

**Chen Style Taijiquan**  
*Reeling Silk Energy Exercises*

**Chan Si Gong**



**By Feng Zhiqiang**

## *Reeling Silk Energy Exercises*

CHEN STYLE TAJI REELING SILK EXERCISES  
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Reeling silk skills (chan si gong) is an exercise found exclusively in the Chen style Taijiquan system. It consists of spiral movements combined with the internal flow of intrinsic energy (qi) and the external motion of rotation.

After practicing these exercises for a period of time, one will be able to develop real energy (zhen qi) to open the eight channels, to improve the yin and yang balance of the body and to smooth the flow of blood. The exercises internally help the mind to lead the qi and externally help strengthen the body. When the qi rises, the arms turn and the wrists twist. When the qi lowers, the knees turn and the ankles twist. When the qi is in the central portion of the body, it passes in a spiral through the chest, waist, abdomen and kidneys. The qi also revitalizes and exercises the eighteen major joint areas of the body: shoulders, elbows, wrists, hips, knees, feet, chest, ribs, waist, abdomen and kidneys; thereby gradually harmonizing the internal and external. The entire body will eventually become a resistant "qi sphere" reaching a balance of yin and yang.

When practicing chansigong, the entire body must have circular motion. This type of motion is controlled by the mind/intent. It is expressed from the inside as segmented twists and turns which are mutually related. The motion cannot be defined as

a single chaotic motion. Whenever performing a single chansigong exercise, the intent/mind emits from the center to various parts of the body; at the same time, the external shape gradually combines with the mind and qi, and the internal qi slowly flows to set targets in the body. This will thereby allow the blood to flow smoothly throughout the body, opening up the meridians and strengthening the muscles. This will produce an agile and flexible body. With long practice one can obtain a strength which is ever changing and improving. This is very important to the practice of boxing basics.

In order to properly perform the chansigong, one must stand in the wuji (void) stance and focus on the dantian (focal point of abdomen) from 3-9 minutes. Afterwards, rub the face and abdomen.

The following exercises can be practiced from the beginning to end or in sections. One can also practice according to one's own needs by selecting individual movements. Should the entire set be performed, each individual exercise must be repeated at least nine times or more. There is no limit to the repetitions.

The following introduces each exercise for the practice of chansigong.

## Reeling Silk Energy Exercises



图 1



图 2



图 3



图 4



图 5



图 6



图 7



图 8



图 9



图 10



图 11



图 12

### 1. TURNING THE HEAD

From the wuji stance, place the hands on the waist while turning the head levelly to the left and right. The movement must be smooth and even; the head and shoulders must maintain a straight posture completing the exercise a number of times, conduct the closing exercise.

### CLOSING EXERCISE

The body is natural and relaxed (Figure 1-2). The face looks forward. Place the hands in front of the abdomen. The arms move in an upward arc to the sides of the body; following, the hands pass the front of the face, the chest and then the hips. The palms face down and the fingers point to the front. The qi slowly sinks down and the spirit is concentrated inward (Figure 3-6). After calming down a while, return to a normal mind set.

### 2. REVOLVING THE NECK

From the wuji stance, place the hands on the waist; relax the neck to allow the head to softly and gently bend forward, to the left, to the rear, and then to the right (Figure 7-10). The head should turn clockwise for a number of repetitions and then counterclockwise the same amount. The movements must be even, continuous and natural. The upper body should not bend too far. The qi and head movements should be united while performing this exercise. The inside of the body should have a comfortable feeling while performing. The exercise can naturally stop at any moment. When completed, conduct the closing exercise as described in movement #1.

