



Gentle exercises for relaxation  
and health enhancement

## Tao Yin—The Yellow Emperor’s heart calming exercise

The Tao Yin is a set of eight gentle callisthenic exercises attributed to China’s legendary Yellow Emperor who lived 2500 years ago.

These notes accompany the Academy’s *Tao Yin* video. Images are adapted from the video, © and presented by Grand Master Khor.

### General Tips

All movements begin in a relaxed stance. Breathe even and deep through the nose, the tongue resting on the roof of the mouth. Breathe out fully, rather than trying to take in a big breath.

Coordinate breathing with the movements and repeat each exercise four times to each side.

Vary the speed, pacing and number of repetitions depending on your purpose for using the exercise.

Only sink as far as is comfortable in sinking exercises. Maintain a comfortable stance at all times, ensuring your balance.

*Horse-riding stance:* feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent. Maintain an upright posture, spine relaxed, and ‘sit’ comfortably when in the horse-riding stance.

*Bow stance:* feet almost shoulder width apart with one ahead of the other; weight evenly balanced with the back foot positioned at roughly 45° to optimise balance.

### Elegant Crane Greets Morning Sun

Start in horse-riding stance. Relax and slowly extend arms forward to just under shoulder height, forming a gently fist as they rise. Relax arms to side again and sink.

Slowly extend arms to side while forming a gently fist, raising onto toes and turning head to one side. Relax arms to side again. Extend arms forward and lower.



Repeat other side.

Finish by similarly extending arms to rear, then forward to starting stance.

### Scholar Stretches the Body

Turn to one side and step into the bow stance. Relax back, raise hands to shoulder height and breathe in.

Shift weight forward and stretch while rubbing arms down body. Breathe out as you stand up and stretch, breathe in as you draw up and sit back.



Repeat four times; then turn and repeat on other side.

Turn back to the first side and shift hands to back. Breathe in.

Rub down back on kidneys with arms as you stretch forward and breathe out.



Repeat four times; then turn and repeat on other side.

### Tiger Crouch

This exercise starts and ends with the feet together and body relaxed. Breathe in as you raise arms and cross hands in front of face. Step aside to horse-riding stance while lowering and breathing out.

Cross one leg behind and continue to sink (squat and breathe out), arms circling around and down to form fists, head to one side.

Breathe in as you rise and lower the arms; step back to starting side as the arms come up and out (similar to separate clouds). Finish with feet together and arms relaxed.

Repeat other side.

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### Elephant's Trunk

This exercise starts and ends with the feet together and body relaxed. Breathe in as you raise arms and cross hands in front of face. Step aside to horse-riding stance while lowering and breathing out.



Open up and scoop arms, raising them to curl inwards towards the shoulders like an elephant's trunk (breathing in). Elbows remain open, hands form loose fists with the first finger pointing back beside head.



Squeeze elbows in (breathe out). Extend up with hands (breathe in), separate arms and lower to side

(breathing out) while stepping in.

### Albatross Flaps Wings

This exercise starts and ends with the feet together and body relaxed. Breathe in as you raise arms and cross hands in front of face. Step aside to horse-riding stance while lowering and breathing out.



Arms expand sideways, up and over head, coming to rest in front of shoulders, forearms horizontal.

Breathe out as fingers are flapped (up and down) in front of chest.

Lower arms and reach behind back, rubbing kidneys as you stretch and breathe in. Expand arms out to side and return to flap hands (in and out) in front of chest while breathing out.

Form fists, raise hands in front of face while breathing in, lower arms (breath out) and step in to complete.

### Pounding Acupoints

Start in horse-riding stance.

Relax body and swing arms with closed fists, gently striking the acupoints on the opposite upper arm and lower back.

Relax, hands on waist. Shift weight to stand on one foot, gently strike the back of the supporting leg with other foot.

Lower foot, shift weight to other side and repeat, alternating sides.

### Monkey Presents Fruits

This exercise starts and ends with the feet together and body relaxed. Turn to one side. Step forward, scoop both hands and raise with other knee into presentation pose, palms up as you breathe in.



Drop back into bow stance while lowering arms and form fists (breath out). Shift weight forward while expanding arms out and up, then down to sides with weight forward.

Drop back with another scoop of the arms and return to presentation pose with hands and knee raised.

Turn to front with hands and knee raised and lower leg to horse-riding stance while breathing in. Lower hands while breathing out and return to start position.

Repeat other side.

### Facial Massage

Horse-riding stance, remove glasses if required and rub hands to warm. Gently massage face, neck, back of head and ears with hands.

### Prayer Stance

In Rockhampton we often end the set with a short meditation in the *standing zen* position: feet parallel and shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, weight balanced, with the hands on the *tun tien* (lower abdomen, behind and below the belly button).

Closing the eyes helps avoid distractions and aids relaxation.