

# Posture

## *In the Wuji Stance*

One of the key aspects of Taiji is the use of the natural structure of the body to provide a strong, resilient posture throughout the form. At the beginning of the form, when in the *Wuji Stance*, take a moment to go through each of the following points before starting.



- The feet should be shoulder width apart and parallel.
- The weight should be evenly distributed and in the middle of each foot. Avoid any tendency for the weight to roll to the edges of the feet, forward into balls of the toes or backwards to rock on the heels.
- Keep the feet relaxed. Don't grip the ground with the toes.
- The knees should be slightly bent.
- The pelvis should be tucked in slightly, giving a feeling of the weight of the body dropping down through the center, and of the tail bone being suspended.
- The back should be straight. However, the spine has a natural curve, so allow that to find expression and don't seek a back like a broom stick.
- Let the shoulders relax. The weight of the arms should hang and draw the shoulders down. The arms should be straight, but do not lock the elbows. Let the elbows, wrists and fingers relax.
- The head should be light, as if it is balanced on the neck and suspended from above. Imagine a cord from the crown of the skull drawing the head upwards but tuck the chin in slightly to avoid any excess stretching in the neck.
- Keep the tongue pressed lightly in the roof of the mouth.
- Relax and let the breath sink.
- This posture can be used as a standing meditation, and stillness forms the foundation of movement.

## *Throughout the Form*

All of the points raised above remain relevant whilst doing the form. In *Wuji*, each point should be explicitly checked, during the form they should continue to be part of your peripheral awareness.

- Pay particular attention to remaining relaxed during the movements.
- Each posture should be completed. Don't cut one move short as you start the next.
- The movements from one posture to the next should be smooth and relaxed.
- The movements start in the feet, are powered by the legs, guided by the waist, travel up the back, through the shoulders and finally find expression in the hands.
- Always keep the knees centred over the feet. Do not allow them to drift out to the side, or collapse inwards.
- When in a back stance such as *San Ti*, The back should be straight and the weight should drop down entirely into the back foot.
- When in a forward stance such as *Brush Knee and Twist Step*, the weight should be mostly in the front foot and the back leg should be straight. Allow the torso to incline forward; there should be a line from the back heel, up the leg and back. The "cleanness" of this line determines the body's ability to issue and absorb energy.