### 3. REVOLVING THE SHOULDERS

A) Left and right revolving shoulders: From the wuji stance, the hands form loose fists. The upper body slightly turns to the right and left shoulder angles to the front causing the shoulders to sink down. Concentrate the qi downward (Figure 11). Revolve the left shoulder up and to the rear while relaxing the shoulder; the right shoulder slightly lowers down at the side (Figure 12). Continue this motion a number of times; afterwards, change the direction to the front, then down, to the rear and finally upward. The figures demonstrate the revolving of the left shoulder;

## Reeling Silk Energy Exercises

the right shoulder is just the same as the left (Figure 13-14). After completion, perform the closing exercise.

B) Double shoulder revolving: From the wuji stance, step the right leg to the right a half step. The knees should bend slightly and the fists are placed alongside of the thighs. The chest is sunk and the shoulders are rounded. The qi is lowered downward (Figure 15). Gradually expand the chest while the shoulders turn in a circular fashion from the front, upward and then to the rear. The arms are bent at the elbow and the fists are lifted up to the waist (Figure 16). After practicing this movement a number of times, the shoulders turn in a circular fashion from the front, downward, to the rear and then up. When performing this exercise, the body must be relaxed. The shoulder and elbow joints rotate naturally. Breathe naturally, and upon completion perform the closing exercise.



图 13



图 14



图 15



图 16

#### 4. PRESSING THE SHOULDERS TO THE FRONT AND REAR

From the wuji stance, the right foot steps forward a half step and the knees bend slightly. The weight is placed on the left leg. The hands form fists. The arms quickly rotate out to the sides. The shoulders press to the rear. The palms of the fists turn upward. The upper body expands out as the shoulders press back. The eyes gaze forward (Figure 17 and front view). Continuing from the above movement, the arms revolve inward and the chest is sunken inward. The shoulders press forward. The palms face to the rear. The eyes gaze down (Figure 18 and 18 side view). Next repeat the sequence with the left foot forward. Upon completion, perform the closing exercise.



图 17



图附 17

NOTE: Beginners should not use any force when performing this exercise because they do not have enough inner qi developed. By using force, one may seriously injure the body and the qi. Slowly practice these movements and calmly nurture the qi. Maintain a natural motion for each part of the body in order to harmonize the internal qi which will then naturally increase giving way to "fa jing" (release of energy.)

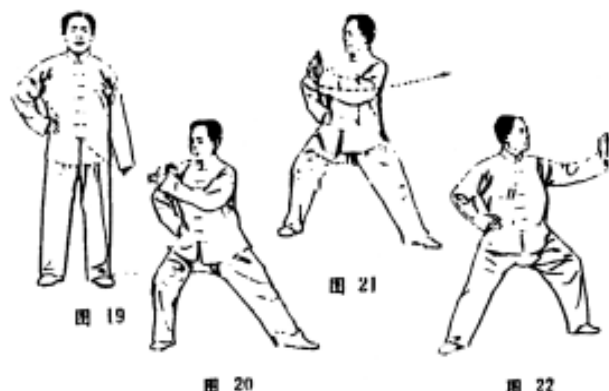


图 18



图附 18

## Reeling Silk Energy Exercises



### 5. LEFT AND RIGHT ARM CHAN SI

Left arm counterclockwise chan si: Begin in the wuji stance. The right hand is placed on the waist. The left foot takes a half step to the left. The toes of the left foot are turned outward. The left arm twists outward while the left hand turns upward to the front of the right shoulder. Following, the front of the left arm twists inward while the left hand is levelly pulled in an arc to the left. At extension the front of the left arm twists out slightly and the left hand lifts up. The body weight should shift with the movement of the left arm (Figure 19-22).

The right side is conducted in the reverse fashion of the left (Figure 23-26). After performing a number of times, conduct the closing exercise.



