

Deer Frolic

Guiding principle:

Open, lifting, and unrestrained.

Mnemonic:

The deer's body is relaxed and open/open and extended;

Its mind like a pine;

Absolutely unforced and unrestrained in its motion;

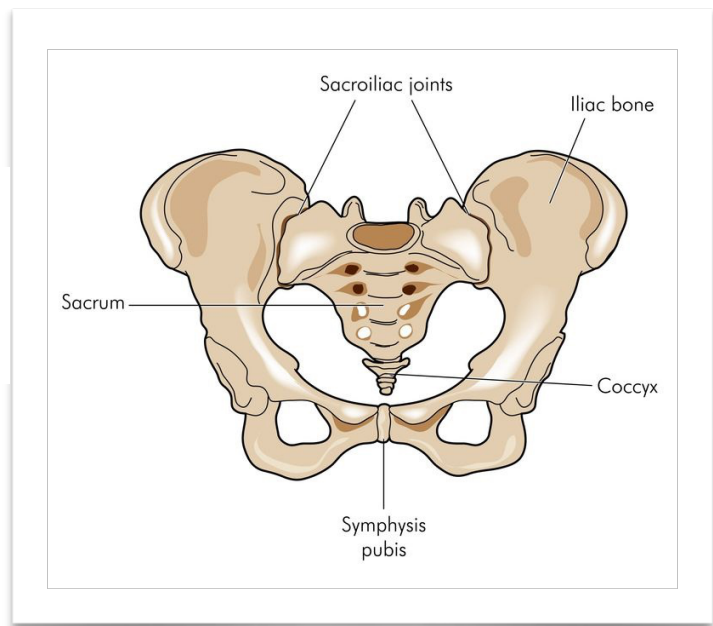
Leaning, leaping, and turning back;

Qi flows through the wěilù, training in the sinews.



The body of the deer is said to be open and extended, as postures when training the deer frolic must be open and extended. The heart must be quiescent, and the body like a pine. The power must come naturally, never from forcing or restraint. Motions such as leaning, leaping, and turning back comprise those principal to deer.

Wei Lu (Tailbone gate, DU 2) -
In the space between the
sacrum and the coccyx.



When training the deer frolic, inhale slowly through the space between the teeth, and exhale while silently reciting the sound the word “xū” (pronounced “shyew” for those unfamiliar with pinyin).

This frolic primarily trains the sinews, and serves to stretch the physique.

The ancients believed deer to be excellent runners which possessed a docile nature. They considered its sinews to be preeminent in their development due to its superb flow through the wěilù, linking the two vessels of the rèn and the dú.

Thus, when practicing this frolic, one’s mind should be kept on the wěilù. Wěilù refers to the end of the coccyx, which the ancients named the “wěilù gate”. It is one of the “three gates” of the dú mài/governing vessel.

(The “three gates” of the dú mài/governing vessel are: the wěilù gate, the jiājǐ/para-spinal gate, and the jade pillow gate.)

This is close to the starting point of the dú mài/governing vessel, which is the fundamental organizer/hub of all the yang channels. Keeping the mind in this location serves to energize/enliven the dú mài/governing vessel and stretch the physique.

I. Deer Stepping:

After completing the opening exercise, withdraw the left foot to the inside of your right, with the toe of your foot touching the ground. Simultaneously turn your body slightly to the left. Both arms should be slightly bent, with your fingers together. Your hands should be level, with your palms pressing down. With your eyes level, gradually extend your left foot forward and to your left as you exhale, straightening your leg so that the sole of your foot hovers maybe an inch off the ground. Then, lift the toe of your foot, and step firmly down with your heel.

After pausing slightly, lay down the toe of your foot, so that the sole of your foot is planted on the ground. Your eyes should be looking directly in front of you and the motion of your legs should be as though you are in mud. As you inhale, withdraw your right foot to the inside of your left, with its toe touching the ground, simultaneously turning slightly to the right, and relax the hands.

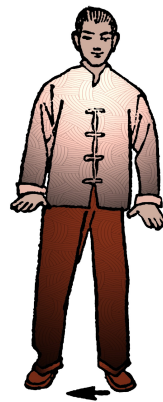
(Figure 39-44)

This is left style.

Following left style, advance your right foot as you exhale, mirroring the motions of left style.

This constitutes right style.

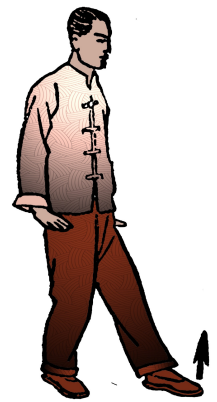
Practice by alternating left and right.



