

Official W.T.B.A. Grading Syllabus

In the following pages you will find all the separate grading systems for the different aspects of the WTBA

Please check website for video guidelines

Please note: Once you are moving through the instructor grades, these should be your main focus, however other training methods etc that are not in the test for each grade, may help you learn something you're not understanding, so don't disregard things that are not in the grades, the grades are based on the fundamental forms and training methods only.

A student only has to go through the grading if they wish to work towards their Instructors degree, otherwise they do not need to take grades, but still can if they wish as a way of seeing how they are doing.

Student Grading:

Can be carried out by any wtba certified instructor of grade 1 or higher.

Instructor Grade 1:

Can be carried out by a WTBA instructor of Grade 5 or higher.

Instructor Grades 2-5:

Can be carried out by WTBA instructors with Masters Degree, however, the student must have met and trained with Eli in person to be graded.

Instructor Grades 6+:

Are only carried out by Eli Montaigne

All grades must be signed and certified by Eli Montaigne:

In most cases you will be viewed during class time, your teacher will simply take note of your ability during class, and then contact Eli to have the grade issued.

When this is not possible,
a small fee may be charged to cover your instructors time for the grading.

There is no fee for the issuing of a grade, however you do need to be a WTBA "Active Member"

Ask your instructor about grading, or contact Eli.

eli@wtba.co.uk

www.taijiworld.com

Official W.T.B.A. Student Grading Syllabus (Taijiquan)

On average with regular training and dedication a student should be able to pass one grade every 4 months,

getting them to grade 1 Instructor within 3 years.

Student grades are not "strict" You do not have to be pedantically correct like with the instructor grades.

The student grades are more about learning, so when you are taking the test, if you make a mistake, your examiner will try to help you correct that mistake so you pass.

If you are able to correct the mistake on the spot with help from your examiner, then you still pass.

Exceptions:

If someone has a physical problem with their body, such as a knee injury, or major back problems etc, if this stops them being able to do a certain movement, but they are doing everything else well, then we will make an exception that they would not have to do that move that they cannot, but it must be a good reason!

Yang Lu-chan's form "Step" descriptions:

Step 1

The form should be done at an all slow pace, i.e. no speeding up or slowing down. Stepping should be done with balance, i.e. the heel should be placed with no weight falling onto it. Stances should be correct width and length, should have hands in correct structure, and center line should face the correct direction. Should also maintain a vertical spine.

Some movements such as the leaping kicks, plum blossoms etc, that cannot be done slowly, should be done with momentum. Must have the pelvis tucked. Must not bob up and down. Must keep the head facing with the shoulders. Weighting must be correct.

Step 2

Should now have an understanding of correct Yin and Yang wrist changes, showing a change with each movement. (This is only basic yin/yang, and does not require the subtle empty moves, nor the separation of left and right on double yang palms etc)

Should now have added to it the set fa-jing movements (just a snappy well-structured strike is expected)

Full Fa-jing is not expected from a student.

Step 3

Should now show no double weightiness in the palms, one hand should always lead the other on double yin or double yang movements. Every movement should now come from the center.

Yang Cheng-fu's form "Step" descriptions:

Step 1

The form should be done at an all slow pace, i.e. no speeding up or slowing down. Stepping should be done with balance, i.e. the heel should be placed with no weight falling onto it. Stances should be correct width and length, should have hands in correct structure, and center line should face the correct direction. Should also maintain a vertical spine.

Movements that require some momentum can of course be done faster, but should still be done smoothly and gracefully. Must have the pelvis tucked. Must not bob up and down. Must keep the head facing with the shoulders. Weighting must be correct.

Step 2

Should now have an understanding of correct Yin and Yang wrist changes, showing a change with each movement. (This is only basic yin/yang, and does not require the subtle empty moves, nor the separation of left and right on double yang palms etc)

Step 3

Should now show no double weightiness in the palms, one hand should always lead the other on double yin or double yang movements. Every movement should now come from the center.

Grade 1:

YLC or YCF form:

First 3rd, step 1.

Qigong:

Should be able to hold standing three circles for 8 minutes.

Small San Sau:

Should be able to perform the solo form up to double P'eng, showing smooth swiveling on the heels, correct weighting, good forward drop steps, correct direction of center line, the hands should hold correct structure, and move from the waist. Must have the pelvis tucked. Must not bob up and down. Must keep the head facing with the shoulders. Weighting must be correct.

Single push hands:

Should be able to hold a solid P'eng in a power stance, move from the waist with correct weight shifting, and not let excess tension into the body.

Wudang Hand Weapons, Hammer:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the center to move the hand.

Grade 2:

YLC or YCF Form:

2nd 3rd up to and including "Cloud Hands" step 1.

1st 3rd step 2.

Qigong:

Should be able to hold standing for 10 minutes

Triple Heater Qigong should be performed with good structure and balance (the full squat is not required)

Small San Sau:

Should now know the solo form up to Arn, at the same level as for Grade 1, and be able to perform the two man form up to Double P'eng, with a medium speed and pressure of attacks, showing good structure and balance in defence. The student should also be able to throw the attacks up to double P'eng for another student.

Single Push Hands:

Should now show correct angle of P'eng to take the pushing power and redirect it up the arm to the shoulder. Showing the ability to correctly move ones center around the force.

Wudang Hand Weapons, Spear:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the center to move the hand.
The Hammer should have improved to a faster and stronger pace.

Grade 3:

YLC or YCF form:

The whole 2nd 3rd step 1.

1st 3rd step 3.

Qigong:

Should now be able to hold for 12 minutes.

Small San Sau:

Should now know the full solo form at the same level as for grade 1, and be able to perform the two man form up to Arn, with same level as previous grades. The student should also be able to throw the attacks up to Arn for another student.

Single Push Hands:

Must now be able to change hands without losing structure during the 3 main change over methods.
Forward, Back, and Low.

Wudang Hand Weapons, Sword:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the center to move the hand.
The Spear should have improved to a faster and stronger pace.

Grade 4:

YLC or YCF form:

3rd 3rd up to "Qi Resting" step 1.

2nd 3rd at step 2

Qigong:

Should now hold for 15 minutes.

SSS:

Should now know the full two person form, at the same level as the previous grades.

Single Push Hands:

Must now be able to listen to where the push is coming from and react accordingly.
Moving left, right, up, or down, from the center, in accordance with where the push is coming from

Wudang Hand Weapons, Plough:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the center to move the hand.
The Sword should have improved to a faster and stronger pace.

The Post:

Method one should be performed with good balance, showing empty heel and two steps

Grade 5:

YLC or YCF form:

Full 3rd 3rd Step 1

2nd 3rd step 3

Qigong:

Should now hold for 18 minutes.

SSS:

Should now be able to perform the full two person set at speed with heavy strikes,
and go straight into throwing the attacks for their training partner to then do the form.

Single Push Hands:

Should show improvements on all learnt so far

Dragon Prawn Boxing:

All four methods should be performed with speed and flow, against medium strikes.

Wudang Hand Weapons, Axe & Nun:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the center to move the hand.
The Plough should have improved to a faster and stronger pace.

The Post:

The second method should be performed showing good balance, keeping the body centered with-out leaning.

Grade 6:

YLC or YCF form:

3rd 3rd Step 2

Qigong:

Should now hold for 21 minutes

SSS, and Single Push Hands:

Should show improvement of all principals learnt so far.

Dragon Prawn Boxing:

Should now be able to perform the 4 methods under heavy fast strikes, with-out tensing up.

Chee Sau:

Should be performed with flow, structure, and looseness, the basic movements, (Not Freestyle)

Da-Lu:

Should be able to perform all the basic movements, smoothly and controlled.

Wudang Hand Weapons, Combine & Dart:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the center to move the hand.

The Axe and Nun should have improved to a faster and stronger pace.

Striking:

Straight driving Palm in reverse stance. Showing good drive from rear leg, and connection through waist.

Back Fist. Should show good swing momentum from waist.

Downward cross hammer fist. Should show heavy weight in fist, and waist connection.

All strikes should be done with-out excess tension, and show good accuracy on mitt.

Lateral Elbow. Showing good structure and connection to the waist.

Grade 7:

YLC or YCF form:

3rd 3rd Step 3

SSS, SPH

Should all be showing improvements, to prove the student is always developing their foundations.

Qigong:

Should now hold for 25 minutes.

Chee Sau:

Should now be able to do it with the over under method.

Da-Lu:

Should now be able to perform all the basic movements with speed and power.

Wudang Hand Weapons, Drill & Shovel:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the center to move the hand.

The Combine & Dart should have improved to a faster and stronger pace.

Striking:

Straight driving Palm in reverse stance. Should now show no follow through on the strike, the student should shock the bag holder with-out any “push” being present in the strike.

Back Fist. Should no longer follow through, the hand should be back to guard as soon as the strike is done.

Downward cross hammer fist. Should now show a smaller circle, with added sinking power to the strike.

Lateral Elbow. Should now show no follow through.

Kicks:

Should be able to perform front heel kick, and back heel kick.

In air to show balance and structure, should be able to perform each kick with-out having to place the kicking foot back on the ground.

Grade 8:

YLC or YCF form:

Full form Step 3

Qigong:

Should now be held for 30 Minutes:

Triple Heater Qigong should be performed with good structure and balance (Full Squat, a heel step can be used)

SSS:

Should now be able to name and roughly locate a relevant Dim-Mak point for each strike in the form, in defence and attack.

Wudang Hand Weapons:

All 12 weapons should now be performed with good speed and structure, movement should come from the center.

Striking:

Straight driving Palm in reverse stance. Should now be showing recoil, and be able to deliver two strikes equal in power to your single strike, with in 1 second.

Back Fist. Should now be getting a “Snap” back fist happening, and be able to deliver two strikes equal in power to your single strike, with in 1 second.

Downward cross hammer fist. Should now show “follow through recoil”
Not bouncing back, but following through with a small circle back to center.
and be able to deliver two strikes equal in power to your single strike, with in 1 second.

Lateral Elbow. Should now be showing recoil,
and be able to deliver two strikes equal in power to your single strike, with in 1 second.

All strikes should be done with good understanding of yin and yang.

Kicks:

Front and back Kicks should now be performed on the bag, showing good impact with recoil.

Chee Sau

Should now be performed at a slow freestyle level, being able to sense slow incoming attacks.

Double Push Hands:

Should simply be able to perform the frame work, under light pressure, with flow and structure.

Wrist Grabs:

Should be able to free one’s self from any single handed wrist grab,
the grabber should be of a similar size and strength, the student should not struggle to get free.

Self-defence:

Should be able to stop a full powered strike from a similar sized person, using Tai Chi principals.

Against, straight punch, hook punch, double handed push, all aimed at the head.

Rip hook, and upper and lower tackle

Should also issue a counter strike before a second attack is issued.

After passing Grade 8 you are now ready to take the grade 1 instructor test

