

CHEN STYLE TAIJIQUAN: FIRST PASSAGE

1. WUJI
Feet together, head suspended, knees unlocked: relaxed and empty, seek stillness.
2. WUJI TO TAIJI
Shift axis right, emptying left leg. Sink and turn palms out, differentiate yin and yang: solid and empty. (Can be repeated to left.)
3. POTTER SITS AT THE WHEEL
Weight in right leg, step to the left with the left foot into a horse stance (ma bu) with feet parallel and shoulder-width apart. Inhaling: arms reach out to sides, palms forward as if to gather. Exhaling: lower body into a sitting position, rotate arms till palms angle in and down, as if resting on a large waist-high ball in front, as if preparing as-yet-unformed clay for the act of creation. (Rise to repeat if desired.)
- 4A. WILLOW DROOPS BRANCHES TO THE STREAM
Same stance as 3; torso turns arms in vertical clockwise circle, hands shoulder width apart, inhaling as arms rise and exhale as palms descend. Palms down at bottom, face each other on sides, up at top. Weight left as arms rise, center at top and bottom, right as arms descend. (Repeat as desired.)
- 4B. WILLOW DROOPS BRANCHES TO THE STREAM
Reverse direction of 4A to counter-clockwise.
- 5A. PUSH WATER TO MAKE WAVES, RIGHT (“Waves Lap the Shore”)
As arms descend in 4B turn right foot out 45° (creating a “bow & arrow” stance, or gong bu). Shifting weight to right, push palms out and down in a horizontal clockwise circle. As circle you complete the circle, shift weight back to left foot and turn palms up. Be sure not to rotate the knees and keep front knee from extending past “dynamic limit” (over ankle).
- 5B. PUSH WATER TO MAKE WAVES, LEFT
As you push out for the second (or subsequent time) in 5A, draw left leg up to right leg, then step forward, left toes pointing straight ahead. Be sure to leave space between the feet laterally. Push counter-clockwise circles.
6. RISING DRAGON STRETCHES ITS CLAWS
From push forward in 5B, reach back with right hand and bring right foot forward. Touch ball of foot lightly to the ground in an empty step (xu bu). Extend right arm to front palm up at a downward angle, left fingers on inside of right elbow. Lift right thigh parallel to ground, right foot hanging loose; draw right hand back in fist to right armpit, palm out; extend left hand to front, palm outward, fingers horizontal in “claws,” elbow curved. Twist torso. (May be repeated side to side.)
7. WARRIOR POUNDS MORTAR
From 6, step to right horse stance (ma bu: parallel feet); bring right elbow followed by back of right fist into upturned left palm. Draw hands into your low abdomen, sitting equal weighted.
8. HULL RICE WITH MORTAR & PESTLE; CLOSING (Taiji returns to Wuji)
Circle fist-on-palm up left side of abdomen, over the top and down the right. Open arms to sides, shift right, and step left foot next to right foot. Draw hands in to cover abdomen, stand up and let arms hang at your sides as in Wuji, #1.