

MetroWest T'ai Chi

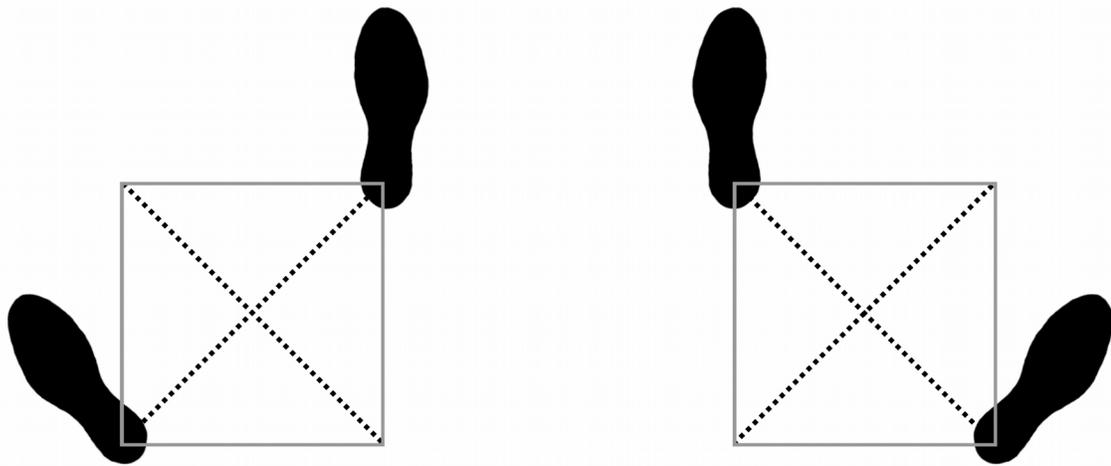
www.MetroWestTaiChi.com

508-656-0550

Jon@MetroWestTaiChi.com

The Bow Stance

The "Bow Stance" is the most common stance in T'ai Chi. Almost every movement uses the bow stance or one of its variants.



Right Bow Stance

Left Bow Stance

These diagrams represent an "ideal" Bow Stance. (Don't worry about trying to make this perfect – I just want to communicate the ideas of this. As the above diagrams show, we want the front foot of the bow stance to point in the direction of the move while the back foot point at a 45 degree angle to that direction.

If we delve into the geometry of all of this a little bit, (bet you didn't know that we would be doing math) the width of the square represents the width of our hips. You may notice that even after we take our step, the feet are still maintaining their shoulder width. In fact if we create the square with all four side being the width of our hips, in an ideal world, the heel of our stepping foot will land on the opposite corner of that square. (If you really want to get fanatic about it, you can tape out a square on the floor and try it out.

One other note worth mentioning... If we step on the opposite corner of the square, that means that the heels are lined up at a 45 degree angle to the direction we are facing. (represented by the dotted line.

Okay, one more thing... At the "end" of most movements (or the most forward position of a particular movement), the ideal alignment of the hips is facing forward. (This is not shown in the diagram.) In other words, the hips would ideally face the same direction as the front toe.

A lot of this will feel strange and may be difficult to accomplish at first. Again, don't worry if you don't have this all perfect. Just get an idea of what we are aiming for and let the whole process unfold over time. It will also help to try to develop a familiarity for the feeling of this rather than taxing your brain trying to remember all this geometry from High School. If you become familiar with the feeling, you be more aware of when things are out of alignment and you can more easily bring yourself back to the familiar feeling rather than having to remember all the details.