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II. Deer Charging/Straightening up:

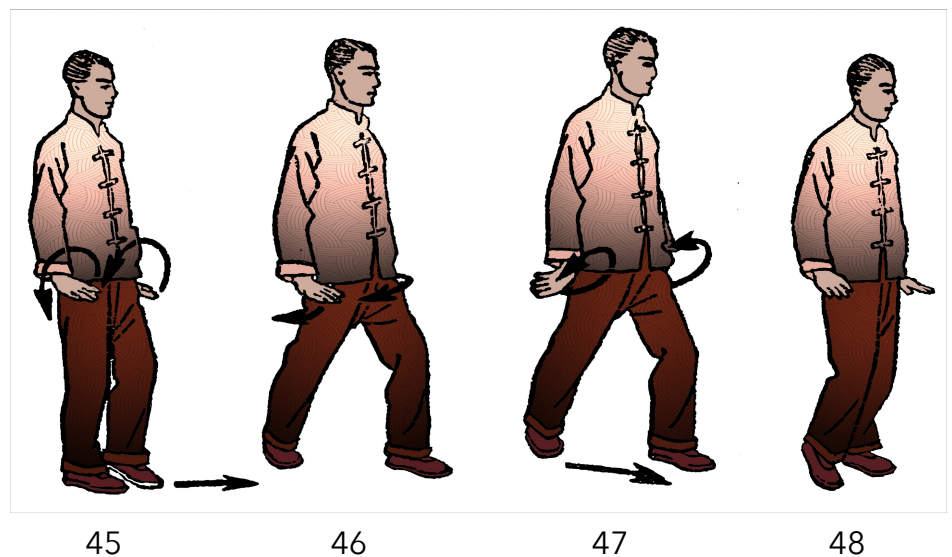
Following the previous exercise, as you inhale, bend both knees slightly and crouch down slightly, as your hands arc/curve/circle and press down (arc from front to back). As you exhale, take half a step forward with your left foot into bow and arrow stance. Both hands first move back to initiate their arcing motion, rising and curving to the front, and returning to press at the hips (palms facing down, fingers slightly bent and extended toward the front). Your upper body should lean slightly forward, with the "three tips", the tip of your nose, the tip of your knee, and the tip of your foot, forming a straight line, and your shoulders and neck should straighten up with subtle power. As you inhale, draw your right foot back to the inside of your left, toe touching the ground, as you simultaneously turn your body slightly to the right. (Figure 45-48)

This is left style.

Following left style, advance your right foot as you exhale, mirroring the motions of left style.

This constitutes right style.

Practice by alternating left and right.



III. Deer Leaning:

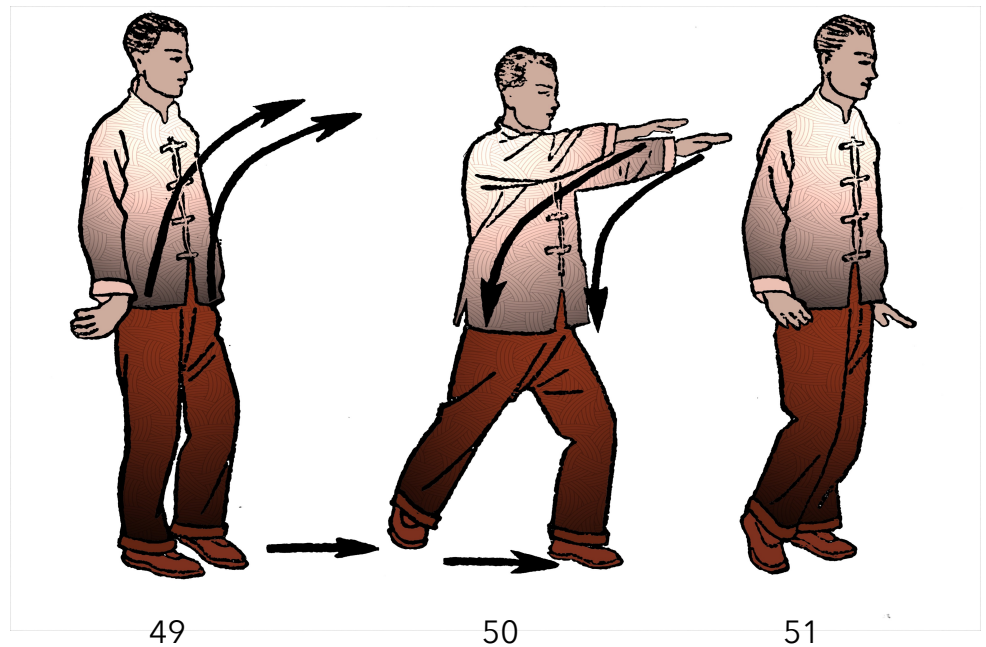
Following the previous exercise, draw both hands back as you exhale and step forward with your left foot into bow and arrow stance. Both hands should arc upward, passing your flanks, and extend forward, rising to the height of your shoulders. Your elbows, wrists, and fingers should be slightly bent, and your hands rotated outward. Both eyes should look directly ahead as your shoulders and neck straighten up with subtle power. As you inhale, withdraw your right foot to the inside of your left, with your toe touching the ground. Simultaneously, turn your body slightly to the right as both hands arc down to press at the hips. (Figure 49-51).

