V # 17.
- b) With the horizontal stab, the sword is held in the t'ai yang chien position. The left arm is curved in a half circle with the sword fingers held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out.

7. Tian: to point

This posture is done from a right tiger crouching stance using chung yin chien. The arms and the body do not move at all in this posture. Only the energy of the wrist is used to direct the point of the sword down at the opponent's wrist. The left arm is curved in a half circle with the sword fingers held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out.

8. Peng: to cut upward by flicking or snapping the wrist

There are two methods: cheng (direct); and fan (reverse).

- a) Cheng peng (direct snap) is done from a right tiger crouching stance using chung yin chien. The arm and the body don't move; the wrist is snapped up so that the front of the sword suddenly cuts upward at the opponent's wrist from below. The left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist.
- b) Fan peng (reverse snap) is done by stepping away from your opponent. Starting in a stance with the right foot forward, cross step the right foot backwards over the left. With the weight in the right leg squat down, circle the sword counterclockwise and using chung yang chien snap the wrist up so that the front of the sword suddenly cuts upward at the opponent's wrist from below. The left hand sword fingers touch the right arm.

Note: Methods 7 and 8 rely on the intrinsic energy of the tan t'ien as the impetus for the snap. The whole body must move as one unit beginning from the tan t'ien.

9. P'i: to split

This posture is done from a right bow stance using chung yin chien (this is how it differs from cheng chi).

Step directly forward and use an overhand motion to strike down at the head. The left arm is curved in a half circle with the sword fingers held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out.

10. Chieh: to intercept; hinder; or block

There are four methods: chi (direct); tso (left); you (right); fan (reverse). In all cases the purpose of the move is to cut at the opponent's wrist to keep him from completing an attack.

- a) Chi chieh (direct intercept) is done from a right bow stance using chung yin chien.

Step forward, raise the sword up and over your opponent's wrist, and slice down at it from above. The left hand sword fingers are held straight out from the body, pointing to the back left diagonal.

- b) Tso chieh (left intercept) is used to neutralize a direct stab forward to the left side when your right foot is forward.

Incline your body to the right and step into a right bow stance.

Using chung yin chien, circle the sword back to the left to cut down at your opponent's wrist to keep him from completing his cut. The left hand sword fingers are held straight out from the body, pointing to the back left diagonal.

- c) You chieh (right intercept) is used to neutralize an attack to your right side when your left foot is forward.

Incline your body to the left and step into a left bow stance.

Using chung yin chien, circle the sword back to the right to cut down at your opponent's wrist to keep him from completing his cut. The left hand sword fingers are held straight out from the body, pointing to the back left diagonal.

d) Fan chieh (reverse intercept) is used to neutralize a high attack.

Step into a left bow stance and shift the weight to the left side to avoid the stab.

Circle your sword to chung yang chien to cut up at the wrist from underneath with a backhand motion. The left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist.

11. Chiao: to twist

There are two methods: chi (direct); and heng (horizontal).

a) Chi chiao (direct twist) involves both [a] and [b] using t'ai yang chien.

The swords aren't attached; the point of the sword 'twists' (circles) around the opponent's wrist; the left hand sword fingers touch the right wrist.

[b] steps forward and [a] steps backward each trying to cut the other's wrist. When [b] steps forward, the point of his sword makes a small circle to cut at [a]'s wrist.

[a] must avoid [b]'s cut on the one hand, and also try to cut [b]'s wrist on the other, so his point makes a large circle and his wrist makes a small one.

b) Heng chiao (horizontal twist) involves both [a] and [b] using chung yin chien.

The swords are attached midway along their lengths as each one twists his sword about the other's. The left arm is curved in a half circle with the sword fingers held just in front of the left temple, palm facing out.

12. Ya: to press down

This posture is done from a right bow stance using t'ai yang chien. Use the sword to press down your opponent's sword. Having stopped him in this way, you can take the opportunity to change the position and attack. When pressing, your sword should be pointed slightly downward, giving your opponent no chance to escape.

13. Hsi: to wash

This posture is done from a right bow stance. Circle the sword backward in a clockwise direction into lao yang chien and cut upward at the left side of your opponent's body from below. The left hand sword fingers are held straight out from the body, pointing to the back left diagonal.

Note: In the sword method we don't use the techniques of k'an (hack) or ch'ieh (chip). Those techniques belong to the knife. Sword makes use of only the 13 techniques discussed above.