### 6. LEFT AND RIGHT ARM SPIRALLING CHAN SI

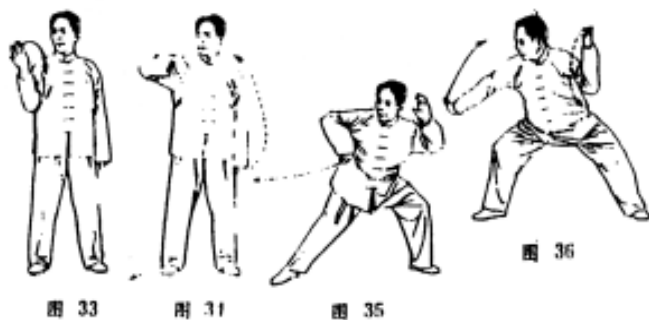
Left arm spiralling chan si: Begin from the wuji stance; the right hand is placed on the waist. Bend the knees slightly and shift the weight to the right a bit. Twist the left arm outward while the left hand spirals counterclockwise up to the front of the chest. The palm faces up; afterwards, the left leg takes a step to the left side, bend the knee to form a bow step, and twist the left arm inward. The left hand straightens to the lower left front with the palm turned upside down to face up. The eyes gaze at the left hand (Figure 27-29).

The movement for the right hand is the same as the left, only the directions are changed (Figure 30-32). Conduct the closing exercise upon completion.



### 7. LEFT AND RIGHT ARM SPIRAL CHAN SI

Right side double arm spiral chan si: Begin in the wuji stance; the right arm rises with a bent elbow, followed by bending the wrist. The back of the hand slides down to the side of the right ribs. Afterwards, the upper body turns to the right; the right leg steps to the right a half step, and the knees bend forward. The palm of the hand is turned over to face to the rear. The left arm twists outward with a bent elbow, as the left hand is raised to the left side of the head. The palm of the hand faces to the left. The eyes gaze at the right hand (Figure 33-36).



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Left sided double arm spiral chan si: Shift the weight to the right leg as the upper body slightly turns to the left. The right arm twists out with a bent elbow. The right hand rises to the right side of the head. The left hand bends at the wrist as it slides down to the left side of the rib cage. Afterwards, the left leg bends and the palm of the hand faces to the rear. The eyes gaze at the left hand (Figure 37-38). Practice both sides by connecting the movements with Figure 35 and alternate. Perform this sequence many times in order to allow the qi to flow smoothly and to naturally relax the body. Perform the closing exercise.



图 37



图 38

### 8. DOUBLE ARM CHAN SI

Begin in the wuji stance. The right arm twists inward while the right hand slowly straightens to the upper right; afterwards, the right hand follows an arc down to the front of the left hip as the right arm twists out. The palm faces to the left and the fingers point to the lower front. The left arm twists outward as it is lifted upward with a bent elbow. The left hand arrives at the front of the right shoulder; the palm faces to the right and the fingers point up. The body turns slightly to the left. The toes of the right foot turn out and take a half step out. The eyes gaze to the right (Figure 39-40). This completes the clockwise chan si.



图 39



图 40

The right arm twists inward and the body slightly turns to the right. The arm pulls to the upper right. At the same time, the left hand is placed on the inside of the right elbow and makes an arc down to the outside of the left hip. The left arm is below the right while they pull apart. Attention must be paid to not hold the breath. The breathing must be natural. The shoulders should be relaxed and rounded (Figure 41). This completes the counterclockwise chan si. To repeat on the opposite side, open the step to the left and begin to repeat the motions on the opposite side (Figure 42-44). Perform the closing exercise when finished.



图 41



图 42



图 43



图 44

### 9. DOUBLE ARM DIAGONAL OPENING AND CLOSING CHAN SI

Begin in the wuji stance. Open the toes of the left foot out and place the right foot forward.

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图 45



图 46



图 47



图 48



图 49



图 50

The sole of the right foot is empty. The left arm bends at the elbow while the left hand rises to the front of the chest. The palm is cupped with the fingers pointing down. The right arm twists inwards as the right hand passes the outside of the left arm to rise to the upper left. Afterwards, the front arm twists outwards while pulling above the right shoulder; the palm faces to the front and the tiger's mouth faces down. The left arm twists out while the hand moves in an arc to the left, to the rear and then to the side of the ear. The palm faces up to the front and the fingers point to the rear. The right arm continues twisting outward while the right hand straightens to the rear alongside of the body and then turns in an arc to the front. The palm faces up and the fingers point forward. The eyes gaze to the front (Figure 45-47). After performing this sequence a number of times, place the left foot forward and repeat on the opposite side (Figure 48-50). Perform the closing exercise.



