

8 - Pressing the Ball in Water



In Chinese mythology, a ball can also be a Pearl of Wisdom.

In Chinese art we often see pictures of flaming pearls under the dragon's chin or claws. The pearl represents spiritual energy, prosperity,

long life, thunderous power, or the moon.

In Daoist alchemy, the pearl is used to represent the Most Secret Name. It also represents the perfect singularity of Hunyuan (the pre-yingyang state of primordial division-less unity), from which the entire universe emerged and within which the infinite universe is contained.

The ball or pearl is also symbolic of the middle dantian.

Preparation movements

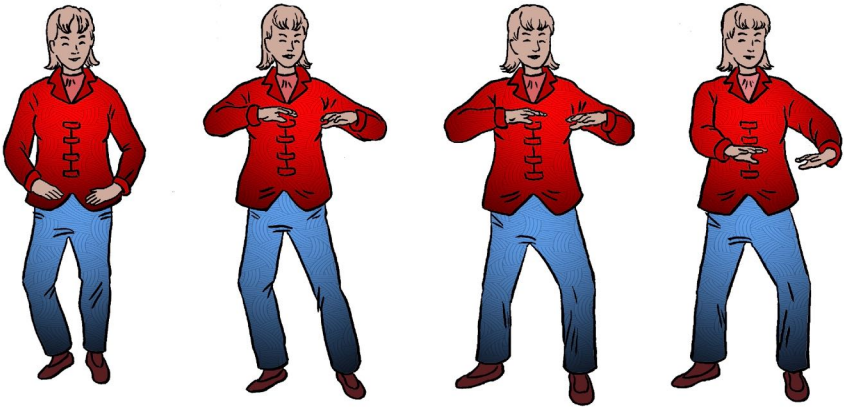
- a. Continuing from the Movement 7, bring your hands together at chest-height with your palms facing down. (M 8.1)
- b. Move your right foot to the inside of your left.
- c. Bend your knees slightly.
- d. Lower your hands until they reach the level of your lower abdomen, your body rising slightly.
- e. Shift your weight to your right foot and turn your body slightly to the left. Lift your left heel slightly. Sink your weight to the soles of your feet.



M 8.1

Left side pattern

- a. Step forward with your left foot to form a bow stance. Your weight should remain on your right foot. Keep your buttocks aligned with your right heel. (M 8.2)



M 8.2

- b. Your arms should form an oval, offset slightly to the left, at the level of your heart.
- c. Your space between your hands should be directly above the inner thigh.
- d. Shift your weight to your left foot and form a bow and arrow stance.
- e. Move your hands forward, while maintaining the oval as you do so. Move your hands as if they were gently guiding a buoyant ball, resting atop it as it floats.
- f. Press the ball beneath the water with your hands as your hands continue their vertical circle, using a circular motion. Press down until your hands are at the level of your navel.
- g. Shift your weight back to your right foot as your hands move down and back, completing their circle. Relax your shoulders and sink your elbows. Maintain your hand position, as though gently holding a ball beneath the water, as you draw your hands back to your middle dantian.
- h. In this sequence, your hands should circle up, forward, down, back, and up. They should be as though placed atop a buoyant ball that you are guiding in a vertical circle. Shifting of weight between the front and back feet should follow this circle, shifting

forward into bow and arrow stance as your hands move forward, and shifting back into bow stance as they draw back.

Changing sides

- a. Continuing from part 2, bring your hands together at chest-height with your palms facing down. (M 8.3)
- b. Move your left foot to the inside of your right.
- c. Bend your knees slightly.
- d. Push your hands down until they reach the level of your lower abdomen, your body rising slightly. (M 8.4)
- e. Shift your weight to your left foot and turn your body slightly to the right as you lift your right heel.



M 8.3

Right side sequence

- a. Step forward with your right foot to form a bow stance. Your weight should remain on your left foot. Keep your buttocks aligned with your left heel.
- b. Your arms should form an oval, offset slightly to the right, at the level of your heart.



M 8.4

- c. Your hands should be directly above the inner thigh of your left leg.
- d. Shift your weight to your right foot and form a bow and arrow stance.
- e. Move your hands forward, while maintaining the oval between them. Move your hands as if they were gently guiding a buoyant ball, resting atop it as it floats.
- f. Press the ball beneath the water with your hands as your hands continue their vertical circle. Press down until your hands are at the level of your navel. Shift your weight to your left foot.
- g. Shift your weight back to your left foot as you draw your hands down and back, completing their circle. Relax your shoulders and sink your elbows. Maintain your hand position, as though gently holding a ball beneath the water, as you draw your hands back to your middle dantian.
- h. The hands circle up, forward, down, back, and up like the left side sequence.

Additional information to enhance practice:

This posture uses the following qi guiding patterns:

1. Breathe into the middle dantian.
2. Direct qi from the middle dantian to the palms of the hands.
3. Practice of this motion also facilitates circulation of qi in the Microcosmic Orbit, utilizing the fire cycle (up the Du mai, down the Ren mai).
4. The rhythmic ascending and descending aspects of this motion serve to help harmonize the ascending and descending channels of the body.
5. This technique employs powerful pulling of the silk (linear stretching of the tendons and ligaments). It is thus helpful for training the sinews and developing vibrational power.