

# Yiquan Training: Kicks and Knee Strikes (*Tui Fa*, 腿法)

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In this article, we will explore the Yiquan training procedures for kicks and knee strikes.

The training and conditioning methods are based on *Yao's* style Yiquan (姚氏意拳) as taught by Master *Yao ChengRong* (姚承荣老师) of *Beijing Zhong Yi Wu Guan* (北京中意武馆), Beijing, China. (Web Site: [www.yq-zywg.com/english/home.html](http://www.yq-zywg.com/english/home.html))

Yiquan is very careful about using kicks and knee strikes, believing that lifting one's leg to kick drastically reduces stability, and that leg maneuvers/techniques are effective only if kept low, and done when your opponent's posture integrity is compromised. The kicking movement must be *natural* and conform to Yiquan's principle of using "*curve physical form to deliver linear force*" (*Xing Qu Li Zhi*, 形曲力直). In general, you should kick and withdraw your leg quickly as if kicking onto a red-hot iron plate. On contact, tense and focus all muscles as your leg smashes through the target; your kick should accelerate as long as there is physical contact. If possible, do not use kicks and knee strikes without hand contact with your opponent to provide stability. Firm foundations in footwork (*Mo Ca Bu*, 摩擦步) and relaxed standing in one-leg postures (*Du Li Zhuang*, 独立桩, *Dan Tui Yi Tuo Zhuang*, 单腿依托桩) are keys to clean execution of kicking techniques.

## Principles

All Yiquan maneuvers/techniques training and conditioning must include:

1. Relaxed standing (*Zhan Zhuang*, 站桩) with *motionless movement* to seek, sense, and cultivate your whole-body balanced force (*Mo Li*, 摸力),
2. Trial and feel (*Shi Li*, 试力) with kinesthesia to perceive the pathways of force transmission (*Xun Zhao Jing Lu*, 寻找劲路) and to synthesize your neuromuscular coordination, harmony of actions, and harmony of forces (*Ba Li Shi Chu*, 把力试出), to merge all force components as "*one*",
3. Power discharge/release (*Fa Li*, 发力) to cultivate the ability to "*explode*" your internal power as external force onto your opponent (*Ba Li Da Dao Shen Wai*, 把力打到身外), and

4. Push hands (*Tui Shou*, 推手) and sparring (*San Shou*, 散手) to learn from realistic experience (*Ti Yan*, 体验) the appropriate timing, distance, and angles of attack of executing the specific maneuvers/techniques.

While each maneuver/technique requires its own special relaxed standing postures, trial and feel exercises (in fixed-step and free-step), and power discharge/release conditioning; they must still adhere faithfully to the proven principles and sound doctrines of Yiquan (*Quan Quan Fu Ying*, 拳拳服膺), to deliver the balanced force (*Hun Yuan Li*, 浑元力) from curve physical forms (*Xing Qu Li Zhi*, 形曲力直), to employ whole-body harmony of actions (*Zheng Ti Xie Tiao*, 整体协调) with optimal *alignment* and *connected-ness* (*Lian Tong Yi Guan*, 连通一贯), and to merge all force components as “one” (*Quan Shen Li Yi*, 全身力一). The actions of each body element must be the result of your whole-body neuromuscular coordinated movement (*Yi Dong Wu Bu Dong*, 一动无不动). To achieve these, you must use proper *body mechanics* (*Shen Fa*, 身法) with musculoskeletal support (*Gu Ge Zhi Cheng*, 骨骼支撑) and appropriate neuromuscular relaxation/tension exchanges (*Song Jin Yun Yong Zi Ru*, 松紧运用自如). Remember: there are no advanced and/or secret maneuvers/techniques; they are only basic skills (fundamentals) being performed really well.

