

## Yin Yang Studies

Below are some examples of Yin and Yang opposites but note that according to taiji theory each contains elements of its opposite and the height of one leads to the creation of the other.

Yin	Yang
Shady	Sunny
Insubstantial	Substantial
Defence	Attack
Swallow	Spit
Sink	Float
Store	Release
Close	Open
Light	Heavy
Anti-clockwise	Clockwise
Water	Fire
Earth	Heaven
Energy body	Physical body
Female	Male
Moon	Sun
Completion	Creation
Cold	Heat
Empty	Full

The theory of taiji or the constant interplay of Yin and Yang underpins many, if not all aspects of traditional Chinese culture and indeed extends into every day life. In taijiquan we constantly seek to embody yin and yang both in the physical body and in the interplay between mind and body. Furthermore the tactical and strategic principles of the art are rooted in the taiji.

For example consider this teaching from the Art of War and its commentaries: "Good warriors make others come to them, and do not go to others. This is the principle of emptiness and fullness of others and self. When you induce opponents to come to you, then their force is always empty; as long as you do not go to them, your force is always full. Attacking emptiness with fullness is like throwing stones on eggs." — Zhang Yu in his commentary on Sun Zi's Art of War

## Starting Points

### Standing

Wuji, the prelude to taiji

Even as we stand in an undifferentiated posture our breath, the very stuff of life, starts the taiji. Now as we consider the slightest shifts in weight distribution we see more clearly the birth of the taiji.

### Moving

Following the principle of going from the large to the small we start our study of yin and yang in movement with:

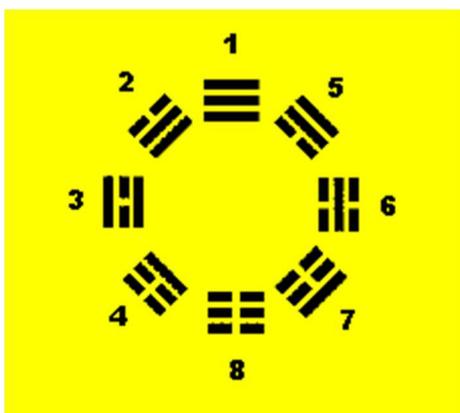
yin and yang as up and down left and right.

### Yin and Yang and constant change

The process by which all things are constituted of the ever-changing relationship between yin and yang is described by the Chinese bagua of which there are two arrangements the pre-heaven and the post-heaven

The 8 basic symbols of trigrams are:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
乾	兌	離	震	巽	坎	艮	坤
qian2	dui1	li2	zhen	sun4	kan3	gen4	kun1



In the pre-heaven sequence the eight trigrams correspond to taijiquan's eight basic powers thus:

Qian **Peng**

Kun **Lu**

Kan **Ji**

Li **An**

Sun **Cai**  
Gen **Lieh**  
Dui **Zhou**  
Zhen **Kao**

In the post-heaven sequence the correspondence is thus:

Kan **Peng**  
Li **Lu**  
Dui **Ji**  
Zhen **An**  
Qian **Cai**  
Kun **Lieh**  
Gen **Zhou**  
Sun **Kao**

By examining the trigrams we can learn something about the combination of yin and yang in the corresponding powers.

The relationship between the pre-heaven and the post-heaven diagrams in martial arts is explained in three different ways:

- 1/ Train the post-heaven to remedy the pre-heaven
- 2/ Train the post-heaven to return to the pre-heaven
- 3/ Train the unification of pre-heaven and post-heaven

In order to make practical use of these trigrams in our training we shall consider the pre-heaven arrangement as the ideal that we are aiming for and the post-heaven arrangement as a guide to the qualities our movements should embody in order to attain that ideal.

### **The Five Elements**

As well as the eight powers taijiquan embodies the five movements: forward, backward, left, right and **zhong** **ding** or central equilibrium. These correspond to the five elements: metal, wood, water, fire and earth.

Forward **Metal**  
Backward **Wood**  
Left **Water**  
Right **Fire**  
Centre **Earth**

We can practice these both in solo movements and with a partner.

The constant interplay of yin and yang can be found in every aspect of taijiquan whether, form, pushing hands, weapons, applications or neigong but **REMEMBER:**

**NO MATTER HOW COMPLEX ALL OF THIS SEEMS, THE ESSENCE IS VERY SIMPLE:**

**One Yin, one Yang and turn the waist.**