

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 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 (Baguazhang)

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!

Bagua Circular form "Step" descriptions:

Step 1

The form should be done at an all slow pace, (with the exception of movements requiring momentum) Stepping should be done with balance, i.e. the heel should be placed with no weight falling onto it. Stances should have correct placement on the circle, should have hands in correct structure, and centre line should face the correct direction. Major movements should come from the waist. Must show proper Bagua Palm Flex. Correct weight placement. Pelvis should be tucked under. Must not bob up and down on moves unless you are clearly lifting or dropping.

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 show use of momentum with centrifugal movements

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. Should be able to do the striking postures with good snap and recoil,

Step 4

Should now be able to do the form at a good pace, executing strikes with a good sense of power

Grade 1:

Circle walking:

Should show a smooth controlled step, with use of the waist to cause brushing of the legs.

Should have no weight in the front leg until the next step is made when the weight must come forward.

(No hands till Grade 4)

Circular Form:

Palm changes 1 & 2, at step 1.

Single Push Hands: (Taiji Style)

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.

Qigong:

Standing 8 Palms: Should hold each palm for 1 minute

Wudang Hand Weapons, Hammer:

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

Grade 2:

Circle Walking:

Rear leg must now lift heel and toe together, showing good core connection, and maintaining waist movement.

Weighting should be correct and sinking into the heels. Weight should not drop forward on steps

Circular Form:

Palm changes 1 & 2 at step 2. Changes 3 & 4 at step 1.

Qigong:

8 Palms 2 minutes Each.

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.

The Post:

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

Grade 3:

Circle Walking:

Stepping should now have a little soft snap to it, while maintaining all learnt so far.

Should be able to do inside and outside swivels and maintain flow and balance.

Circular Form:

Changes 1 & 2 at step 3. Changes 3 & 4 at step 2. Changes 5 & 6 at step 1.

Qigong:

Number 3 palm closed step walking position held for 1 minute each leg.

The Post:

The second method should be performed showing good balance, keeping the body centred without leaning.

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:

Circle Walking:

The hands should now be held correctly in the number 3 palm while walking and maintaining everything learnt so far

Inside and outside changes should show good flow and structure in palms.

Circular Form:

Changes 1 & 2 at step 4. Changes 3 & 4 at step 3. Changes 5 & 6 at step 2. Changes 7 & 8 at step 1.

Qigong:

Number 3 palm closed step walking position held for 1.5 minute each leg.

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.

Grade 5:

Circle Walking:

Should now be able to change direction without hesitation when your examiner says "Change" While maintaining all principals.

Circular Form:

Changes 3 & 4 at step 4. Changes 5 & 6 at step 3. Changes 7 & 8 at step 2.

Qigong:

8 Palms 3 minutes Each

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.

Square Blocking:

Should be able to perform the four hammer palm blocks with power and speed,
and be able to throw the correct attacks for your partner to try.

Grade 6:

Circle Walking:

Should now be showing speed and power in changes
While maintaining all principals.

Circular Form:

Changes 5 & 6 at step 4. Changes 7 & 8 at step 3.

Qigong:

Number 3 palm closed step walking position held for 2 minutes each leg.

Wudang Hand Weapons, Combine & Dart:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the centre 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 Palm. Should show good swing momentum from waist.

Downward cross hammer Palm. 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:

Circle Walking:

Should now be able to walk slowly with partner with wrist pressure
while maintaining all principals.

Circular Form:

Changes 7 & 8 at step 4.

Qigong:

8 Palms 4 minutes Each

Wudang Hand Weapons, Drill & Shovel:

Should be able to perform the drill at a medium pace, using the centre 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 Palm. Should no longer follow through, the hand should be back to guard as soon as the
strike is done.

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

Lateral Elbow. Should now show no follow through.

8 Kicking Method:

Should be able to perform the four kicks on each side, solo.

Grade 8:

Circle Walking:

Should now be able to walk with partner with wrist pressure, and react correctly to changes, while maintaining all principals.

Circular Form:

Full Form (8 changes) step 4.

Qigong:

Circular form done super slowly (like tai chi form would be done)

This is show that the student has a true understanding of the flow of the movements, doing it slowly will show up your mistakes.

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 Palm. 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 Palm. Should now show “follow though 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.

8 Kicking Method:

Should be able to perform the four kicks on each side, partnered.

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 Bagua 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 grade 8 you are then ready to move onto instructor grades