

BACK STANCE:

The particular posture illustrated above is Seven Stars, the guard position adopted at several points in the Long and Short Forms, and the stance taken when practicing applications and two-person drills.

Apart from being a position from which a number of techniques can be performed almost simultaneously (for instance a deflection and slap), it also appears less aggressive and more conciliatory to an opponent, than clenched fists, especially if both palms face down.

The weighting is crucial. 80% or more should be on that bend back leg, the direction of the feet forming right angles to each other, and a comfortable, stable, distance apart. In the Form's postures, the stance is performed with the toes raised. In applications training, the foot-pad or toes rest lightly on the floor. The front leg is "empty" (ying) and can be raised easily to step or kick. **Cat stance** is formed by bringing the front foot close in and up onto toes.

FRONT STANCE:

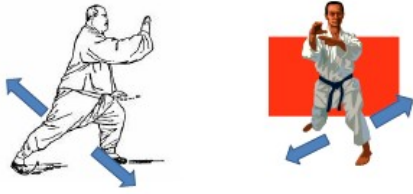
Back leg is straightened, while the front is bent so the knee is directly above the ankle- a simple rule of thumb is to spot just the crescent of the shoe visible over the kneecap.

The legs should start from a little over shoulder-width apart, and then separated as shown but keeping that same should-distance apart. A common mistake is to have front and back feet virtually treading on the same line- as if tight-rope walking, and hence very unstable to any side-ways force. In **Wudang style** (slightly different to the illustration), try for a straight line running from the angle of the leg into the angle of the back (so there is forward lean –not too much – to the body). Weight is more evenly spread than in back stance, but rests mainly on the front leg.

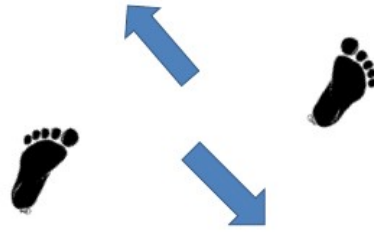
HORSE-RIDING STANCE:

As the illustration shows, this stance is made by opening the legs and bending the knees- as if riding a fairly fat horse. Toes should be pointing out at about 45 degrees in order to minimise strain on the knee joints. Keeping the back upright, you should aim to sink lower than the illustration. In Wudang style, this stance is adopted for Single Whip, and through Cloud Hands, and is a posture held through much of the Nei Gung exercises.

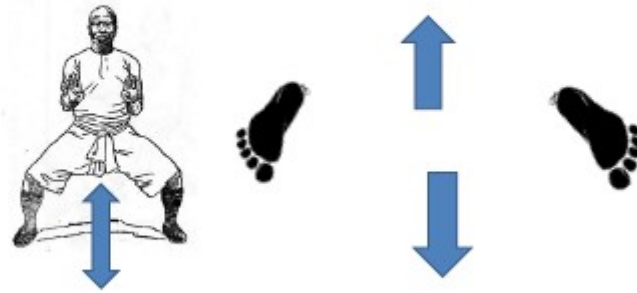
Voids in front stances



Voids in front stances



Voids in horse-riding stance



Voids in back stance

