

8 Silk Brocade, or 8 Treasures

Very popular set, with origins in 12th century AD (Song dynasty). Lots of versions, using various names for the exercises, but all sharing the same 8 basic movements. Activates qi flow for unification of mind and body for physical and emotional stability and health. Eight brocades (*bā duàn jīn*, 八段錦) is a good warm-up routine. Can be done in just a few minutes if you don't have a lot of time to practice.

Two Hands Hold up the Heavens, or Lifting the Qi up to the Sky, or Push the Sky

- Pole stance. Push both hands up. Hold. Let qi wash down over center, back, sides. x6

Draw the Bow to Shoot the Eagle, or Bow and Arrow

- Horse stance into bow stance, 'shooting' left and right. x3

Separate Heaven and Earth, or Iron Hand Holds up the Sky, or One Hand Plucks the Stars

- Pole stance. One arm aloft pushing up, other at side or behind back, push down. x3

Wise Owl Gazes Backwards, or Looking Backwards

- Pole stance. Arms akimbo or palms on kidneys. Look back left, hold, then right. x3

Sway the Head and Shake the Tail, or Look at Your Shoes, or Take Your Shoes Off

- Horse stance, wide. Stretch-squat down left, right. x3

Two Hands Hold the Feet, or Hold Your Feet

- Pole stance. Reach up, then down, behind and up. May also turn left, reach down, then center, then lift up, then squat and lift while holding toes, etc. Then right. x3

Clench Fists and Glare Fiercely

- Horse stance. Thrust fists with eyes glaring, left, right. x3 May repeat slowly, quickly.

Seven Stamps, or Bouncing on the Toes

- Tight stance, heels touching. Raise and lower heels. Shake, center, settle. x7

Close

- Palms over navel. Three deep breaths.

Five Animal Frolics, or Animal Play

An ancient form of medical/health qigong, with origins in first century AD (Eastern Han Dynasty). Deep stretching (*dao yin*) and deep breathing (*tu na*). Stimulates energy flows along governing (*du mai*) and conception (*ren mai*) channels.

Bear, lead qi to core energy reservoir

- Bear claws, walk like a bear.
- Reach up, reach down.

Deer, a key to longevity is lifting the feet

- Deer horns, push forward.
- Antlers, side to side, big step.
- Deer horns, big step forward, pull back.

Tiger, lead qi to middle (heart-level) energy gate

- Tiger paws, closed. Circulate around belly.
- Claws out. Rock forward, back in circles.
- Claws out. Big step forward and back.

Monkey, lead qi to upper gate (between eyes)

- Monkey paws, swing horizontally.
- Circle paws in front, lift up at center, on toes, look left, repeat right.
- Circling, lift left to "sleeping dog" pose, then big step right to "grab a banana", recover. Repeat right.

Bird, supreme ultimate integration of yin and yang

- Bird wings. Rock vertically, hand forward and back with one foot forward, gently raising back foot.
- Bird wings. Rock horizontally, left both hands and one leg, do 1, 2, or 3 wing flaps. Then lift other leg. Hold for a bit if steady enough.
- Bird wings. Rocking vertically, bend forward, then reach back, arch the back while lifting back leg to "bird in flight". Repeat other side.