图 51



图 52



图 53



图 54

10. DOUBLE ARM STRAIGHT SPIRAL UP CHAN SI  
From the wuji stance, the knees slowly bend and the arms twist out. The hands straighten to above the head while passing the front of the abdomen. The legs gradually straighten as the hands rise up. The arms twist inwards as the hands slowly lower to the front of the abdomen moving along the side of the body (Figure 51-54). The movements must be smooth and expanding. After practicing a number of times, perform the closing exercise.



图 55



图 56



图 57



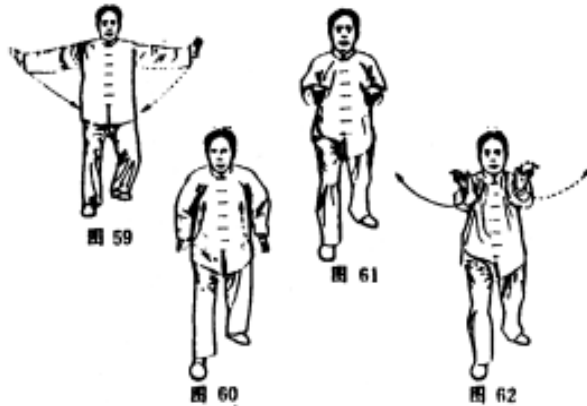
图 58

11. DOUBLE ARM STRAIGHT SPIRAL DOWN CHAN SI  
From the wuji stance, twist both arms out while raising the arms up along the sides of the body. The wrists are bent and the fingers of both hands first pass the front of the face and then lower down to the front of the abdomen. The legs slowly bend down. The backs of both hands touch each other. Following, slowly divide the hands downward to the sides of the hips. The palms face down and the fingers point forward. The eyes gaze to the front (Figure 55-58). When the movement is practiced continuously, the legs should straighten and the hands move to the position shown on Figure 55. Perform the closing exercise upon completion.

## Reeling Silk Energy Exercises

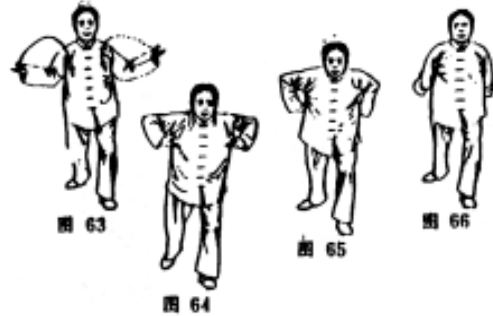
### 12. DOUBLE ARM STRAIGHT SPIRAL FORWARD CHAN SI

From the wuji stance, the right leg takes a step to the front. The weight of the body is placed on the left leg. The arms twist in while rising up along the sides of the body. Following, the hands make an arc to the rear and then straighten to the front by passing the sides of the rib cage. At the same time, the right knee bends forward. The eyes gaze to the front (Figure 59-62). To continue the movement, both arms twist in towards the sides to connect with the movement of Figure 59. Conduct the closing exercise.



### 13. DOUBLE ARM STRAIGHT SPIRAL BACKWARD CHAN SI

From the wuji stance, the right leg takes a step to the rear. The arms twist outward as the hands lift up to the sides. The palms face at an angle upward. The upper body slightly bends to the front. Both arms bend at the elbow and wrist. The hands pass the upper rib cage to straighten to the rear. The palms face up. The left leg bends forward at the knee, the chest expands, the head is lifted and the eyes gaze forward (figure 63-66). The arms twist out while the hands pass the sides in an arc-like motion to connect with the move in Figure 63. Repeat in a continuous motion. Perform the closing exercise afterwards.