All kicking maneuvers are based on the wading step footwork (*Mo Ca Bu*, 摩擦步). A firm foundation of the wading steps is a prerequisite; as you step forward/backward, maintain the basic on-guard *frame* (*Hun Yuan Zhuang*, 浑元桩), elbows prop out as if holding imaginary balloons in your armpits. (See YIQUAN BEGINNERS’ GUIDE: BASIC SKILLS for details of footwork training.) Keep your supporting leg slightly bend (*Si Qu Fei Zhi*, 似曲非直) as you push off the ground. Visualize doing a forward snap kick as you drive your stepping leg forward from your hip (*Shen Ti Dai Dong*, 身体带动); visualize stretching the imaginary springs between your knees and between your supporting leg hip and your stepping leg knee.

## Procedures and Methods

All categories of Yiquan training and conditioning exercises are inter-related and inseparable. You must train all categories concurrently to re-pattern your whole-body harmony and to merge your neuromuscular movements as “one” (*Ji Rou Ru Yi*, 肌肉如一). In the following, we have separated these training categories only for ease of presentation.

### 1. Relaxed Standing (*Zhan Zhuang*, 站桩)

When kicking, lifting one leg off the ground greatly reduces your stability (*Tai Tui Ban Bian Kong*, 抬腿半边空). Employing the *ground path*, optimal body *alignment*, and *connected-ness* (*Lian Tong Yi Guan*, 连通一贯) become absolutely necessary to take up power from push off the ground. Relaxed standing (*Zhan Zhuang*, 站桩) lets you seek, sense, and cultivate your balanced force (*Hun Yuan Li*, 浑元力) in relative *stillness* (*Mo Li*, 摸力). However, *relaxation*

is only a requirement of *Zhan Zhuang* (站桩); without visualization (*Yi Nian You Dao*, 意念诱导) or mental imagery to direct your neuromuscular relaxation/tension exchanges (*Song Jin Zhuan Huan*, 松紧转换) in your “*motion in stillness*” (*Jing Zhong Zhi Dong*, 静中之动), your relaxed standing will be devoid of content (*Kong Zhuang*, 空桩). Initially, you should use your mind-intent (*Yi*, 意) to induce relatively “large smooth movement” in your neuromuscular relaxation/tension exchange cycles: movement/tension (*Dong/Jin*, 动/紧) – stillness/relaxation (*Jing/Song*, 静/松). When you have mastered whole-body harmony (*Zheng*, 整), you must internalize the relaxation/tension exchange movement; reduce the “*motion in stillness*” to become “*motionless movement*” (*Bu Dong Zhi Dong*, 不动之动).

## A. One-Leg Standing Postures (*Du Li Zhuang*, 独立桩)

- a. Stand in the left lead small step posture (*Hun Yuan Zhuang*, 浑元桩). Shift your weight onto your rear leg and lift your front foot slightly off the ground with the left sole parallel to the ground. Visualize imaginary springs connecting your neck to your front foot and imaginary springs under your front foot. Use mind-intent (*Yi*, 意) to guide your *motionless movement* (*Bu Dong Zhi Dong*, 不动之动); relax and do not use brute strength (*Yong Yi Bu Yong Li*, 用意不用力). Press downward slightly with your front foot while pushing your head slightly upwards, compress the imaginary spring under your foot; feel the vertical internal opposing force pair between your neck and foot (*Shang Xia Zheng Li*, 上下争力). Then imagine a string attached to you front knee, pulling your foot upward, stretch the imaginary spring under your foot, compressing the imaginary spring between your foot and neck. Next, visualize kicking (driving with your hip) your front foot forward, stretching the imaginary spring between your knees; or backward, or to the left, and or to the right (*Qian Hou Zuo You Zheng Li*, 前后左右争力). Practice feeling, sensing, and perceiving (*Mo Li*, 摸力) the transmission of the balanced force components through every link in your body, from taking up the power from the ground and transmitting it through “neuromuscular pathways” to your kicking leg. Internalize your *motionless movement* i.e., minimize your movement but do not remain *absolutely still*.

Do not forget to maintain your *frame* and the on-guard ready posture; prop your elbows out and hug the imaginary tree with your arms; keep hands well up to guard your central line. Make adjustment as necessary to be comfortable, relaxed, natural, and at ease. This is the standing posture training and conditioning for forward (front) snap kicks (*Dian Jiao*, 点脚).

