



Free Tai Chi Starter Pack

Six practical resources for beginning safely and understanding the Shang approach

MOVE BETTER. FEEL BETTER. LIVE WELL.

Learn the art. Practise its principles. Live them.

How to use this pack

These resources are designed to help you begin exploring Tai Chi principles without needing to memorise a form. They are educational, not medical treatment. Work within a comfortable range and use stable support where needed.

1. Tai Chi Foundations Quick Guide

Foundation	Plain-English cue
Posture	Stand naturally tall without stiffening. Imagine the crown of the head gently rising while the chin remains slightly tucked.
Chest and upper back	Avoid lifting or puffing the chest. Let the chest soften and the upper back remain naturally rounded rather than rigid.
Waist and hips	Keep the waist and hips loose enough to turn. Avoid forcing the pelvis into an exaggerated tuck.
Knees	Keep the knees soft, aligned with the feet and never forced deeply.
Feet	Feel the whole foot on the ground. Do not grip hard with the toes.
Shoulders and elbows	Let the shoulders settle and the elbows hang rather than flare.
Hands	Keep the hands open and alive, fingers naturally extended and separated without stiffness.
Eyes and attention	Look naturally in the direction of the movement. Let attention accompany intention.
Breathing	Breathe comfortably and quietly. Do not force the breath to match movement as a beginner.
Tongue	Traditional practice often rests the tongue lightly on the roof of the mouth. Treat this as a traditional practice cue, not a requirement.

2. Beginner Weight Transfer

The aim is to move your centre of mass over the supporting leg without leaning the torso sideways.

- Begin with feet about comfortable standing width.
- Soften the knees without squatting.
- Shift slowly toward one leg while keeping the head and torso upright.
- Notice the receiving leg becoming more weighted (substantial) and the other becoming lighter (insubstantial).
- Return through centre and repeat to the other side.

- Stop before the movement causes strain, wobbling or a need to grab with the toes.

Micro practice: while waiting for the kettle, make 6-10 slow side-to-side transfers with full attention.

3. Five-Minute Morning Practice

Time	Practice
1 min	Sit or stand comfortably. Notice your breathing and release obvious tension.
1 min	Gentle ankle circles or heel/toe awareness.
1 min	Slow side-to-side weight transfer, supported if needed.
1 min	Open and close the arms gently while maintaining relaxed shoulders.
1 min	Stand or sit quietly, breathing naturally and noticing how you feel.

4. Five-Minute Evening Practice

Time	Practice
1 min	Settle into a comfortable seated or standing position.
1 min	Scan jaw, shoulders, hands and abdomen for unnecessary tension.
1 min	Breathe naturally; allow the exhale to be unforced and quiet.
1 min	Make slow, comfortable waist turns or seated turns.
1 min	Finish still. Notice the contact of your feet or body with the support beneath you.

5. Seated Tai Chi Starter

- Sit toward the front of a stable chair if comfortable, feet supported on the floor.
- Let the spine lengthen without stiffening.
- Practise relaxing the shoulders while keeping the head gently lifted.
- Turn from the waist within a comfortable range rather than throwing the arms.
- Coordinate a slow opening and closing of the hands/arms with awareness of the torso.
- Explore intention: decide where the movement is going before moving.

6. Tai Chi Terminology

Term	Working explanation
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Qi (氣)	A traditional Chinese concept often translated as vital energy. Shang teaches the traditional concept without presenting it as a scientifically established substance.
Dan Tian	A traditional centre of attention in the lower abdomen, commonly referenced in Tai Chi and Qigong.
Song	Release of unnecessary tension while maintaining structure; not limpness.
Rooting	A sense of stable connection with the ground produced through alignment, balance and appropriate weight distribution.
Substantial / insubstantial	Distinguishing the more weighted/supporting side from the lighter side during movement.
Yi / intention	Directed attention or intent that gives purpose and direction to movement.
Opening / closing	Coordinated expansion and gathering patterns through the body, not merely moving the arms apart and together.

Next step

If these ideas make sense to you, the free 7-Day Shang Tai Chi Introduction connects them into a guided sequence. Full membership then provides a structured Foundation pathway and 30 days of unrestricted access for new members.