

Exercise ONE -- *Body sway around ankle joints*

General notes: Emphasize the student's awareness of the shifting of the pressure points on the soles of the feet (heel to toe, and left-right) and the corresponding changes in postural stability. Keep head upright, and eyes scanning (when not focused on the instructor).

[a. and b. are incorporated (minimally) in the opening and closing movements of the 8-Form routine.]

All variations (speed, Base of Support, etc.) must take into account each individual's physical limitations. It is not uncommon to use different BOS's for different students.

a.) Keep heels and toes *flat on floor* at all times. Avoid hip flexion. When turning to reach backwards, emphasize the *rotation of the hips* (rather than the twisting of the spine). Feel free to incorporate appropriate 8-Form arm movements as students progress (see d., below).

b.) Initiate hip flexion just before heels rise off the floor.

c.) "*bend the hips* and then take a step..." This is probably beyond the capability of most students; focus on the step. Emphasize lifting the toe of the stepping foot, and a soft touchdown on the heel (use knee flexion to cushion the impact).

d.) Feet flat at all times. Be aware that this is more stressful on the knees than the standard forms. (Note: The video is located on ORI Disk 2, "Standing Movements of Selected Forms".)

(e. and f.) (Not on current ORI video.) These are variations of c., above, and could be described as "catching your fall with a tai chi form".

Exercise TWO -- *Eyes-head movements*

General notes: Since most training venues do not have mirrors, it is helpful to attach small pieces of masking tape to the wall (blue painter's tape works very well) to provide visual targets for the students.

It can be difficult, at first, for some students to get the hang of moving their eyes instead of their head (and vice-versa). Recommend you try some basic head/eye movements to clarify this concept.

[A simplified version of this exercise is incorporated in the *Wave Hands* movement of the 8-Form routine.]

a.) "*Following* the moving hand..." means *tracking* the hand, not lagging it.

b.) There are two ways to do this. 1) The eyes lead the hand movement by a set distance (*offset*), and 2) the eyes move to the offset distance, then fix on that point as the head & trunk rotate to catch up with hand. (This can be difficult.)

c.) This is the classic test/exercise of *vestibulo-ocular reflex* (VOR).

d.) (Suggested addition.) Execute this movement with eyes scanning the (imagined) horizon, i.e. not focusing on any point as the head turns.

e.) (Suggested addition.) With several targets spaced equally along a wall at eye level, execute the movement as your eyes stabilize momentarily (for just a small fraction of a second) on each individual target in sequence from left to right to left, etc.

Exercise THREE -- *Sit-to-Stand, Stand-to-Sit*

Initial position in the chair should be

- 1) Body as far forward as practical, but not so far that the chair begins to tip forward.
- 2) Feet positioned approximately shoulder width apart, with heels pulled back so that the knees are over the toes.

During the movements (a., b. and c.):

- 1) Feet remain flat on floor, and head looking forward (not at floor) during the rocking forward/backward.
- 2) Aim for bringing the shoulders (or nose) over the toes during forward rock.
- 3) Arms should swing forward with *thumbs up or palms up*.
- 4) Breathe IN while rocking forward (and standing up), OUT rocking back.

(d.) Emphasize bending the knees for as long as possible before bending the waist as you lower your body to the chair. Exhale as you lower your body to a soft landing.

General note: As your students progress and gain confidence, adjust the initial position so that the feet are closer together to reduce BOS and challenge students' balance control.

Exercise FOUR -- *Step-and-Turn*

General note: Between each forward step/brush, shift your weight back to rear foot, pull the ball back over the rear knee while rotating your trunk away from forward (extended) foot.

Exercise FIVE -- *Chair Up-and-Walk*

(This exercise is basically a combination of MTMs Three and Four.)

(c.) DVD video shows Dr. Li using "Part the Wild Horse's Mane" movement, rather than a "swing-the-ball" motion. Start walk with **left** foot, not right.

(d.) Use as many steps/brush knee as required, to end up facing the left chair leg (from the student's current point of view).

(e.) "step *<forward>* into a hold-a-ball posture on the left;"

(f.) It sometimes helps to take slightly shorter steps on the way back to the chair, in order to have enough room to again turn.

(g.) The object here is, after stepping back, to end up aligned correctly on the chair before sitting.

Exercise SIX -- *Multidimensional head movement*

(a.) This step should read "Move arms into a hold-a-ball position, *<and perform a normal Part Wild Horse's Mane. Then, while keeping both feet in position and flat on the floor, again>* perform *Part Wild Horse's Mane* (with arms only) with the head turning side-to-side in the direction of the moving hand *<(3 - 5 repetitions)>*;" Slight over-rotation of the head is desirable in this exercise to increase vestibular stimulation.

(b.) "continue with head turning up and down *<in coordination with trunk rotation>*;"

(c.) This is a combination of vertical and horizontal head rotation, so that the head moves in a circular fashion. The movement shown on the video is the transition from "ward off" to "press" (during *Grasp Sparrow's Tail*), rather than *Part Wild Horse's Mane*, with similar multiple repetitions.

Exercises a. and b. can be done (very cautiously) with the eyes closed, *after* the feet are positioned in the bow stance. **No stepping with eyes closed!** Keep both feet flat on floor at all times. Close eyes only in the forward direction; open for the return to the rear position.

Exercise SEVEN -- *Single leg standing with Brush Knees*

[A simplified version of this exercise is incorporated in the *Brush Knee* movement of the 8-Form routine.]

(a.) DVD video does not show (1) "holding the ball diagonally away from the body", or (2) "Hold the posture for 2-3 seconds." These are more advanced variations from that shown on the video.

Holding the single leg stance can be done in two different ways:

(1) Keeping rear leg extended (off the floor) while the pushing hand is extended,
hold;
(2) After lifting the rear leg, bring it forward into a single-leg "hold-a-ball" stance,
and **hold.**

(b.) This essentially means begin holding using method (1), above, and then transitioning to (2) while maintaining the single-leg stance.

Exercise EIGHT -- *Stepping exercises*

(a.) Assuming you start in the left-rear quadrant (as per video) the first step forward should be with the *outside* (left, in this case) foot. If you start in the right-rear quadrant, the first step forward should be with the *outside* (right, in this case) foot.

Assuming you start in the left-rear quadrant (as per video), once you reach the right-rear quadrant you will need to *shift your weight (and ball) from your left foot to your right* before the final sideways step back to the left-rear starting position.

"**Stepping with variations**" does NOT use the four quadrant system; it should be stepping in random directions (maintaining tai chi principles), following the instructor's verbal cues and movements, while varying the kinematics of the step

Exercise NINE -- *Pushing hands*

All step a. thru e. can be done "**Without a partner**".

"With a partner":

(a.) DVD video shows partners rotating their trunks so that their hands inscribe a horizontal circle. This is an added layer of complexity that can be introduced at the instructor's discretion.

(a.) DVD video adds heel/toe lift (coordinated appropriately with weight shift).

(b.) Not shown in video.

(c.) DVD video adds a "stepping in place" variation.

(d.) This is the last segment shown in video chapter.

(e.) Only step 1. is shown in video.

Exercise TEN -- *Sensory integration exercises*

(c. and d.) The *push* and *pull* motions with the ball are meant to be slightly destabilizing, to exercise compensatory postural control. Practice the "eyes closed" variation with caution.

Exercise ELEVEN (video only) -- *Stepping Maneuver around a chair*

I recommend you watch the video and practice this exercise on your own. This exercise is "in work", and is probably only applicable to advanced students.