- b. Stand in the left lead small step posture (*Hun Yuan Zhuang*, 浑元桩). Shift your weight onto your left front leg. Bring your right rear leg up to the front; raise your right knee to navel level. Keep your right knee bend; right foot sole parallel to the ground; turn your right foot sideways with toes pointing right, inside edge facing forward. Visualize imaginary springs connecting your right foot to your neck and spring under your right foot. Use mind-intent to guide your *motionless movement*. Compress the

spring under your right foot; stretching the imaginary spring between your right foot and right shoulder, push your head slightly upwards. Feel the vertical internal opposing force pair between your neck and foot. Then imagine a string attached to you right front knee, pulling your foot upward, stretch the imaginary spring under your foot; compressing the imaginary spring between your right foot and neck.

Keep elbows propped out; hug your imaginary tree. Internalize your *motionless movement*; minimize your movement but do not remain *absolutely still*. This is the standing posture training and conditioning for thrust kicks (*Deng Ta Jiao*, 蹬踏脚).

## B. One-Leg Supported Posture (*Dan Tui Yi Tuo Zhuang*, 单腿依托桩)

- a. Stand in the left lead small step posture in front of a high stool (about navel height). Shift your weight onto your front (left) leg; keep it slightly bend (*Si Qu Fei Zhi*, 似曲非直). Lift your rear (right) leg and place your right foot on the stool; inside edge facing upwards, toes pulled back pointing right; heel pushed forward. Visualize standing in waist deep water with your right leg placed on top of a floating log. Mentally, slightly thrust kick forward, downward, and inward, stretching the imaginary spring between your right foot and right shoulder (e.g., visualize drawing your right shoulder back while pushing your right heel forward, downward, and inward); thrust your hip forward and rotate your kicking leg outwards as you thrust it out. This is the standing posture training for forward thrust kick (*Deng Ta Jiao*, 蹬踏脚).
- b. Stand in the left lead small step posture to the left of a high stool (about navel height). Shift your weight onto your front (left) leg; keep it slightly bend (*Si Qu Fei Zhi*, 似曲非直). Lift your rear (right) leg and place your right foot on the stool; outside edge facing upwards, toes pulled back pointing front; heel pushed forward. Visualize standing in waist deep water with your right leg placed on top of a floating log. Mentally, slightly thrust kick sideways, forward, and downward, stretching the imaginary spring between your right foot and left shoulder (e.g., visualize drawing your left shoulder back while pushing your right heel forward); twist your hips and rotate your kicking leg inwards as you thrust your leg out. This is the standing posture training for lateral thrust kick (*Heng Duo Jiao*, 横蹠脚).

Maintain your *frame* and the on-guard ready posture; prop your elbows out and hug the imaginary tree with your arms; keep hands well up to guard your central line. Make adjustment as necessary to be comfortable, relaxed, natural, and at ease.

These one-legged relaxed standing postures are preparation training for kicking techniques. Sense resistance and seek the equilibrium state along the vertical (up/down) axis between your kicking leg and the rest of your body. Develop the ability to discharge/release the balanced force while standing on one leg. Visualize hugging your imaginary tree between your arms and body; it touches every part of your body. Pay special attention to the vertical opposing force pair of your un-weighted foot and neck. Consciously practice kinesthetic perception of your whole-

body coordinated neuromuscular movements to achieve whole-body harmony and to cultivate the balanced force while standing on one leg (*Xun Zhao Jing Lu*, 寻找劲路).

Practicing relaxed standing in the large-step posture (*Tame-the-tiger* posture, *Fu Hu Zhuang*, 伏虎桩) also augments stepping and kicking training by increasing your lower body strength and whole-body stability.

## 2. Trial and Feel (*Shi Li*, 试力)

The following are primary trial and feel (*Shi Li*, 试力) exercises for kicks. When you lift one leg to kick, you greatly decrease your stability; therefore, kicking should be used sparingly and not be higher than waist level.