Lineage and History of Transmission

The art of the sword tradition has been handed down (transmitted) to us through many generations. Chang San Feng created T'ai Chi and Pa Kua. Wutang Sword Fencing developed entirely out of those two disciplines. Therefore, to know Wutang Sword Fencing you must first know the T'ai Chi forms correctly. It is impossible to master sword fencing without this prior knowledge. After learning T'ai Chi and Pa Kua, the art of Wudang Sword Fencing can be studied.

The Originator : Tung Hsuan Chen Ren was the founder of T'ai Chi Ch'uan.

Original Name : Chang Chuan Yi

Born : Guang Wai Province, Yi Chow

Meditated : Wutang Shan (Wutang Mountain)

Taoist Names : Yu Hsueh Kung; Yu Hsueh Chih; San Feng Chih (Chang San Feng)

1st Generation : Chang Sung Hsi

Born : Honan Province, Tengfeng

Meditated : Sung Shan (Sung Mountain)

Taoist Name : Tan Ai Chih

: Chang traveled to Eastern Chekiang Province

2nd Generation : Chao Ta Pin

Born : Shantung Province, T'ai An

Meditated : T'ai Shan

Taoist Name : Tan Yun Shan Chiu

3rd Generation : Wang Chiu Cheng

Born : Hubei Province, Chun Hsien

Meditated : Wutang Shan

Taoist Name : Wutang Tan Hsu

4th Generation : Yen Hsih Hseng

Born : Hunan Province, Heng Shan

Meditated : Heng Shan

Taoist Name : Wan Tan Shou

5th Generation : Lu Hsih Niang (a woman)

Born : Chekiang Province, Chin Hsien

Meditated : Sih Ming Shan

Taoist Name : Tan Hsia K'e

6th Generation : Li Ta Nian

Born : Shensi Province, Huayin Hsien

Meditated : Sih Ming Shan

Taoist Name : Chin Tan Ch'i Tzu

7th Generation : Ch'en Yin Ch'ang

Born : Anhui Province

Meditated : Chiu Mou Shan

Taoist Name : Tan Yun Lu Che

8th Generation (1) : Yeh He Tao Ren; Pi Yueh Hsia; Pai Fa Lao Ren (real names unknown these are aliases)

Born : (can't be traced)

Meditated : (unknown)

Taoist Name : Huan Tan Tzu

8th Generation (2) : Pi Tun Hsia Hsing (real name unknown)

Born : (can't be traced)

Meditated : Chiu Hua Shan

Taoist name : Pi Tun Hsia Hsing

9th Generation (1) : Sung Teh Hou (also called Sung Wei Yi) descended from 1 above.

Born : Fen Tien Province, Mukden, Pei Chin Hsien

Meditated : Yi Wu Lu Shan

Taoist Name : Fei Tan Chiu Tzu Erh; Hsueh Shang Wu Tsung

: Sung died in the winter of the 14th year of the Republic of China.

9th Generation (2) : Tung Hai Ch'uan

Born : Hsun Tun Prefecture (which included Peking), Wen An Hsien.

Meditated : Chiu Hua Shan

Taoist Name : (not given)

: Tung was the famous eunuch who fought with Yang Lu Chan at the Palace during the Ching Dynasty. He died during the winter of the 6th year of the Ching Dynasty.

10th Generation (1) : Chiang Hsiang Wu descended from (1) in the ninth generation.

Born : No information given

Meditated : No information given

Taoist name : No information given

10th Generation (2) : Li Fang Chien (this book is written about his ideas and the form he transmitted) descended from (1) in the ninth generation.

Born : Shandong Province

Meditated : Chiang Hsien Shan

Taoist Name : Not Given

Later Practitioners : Among the many people who learned through Tung are:

- » Yin To An (a eunuch)
- » Ch'ung Ting Hua
- » Ma Wei Ch'ih
- » Liu Feng Ch'un
- » Liang Ch'en Pu
- » Liu Teh K'uan
- » Li Ch'un Yi
- » Shih Liu
- » Chang Chan K'iu

: Ch'ih Ching Tzu (the author of the book) studied with Li Fang Chien.

- » Master T.T. Liang (the translator of this work, and author of T'ai Chi Ch'uan For Health And Self Defense), studied with Ch'ih Ching Tzu.