

# T'ai Chi



## 5 principles:

1. Move in a slow, relaxed manner.  
(Picking fruit)
2. Moving in Balance  
(*Slowly* shifting weight from one foot to the other)
3. Straight back  
(Crown up, knees unlocked, neither leaning forward nor backward)
4. Waist turning  
(Slowly rotate shoulders while hips remain stationary)
5. 'Beautiful Ladies' Wrists'  
(Arms float up and out as legs slowly straighten; then elbows start to drop as hands float back; hands & arms slowly drop as legs sink)

## Prayer Wheel:

Your left foot is forward, pointing straight ahead, and your right foot is back a little, and at an angle. Arms hang comfortably down at your sides. Shift your weight *slowly* forward onto your left leg, then slowly shift back onto the right leg, repeating this slow back-and-forth several times. See if you can come to do this in such a slow and relaxed way that when your weight is completely over one leg, you are able to relax the opposite leg *completely* for just a brief moment.

Then, while your upper arms still hang comfortably at your sides, bring your forearms up in front of you with palms facing each other about a foot apart (visualize holding a small imaginary soccer ball *very* lightly). Now as you shift weight forward, 'see' this imaginary ball between your palms moving in a circular path up, then forward, then start going down, as your weight shifts almost completely onto your forward leg. As you then slowly begin to shift weight to the back leg, the ball goes on down, then comes back in towards you. With your weight now shifted onto the back leg, the ball comes up just in front of you and - as you begin to shift forward again - the ball continues in a circular path up and then forward. As you get comfortably into the rhythm of this, finally add the raising of the back foot's heel as you shift forward, and raise the front foot's toes as you shift back. After a few minutes, you can reverse your foot placement by bringing the right foot up to the front and moving the left foot over to the rear position.

As you practice this move, keep noticing if there are any places in your body that are tightening or tense, and gently continue to release and soften them. A main goal of this exercise is to practice using the *least amount of energy possible* in doing these moves. Also, keep tuning into *breathing* in a comfortable, relaxed way, from your belly.

To end, move the forward foot back so it's beside the back one, and - with your weight now evenly spread over both feet - slowly bring the imaginary ball into your belly.