Use mind-intent (*Yi*, 意) to guide your movement and force (*Yi Yi Ling Li*, 以意领力); mentally induce the perception of isometric opposite force pairs (*Zheng Li*, 争力) between different body elements; feel, perceive, and learn from experience the pathways of force transmission (*Xun Zhao Jing Lu*, 寻找劲路) of the balanced force from taking up power from the ground to your kicking leg (*Yi Guan Zhi Li*, 一贯之力). While the dominant component of the isometric opposite force pair is up/down (*Shang Xia Zheng Li*, 上下争力), you should perceive opposing force pairs in all six primary directions (*Liu Mian Mo Li*, 六面摸力): forward/backward, lateral left/right, and upward/downward. Merge all force components as *one* (*Quan Shen Li Yi*, 全身力一).

### A. Stationary Stepping

This is a *Shi Li* (试力) exercise for snap and angled swing kicks.

Stand erect. Lift the hands comfortably to your sides for balance; visualize holding onto imaginary hand railings. Sink your weight into your left (slightly bent supporting) leg. Lift your right foot slightly off the ground, sole parallel to the ground. Visualize there is a small sand bag balanced over the top of your right foot. Using your torso (core), hip, and leg, move your right (non-supporting) leg slowly forward then one foot's width to your right, “*delivering*” the imaginary sand bag to your right front until your right knee is almost straight (where you would place your right foot for the right lead small step posture). Keep your right foot close to but do not lower your right foot to the ground; visualize stretching the imaginary springs connecting your right foot to your right shoulder and between your knees. Slowly, using your whole-body, pull your right leg back and deliver the imaginary sand bag to your back and right until your right knee is almost straight. Keep the imaginary sand bag from falling off your foot.

Variations of this exercise may include moving your right foot backward, to your side, then forward circling clockwise, or forward, to your side, then backward circling counter-clockwise, etc. Repeat the similar exercise with your left leg.

## B. Pushing Springs with Your Foot

This is a *Shi Li* (试力) exercise for thrust kicks and knee strikes.

- a. Stand in the small step posture. Visualize imaginary springs attaching your front foot to the ground and to your neck. Slowly pull your front knee upward to navel level; keep your sole parallel to the ground. Visualize stretching the imaginary springs under your foot (feel the spring tension pulling down on your foot) and compressing the imaginary springs between the foot and the neck; keep your toes pointing towards the front (forward). Now slowly press your foot down. Visualize compressing the springs under your foot and stretching the springs between the foot and the neck. Repeat the above exercise with turning the outside edge of your foot forward (*Heng Duo Jiao*, 横跺脚), then with turning the inside edge of your foot forward (*Deng Ta Jiao*, 蹬踏脚). You can also start with the outside edge forward and end with the inside edge forward, and vice versa.
- b. Assume the left lead small step posture. Drive all your weight into the forward foot and balance over it as you bring the right rear leg forward; project the right foot slightly forward of the left foot at roughly knee height above the ground with the toes pointing to the front, sole parallel to the ground. Visualize imaginary springs under the right foot connecting it to the ground, as well as imaginary springs connecting the right foot to the neck. Slowly and evenly step (thrust) your right foot forward and downward, rotating the inside edge forward, visualize compressing the spring under your foot. Feel the pull on the imaginary springs connected to your neck and right shoulder. Do not let your foot touch the ground. Slowly bring the right foot up and feel the relative tension/relaxation exchange in the respective imaginary springs.

Variations include twisting the right kicking foot toes to your left, rotating the outside edge forward, while visualizing stretching the imaginary spring between your right foot and your left shoulder. That is with the toes turning from right to left. Perform this exercise with both legs. Feel with the whole-body; allow your body to experience the whole-body neuromuscular coordination.

