



Sil Lim Tao (Little Idea Form)

"The meaning of Siu Lim Tao name can be translated as follows: Siu means little and in this case means minimal. Lim (sometimes pronounced as Nim) means thought (idea) and Tao means way. So together in this context, the whole name of Siu Lim Tao means a way to minimize your thought. The meaning is to try to empty your mind and concentrate on your practice."

- My Way of Wing Chun

Sil Lim Tao is the first form taught in Wing Chun kung fu and is designed to teach the fundamental principles of that art. The "little idea" at the heart of Sil Lim Tao is the key concept of Wing Chun: centerline theory. The centerline is an imaginary line drawn down the center of the body. Guarding your centerline forces your opponent to take a longer route in an attempt to get around your guard and strike you. You can take advantage of your opponent's arcing strikes by striking along a more direct route in a straight line to the opponent's center.

The form is divided into eleven short series. These, in turn, are divided into three larger sections. Each section has its own aim in practice, and various meanings in application.

The first three series make up the first section. The first section is traditionally used as isometric exercise to develop power and strength in your techniques. It is essential that you devote energy (*kung*) in the form of tension, and time (*fu*) by practicing slowly and patiently, in order to develop true proficiency (*kung fu*) in Wing Chun.

The second section consists of series four, five, and six. Its goal is to teach you how to use the power and strength that you developed in the first section. Wing Chun's punching power comes from an explosive energy that the Chinese call "fa jing." Wing Chun Kung Fu can be considered both soft and hard. This can be demonstrated with a punch. Your arm travels fastest when the antagonistic muscles are relaxed (soft), but just before you make contact with the target, the muscles in your arm tense up for a split second (hard). The goal is to develop focused strikes that harness the kinetic energy of your entire body without compromising your structure or balance.

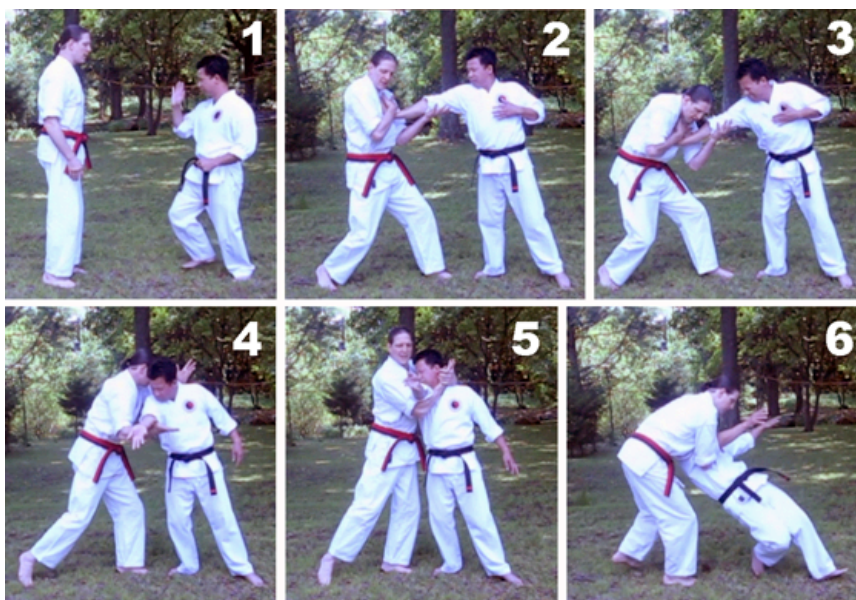
The third section consists of series seven through eleven and is for training the correct position of the basic hand and arm movements with the goal of developing the neural pathways that result in proper "muscle memory." Therefore, concentrate on executing each movement correctly.

The Movements of the Form



Salute

1. Natural stance
2. Attention stance
3. Cross hands in front of chest
4. Bow at waist 45 degrees
5. Return to upright posture
6. