

Basic Standing

Having loosened your whole body, you come to a natural effortless standing position.

This is the most fundamental practice in Qigong. It is the most complete (though not the easiest!) releasing practice. You can practice almost anywhere. It is the basis for all movement practices.

There are two ways of practicing: going through the checklist repeatedly, or just hanging out doing nothing.

You will have learned the detailed instructions for bringing each part of the body into balance; this is a checklist to remind you.

- Feet a comfortable distance apart, more or less parallel.
- Come up on the “front triangle”; stretch the heels back and down till they just touch the ground. Don’t lose the ball of the big toe! Then press the heel onto the ground until you feel a firm contact. At this point the feet should feel a bit like suction cups; the weight is spread out evenly over the whole foot.
- Knees soft, nether locked back nor bent. They should be able to wiggle lightly. (Sometimes we may need to have the knees bent slightly.)
- Tail is dropped—not tucked, not arched.
- Belly soft.
- Back long and wide.
- Chest and upper back broad and open.
- Armpits open (“gorilla arms”).
- Hands soft and open
- Back of the neck back, soft and long
- Head poised as if lightly suspended from above. DO NOT lift the chin!
- A subtle inner smile sends a gentle warmth all through and around you.

Feel that your legs and tail root you deeply into the earth; that your head floats lightly in space, being aware clearly in all directions; and feel your arms widening out from your heart, ready to touch the world around you. Smile to your body, smile to the world!