This is left style.

Following left style, advance your right foot as you exhale, mirroring the motions of left style.

This constitutes right style.

Practice by alternating left and right.



IV. Deer Turning Back/Turning the Head:

Following the previous motion, both hands should move forward and up and curve to press down. Step forward into bow and arrow stance with your left foot as you exhale and draw both hands back, up, and arcing forward, passing the flanks as they extend forward (the particular requirements being the same as for leaning), with your

hands at shoulder-height and your eyes looking straight ahead.

As you inhale, draw your right hand back to your flank and curl your fourth and fifth fingers slightly as you turn your head back

and to the right, with your mind's eye on the wěilù. Pause momentarily, and extend your right hand forward from your right flank along its original pathway as you exhale, returning your head to its original orientation. Then, slowly descend your hands to your hips as you inhale, withdrawing your

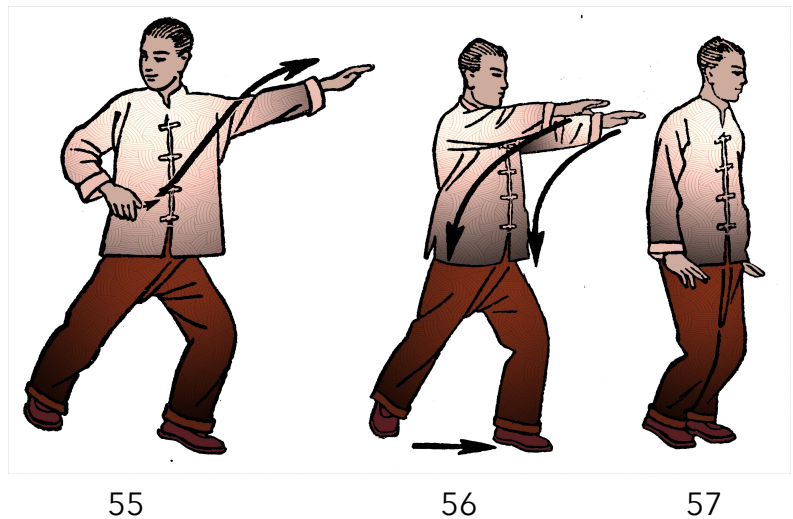
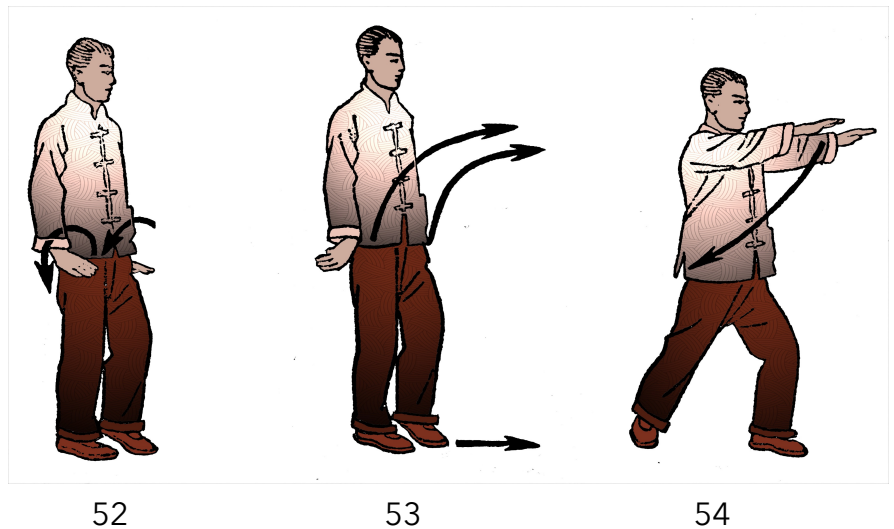
right foot to the inside of your left, its toe touching the ground, and turn your body slightly to the right (Figure 52-57)

This is left style.

Following left style, advance your right foot as you exhale, mirroring the motions of left style.

This constitutes right style.

Practice by alternating left and right.



V. *Deer Leaping/Bounding:*

Following the previous motion, squat down and arc both hands to push down (see Figure 52). As you exhale, your left leg leads first in jumping a step forward. The right foot immediately follows, being drawn to the inside of the left, with its toe touching the ground.

As you jump forward a step, both hands are drawn back and then up, curving past your flanks/sides to shoot out in front of you. Your hands should be at shoulder-height with your elbows, wrists, and fingers slightly bent and your hands rotated outward. Your eyes should look straight ahead. Slowly withdraw both hands along their original pathway back to your hips as you inhale, palms level and pressing down, as your body turns slightly to the right. (Figure 58-61)

This constitutes left style.

Following left style, advance your right foot as you exhale, mirroring the motions of left style.

This constitutes right style.

Practice by alternating left and right.