## 3. Basic Kicks and Knee Strikes *Shi Li* (试力) and *Fa Li* (发力)

Initially, practice the following leg maneuvers in slow fixed-step (*Ding Bu*, 定步) *Shi Li* (试力) mode. Begin by using slow large motion to ingrain the motion into your muscle memory. When you have achieved whole-body harmony in your movement, you can use fast large motion, slow small motion, and fast small motion, starting from different initial positions, to sense the pathways of force transmission (*Xun Zhao Jing Lu*, 寻找劲路). Then, you must practice them in free-step (*Huo Bu*, 活步) mode using soft (*Song*, 松) and focus (*Jin*, 紧) *Fa Li* (发力).

## A. Snap Kicks (*Dian Jiao*, 点脚)

These are based on the wading step (*Mo Ca Bu*, 摩擦步) footwork. Limit your snap kicks to below hip level. Execute it with comfortable natural ease (*Shun Qi Zi Ran*, 顺其自然), keep your balance (equilibrium) and combine your stepping with your kicking.

- a. **Front Snap Kick (*Zheng Ti*, 正踢):** If distance is appropriate, you can use a low short snap kick to your opponent's ankle or shin. Push off your supporting leg to drive your whole-body forward. Drive your kicking leg forward with your hip; keep your knee and ankle loose as you snap your foot forward using your hip and knee as hinges. Snap your shoulder backward for balance. Maintain your on-guard posture and balance; drive with your hip and thigh, stretch the imaginary springs between your kicking foot and your head, and between your knees. Your upper torso should pivot backwards on the side of your kicking leg i.e., when snap kicking with your left foot, you pivot your upper torso to your left and vice versa; your upper and lower torso twist in opposite directions to maintain equilibrium (*Shen Ti Luo Xuan Ning Zhuan*, 身体螺旋拧转). Low front snap kick targets your opponent's shin (or ankle) and should be delivered from your rear leg. When targeting the shin or ankle, the kicking foot should be lowered as it moves forward. After snap kicking your target, withdraw your foot as quickly as possible as if you have kicked onto a red-hot iron plate. Whether you have hit your target or not are less important than keeping your posture integrity; positioning your foot for your next step.

Example: From the left lead small step posture, lead or feint with your left hand finger jab; immediately snap kick with your right foot to your opponent's shin; or snap kick with your left shin into your opponent's left lead leg inner thigh or knee.

- b. **Side Snap Kick (*Ce Ti*, 侧踢):** From your left lead small step posture, drive all your weight into the forward left foot and balance over it as you bring the right rear leg forward; project the right foot slightly forward of the left foot at roughly knee height above the ground with the toes pointing to the front, sole parallel to the ground. Push off your supporting leg; drive your kicking leg with your hip; visualize stretching the imaginary springs between your knees, and between your head and your kicking foot; snap kick your right foot to your right front.

Example: Side step and counter an attack with a side snap kick delivered with the outside edge of your foot to your opponent's short rib or knee. Or deliver a side snap kick with your shin to the outside of your opponent's thigh.

## B. Thrust Kicks (*Deng Ta Jiao*, 蹬踏脚)

- a. **Inside edge forward thrust kick (*Deng Ta Jiao*, 蹬踏脚):** Keep your lead supporting leg slightly bent. Lift your rear kicking knee to navel level, turn the inside edge of your foot forward, toe outward, thrust your hip forward and straighten your leg to thrust kick

your foot forward and downward (*Deng Ta*, 蹬踏) towards your opponent's knee or lower body, stretch the imaginary spring between your kicking foot and your same side shoulder; your upper torso should pivot towards the same side as your kicking leg; when you are thrust kicking with your left leg, pivot your upper torso towards your left and use your right hand to guard. Targets are lower abdomen, thigh, knee or shin. On contact, immediately thrust downwards along your opponent's body axis; step down and into your opponent. When releasing power downward, pay attention to pushing your head up slightly to gain power from the up/down isometric opposing force pair along your spine. Keep your hands high in on-guard position and maintain your fighting posture; keep your balance by twisting your upper and lower torso in opposite directions. Position your foot to land at your intended point of stepping advance (*Ding Ba Bu*, 丁八步). Alternatively, after your thrust kick, pull the knee of your kicking leg back quickly to near your chest, before setting your foot on the ground.

- b. **Outside edge forward side thrust kick (*Heng Duo Jiao*, 横跺脚):** When using thrust kick with your (lead or rear) leg, you may pivot your torso toward the side of your supporting leg, turn the outside edge of your foot forward, toe inward, rotate your hip and thrust kick to your side. Keep your supporting leg slightly bent, stretch the imaginary spring between your kicking foot and the opposite shoulder, pivot your torso towards the side of your supporting leg i.e., when kicking with your right leg, pivot towards your left and vice versa. Pull back the knee of your attacking leg quickly before setting foot on the ground to prevent opponent seizing your leg. Always maintain your balance.
- c. **Knee Strike and Foot Stomp:** Keep your supporting leg slightly bent. Lift your kicking knee to navel level, toes up, sole parallel to the ground, strike your opponent with your knee or foot; then stomp your foot down on top of your opponent's foot (instep). You can turn the inside edge of your foot to facing outwards or inwards as you bring your foot down. Visualize stretching the imaginary springs connecting your feet to your head (*Shang Xia Zheng Li*, 上下争力). This is useful when in a clinch.

### C. Swing Kicks (*Sao Ti*, 扫踢)

Swing kicks are for long range “out-fighting”; the power comes mainly from a waist twist rapid hip rotation or a body pivot (*Ning Yao Zhuan Shen*, 拧腰转身). They are slow, requiring preparation. To counter swing kicks, step-in and attack a swing kicker on his preparation; to back away from a swing kick is to give a swing kicker room to kick.

- a. **Swing kick with the rear leg:** From the left lead small step posture, keeping your front left supporting leg slightly bent, pivot on the ball of the left foot; twist the hips to the left to swing the bent right leg in an arc (first up then down) to smash the instep or the lower half of your shin on your opponent's rib cage, thigh or knee. The kicking leg is kept bent during the swing (pivot). At the last moment before contact, the lower leg is whipped straight. Tense all muscles as you kick out through your target. Withdraw the kicking leg immediately to prevent it being seized. Keep your left hand raise in a high guard position near your left temple for defense during your right swing kick.

- b. Swing kick with the leading leg is quicker but not as powerful e.g., sweep and hook (reap) with the leading leg, backward sweep (reverse swing kick) with the leading leg, etc.

NOTE: For swing kicks, the shoulder and hip may rotate in synch or the shoulder and hip may rotate in opposite directions twisting the body to provide equilibrium.

#### D. Knee Strikes (*Xi Fa*, 膝法)

In “out-fighting”, you may raise your knee to avoid strikes or as a shield to cushion the impact of your opponent's kicks. In close range “in-fighting” where full length arm strikes and kicks are impractical; you may strike with your knees. Knee strikes get power from leverage; clinch and pull your opponent downwards as you strike; drive your knee with your hips; do not use knee strikes without holding on to your opponent as you may lose your balance or open yourself to a counter (*Wu Da Bu Shen Tui*, 无搭不伸腿).

- a. **Swing Knee:** Hold on to your opponent's arm, shoulder or neck. Powerfully twist your hips thrusting your knee up in a sideway arc to smash into your opponent. Direct your force towards his central line while pulling him downwards, towards the side of your striking knee.
- b. **Straight Knee:** Hold on to your opponent and pull him forwards and downwards. Step forward to increase power. Thrust your rear knee upward to smash (spike) into your opponent's groin, solar plexus, short ribs, etc. Keep your sole parallel to the ground (toe up) so your foot may strike your opponent's groin in a high knee strike.

Example: Step deeply into your opponent's center gate (*Zhong Men*, 中门) and lift the knee high with upturned toe to strike. The raising knee and toe are the striking points.