### 14. DOUBLE ARM STRAIGHT SPIRAL HORIZONTAL CHAN SI

Begin in the wuji stance; the arms slowly twist out while the palms turn over to face out. Afterwards, the arms twist in and are lifted to shoulder height. The elbows and wrists are bent as the hands pass the sides of the upper rib cage. The palms face to the rear. The legs are slightly bent. Afterwards, the legs slowly straighten. The arms twist out with bent elbows, and the hands slowly move inward. The palms face each other diagonally, and the fingers point at an angle outward. The eyes gaze to the front (Figure 67-70). To continue the motion, connect the last move with Figure 68.



The movement of the arms must be circular, natural and coordinated with the bending and

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图 71



图 72



图 73



图 74



图 75



图 76



图 77



图 78



图 79

straightening of the legs. Perform the closing exercise.

### 15. LEFT UP RIGHT DOWN SPIRAL CHAN SI

From the wuji stance, lift the right arm up with bent elbow. The right hand rises along the side of the body with the palm facing left. The left arm twists out with a bent elbow as the left hand passes to the front of the chest to straighten on the inside of the left arm. The weight of the body gradually shifts to the right leg. Both legs slightly bend at the knees. Following, the left hand twists in as it straightens to the upper left. The palm faces to the upper left and the fingers point to the upper right. The right hand makes an arc down to the right hip as the arm twists in. The palm faces to the lower rear. The legs straighten as the left hand straightens up. The eyes gaze forward (Figure 71-73).

These movements must be soft and slow and the body must not use any force to perform this exercise. After practicing a number of times, conduct the closing exercise.

### 16. RIGHT UP LEFT DOWN SPIRAL CHAN SI

The movements are the same as the previous exercise (#15), but are performed on the opposite side (Figure 74-76).

### 17. DOUBLE ARM OPENING AND CLOSING CHAN SI

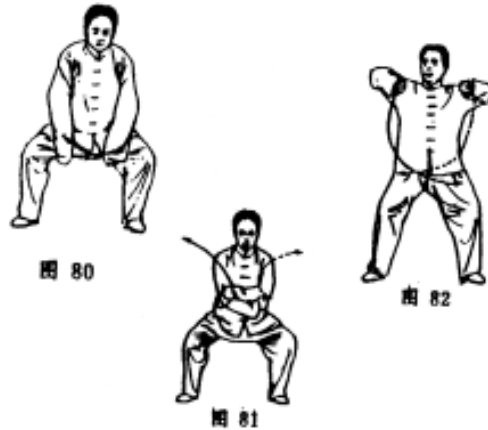
From the wuji stance, bend the knees as the wrists cross in front of the body. Following, the legs straighten as the arms twist out and the hands lift up past the face and then to the sides. The palms face out and the fingers point up. The eyes gaze forward (Figure 77-79). The legs bend again as the hands make an outward arc to the front of the abdomen. Continue from Figure 77 to repeat the sequence. After completion, conduct the closing exercise.

### 18. DOUBLE ELBOW OPENING AND CLOSING CHAN SI

From the wuji stance, the right leg takes a half step to the right and then the knees bend down. The arms twist in as the hands form fists and sink downward to the groin area. The upper body rounds forward. The arms twist out with bent elbows as the fists move to the sides of the elbows.

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The palms of the fists face to the upper rear. The legs slightly raise up as the upper body expands out. The elbows pass the front of the chest as they make an arc to the sides of the body. The palms of the fists face down and the eyes gaze forward (Figure 80-82). To repeat the sequence, the arms twist out as the fists make an arc down to the front of the abdomen to connect with the movement on Figure 81. Upon completion, perform the closing exercise.



The opening and closing of the elbows must be coordinated with the bending and straightening of the legs. The contraction and expansion of the chest and stomach must be united with the jin and qi of the body; only then will the movements be round and natural.

### 19. LEFT AND RIGHT ELBOW CHAN SI

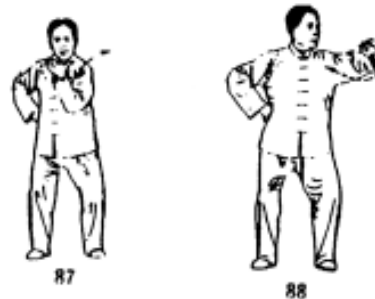
Left elbow clockwise and counterclockwise chansi: From the wuji stance, the right hand forms a fist and is placed on the side stance, the right hand forms a fist and is placed on the side of the right waist. The left hand also forms a fist as the arm twists out. Following, the left fist straightens to the upper right as the body turns to the right. This is the clockwise chansi. The jin and qi of the body are concentrated inward. Afterwards, the upper body turns to the left as the left elbow circles up and to the left. The elbow points to the left and the eyes gaze at the left elbow. This is the counterclockwise chansi. The jin qi of the body is emitted outward in this technique. (Figure 83-84).



The right elbow clockwise and counterclockwise chansi is the same as the above description except the directions are opposite (Figure 85-86). Upon completion, perform the closing exercise.

### 20. TWISTING THE WRIST LEFT AND RIGHT

Left twisting wrist: From the wuji stance, bend the knees slightly and place the right hand on the waist. The left arm is bent as the palm lifts up to the front of the chest. The palm faces up. Afterwards, the left arm twists in as the palm makes an arc down to the left side. The palm faces to the left front; the eyes look at the left palm (Figure 87-88). To continue the motion,



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connect with the move on Figure 87. The movement of the hand should follow a figure-eight pattern. Right twisting wrist: The movement is the same as the above with only a change in directions (Figure 89-90). Conduct the closing exercise afterwards.

### 21. DOUBLE TWISTING WRISTS

From the wuji stance, the arms rise to the front using the wrists as an axis. Rotate in a circle from the inside to the outside. After practicing a number of times, perform the movement in the opposite direction. The entire body must be relaxed especially the shoulders, elbows and wrists (Figure 91-92). Upon completion, perform the closing exercise.

### 22. LEFT AND RIGHT SPIRAL PUNCH

From the wuji stance, the left leg takes a step to the front. The right fist punches to the front as the arm twists inward from the waist. Afterwards, the arm twists out as the fist returns to the waist. The left fist punches to the front as the arm twists inward from the waist. Repeat this sequence with both fists for a number of times. The eyes gaze at the fist being punched (Figure 93-96). Afterwards, perform the closing exercise.

### 23. ROTATING THE ABDOMEN AND KIDNEYS

From the wuji stance, place the hands on the waist. The knees bend slightly as the waist circles in a clockwise direction. After circling for a number of times, repeat the move in the opposite direction. The eyes look downward. The mind should concentrate the qi in the abdomen and kidneys as the movement circles around (Figure 97-100). Upon completion, perform the closing exercise.

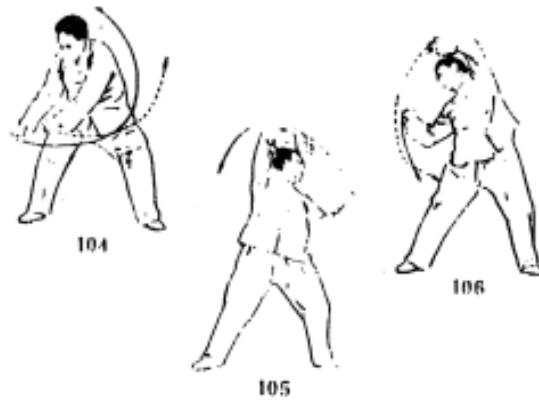
### 24. ROTATING THE WAIST

From the wuji stance, the legs bend slightly at the knees. The arm twist out as the arms are raised to the front sides of the body. The elbows are bent. The hands form fists with the palms facing each other. Afterwards, the waist turns to the left and right while the arms remain level. The eyes gaze at the arms (Figure 101-103). Perform the closing exercise.