### 4. Heavy bags, Pads and Sparring

In general, kick and withdraw your leg quickly as if kicking onto a red-hot iron plate; tense and focus all your muscles as your leg smashes through the target. Firm foundation in footwork (*Mo Ca Bu*, 摩擦步) and relaxed standing in one-leg postures (*Du Li Zhuang*, 独立桩, *Dan Tui Yi Tuo Zhuang*, 单腿依托桩) are keys to clean execution of kicking techniques. While mastery of timing, angles, distance interval, and control of engagement opportunities can only come from prolong diligent push hands and sparring practice. Start with simulated or touch sparring (*Qiang Bu*, 抢步) to ingrain the proper execution of your maneuvers. Then, using proper protective equipment, practice full contact sparring (*Shi Zhan*, 实战). If you have any questions about a maneuver, the answers can usually be found in sparring.

Kicking pads training, with the help of a knowledgeable partner in free step mode, improves accuracy, speed, timing, judgment of distance intervals, and angles of your maneuvers. Training

with heavy bags sharpens your power discharge/release. As your kick connects, be sure to focus your kick to smash through your target, maintain acceleration as long as there is contact; do not stop your force discharge/release on contact with the target (*Yi Chu Ji Fa*, 一触即发).

## 5. Examples

Basic skills training and conditioning for kicking:

- a. Side step with lead foot, side thrust kick (*Heng Duo Jiao*, 横跺脚) with rear foot (outside edge forward) forward and downward. Visualize stretching the imaginary springs between your kicking foot and the opposite shoulder.
- b. Forward step with lead foot, thrust kick (*Deng Ta Jiao*, 蹬踏脚) with rear foot (inside edge forward) forward and downward. Visualize stretching the imaginary springs between your kicking foot and the same side shoulder; there is a twisting of your torso.
- c. Forward step with lead foot, front snap kick with rear foot to the front (to strike your opponent's ankle or shin with your toe) or to the side (to strike your opponent's inner thigh with your shin). Visualize stretching the imaginary springs between your kicking foot and the same side shoulder; there is a twisting of your torso.
- d. Side step, pivot; strike your opponent's outside thigh with your shin with a low swing kick, bring your kicking leg up then swing it downwards.
- e. When in a clinch, use low swing kicks in leg sweep, hook, and backward sweep throws.

## 6. Tactics

Defensive and offensive tactics remains unchanged:

- a. Defend your central line; attack your opponent's central line (*Shou Zhong Yong Zhong*, 守中用中).
- b. Synthesize your offensive and defensive actions (*Gong Shou He Yi*, 攻守合一).

(See YIQUAN BEGINNERS' GUIDE: BASIC SKILLS for details.) In general, attack targets that your opponent must defend; move swiftly to attack from lines and angles where you are least expected; change according to circumstances; compress your opponent's time scale to generate confusion.

Examples:

1. Side step; front snap kick (*Dian Jiao*, 点脚) your opponent's lead foot ankle as he initiate his advance with his lead foot (*Du Da*, 堵打).
2. Thrust kick (*Deng Ta Jiao*, 蹬踏脚) your opponent's hip when he launch a straight punch (*Jie Da*, 截打).

Defense against kicks usually starts with closing the distance and jam the kicks before they reach their strike zone. Do not give room for a kicker to kick.

## 7. Conclusion

诀曰:若真正掌握了内在的运动规则,则可随意变更,不受姿势限制。

Oral Tradition: When you have mastered the internal neuromuscular coordination of a maneuver/technique to deliver the balanced force, you can adapt and refine its external form as desired, without restriction, become form-less.

In Yiquan training and conditioning, though we emphasized procedures, methods, and postures (*Xing Shi*, 形式), do not be limited or bounded by them; though we stressed the importance of the intentional component (*Yi Nian*, 意念), do not be conscious of its control. If you have mastered the whole-body harmony (*Zheng Ti Xie Tiao*, 整体协调), then you are not limited by physical form and may adapt, change, refine, and re-invent with total freedom to become *form-less* (*Wu Xing*, 无形). Based on Yiquan principles, you must cultivate and develop your innate abilities (*Fa Hui Ben Neng*, 发挥本能); skills must become spontaneous reflexes to be useful.

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