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### 25. SPIRALLING THE WAIST

From the wuji stance, the left leg takes a half step to the left. The knees are bent down and the upper body is inclined forward. The head is slightly tilted to the front. The hands form fists and straighten to the right lower front. Afterwards, the upper body spirals to the left using the waist as the axis. The arms move to the left, then to the rear and finally to the right. The chest and abdomen expand with this move. Repeat this move a number of times, and then repeat in the opposite direction. The degree of spiralling is from small to large and the speed must be slow and smooth. The entire body should be supple (Figure 104-106). Perform the closing exercise afterwards.



### 26. LEFT AND RIGHT KNEE SPIRAL

**Left knee spiral:** From the wuji stance, the toes of the left foot turn out and step to the left and half step. The left knee bends to form a bow step. The hands are placed on the left knee with the left on top of the right. Afterwards, turn the knee joint in a clockwise motion. When the knee circles to the rear, the weight of the body should shift to the right leg. The right knee should bend and the left straighten; and when the left knee turns to the front, the left knee bends and the right straightens. After doing this move a number of times, repeat in the opposite direction (Figure 107-109).



The right knee spiral is the same as the left, but is performed in the opposite direction (Figure 110-112). After stopping, perform the closing exercise.

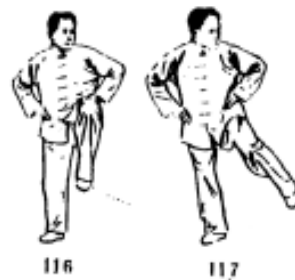
### 27. DOUBLE KNEE SPIRAL

From the wuji stance, the left leg is placed next to the right. Bend the knees into a half squat. The hands are placed on the knees as the knees spiral in a clockwise direction. Afterwards, repeat in the opposite direction (Figure 113-115).

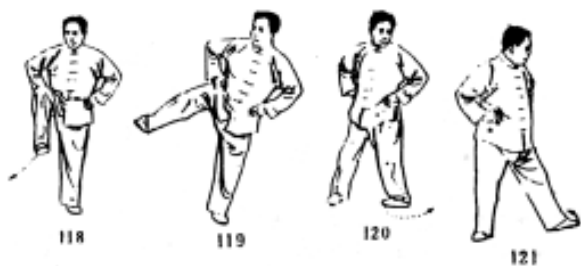


### 28. LEFT AND RIGHT CHAN SI SIDE KICK

From the wuji stance, place the hands on the waist. The left leg twists inward while bending the knee upwards. The left foot is placed next to the inside of the right knee. Spread open the hip joints as the left leg side kicks to the lower



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left. The eyes gaze to the lower left (Figure 116-117). The right side is the same as the left; only the directions are different (Figure 118-119). After completion, perform the closing exercise.

### 29. TWISTING THE FOOT LEFT AND RIGHT

Twisting the left foot: From the wuji stance, place the hands on the waist. The left leg straightens and twists inward. The toes of the left foot lift up, turn inward and then lower back to the ground. Afterwards, the left leg twists outwards and the toes also turn out. Repeat this movement over a number of times. This will benefit the suppleness and flexibility of the ankle (Figure 120-122). The right side is shown in Figure 123-125. After practice, complete the closing exercise.



### 30. GOLDEN COCK SHAKES ITS WINGS

This movement is used to relax the muscles of the entire body. From the wuji stance, bend the elbows of each arm and form fists. Shake the upper body to the left and right causing the muscles of the body to relax and sink down. The movement must be from slow to fast. After shaking the body, the body still vibrates causing the clothes to flutter. The shaking should feel as if the skin of the body will fall off the bone. The entire body should feel completely comfortable (Figure 126-127). The shaking moves are shown in Figure 128-129. After the body is relaxed, conduct the closing exercise.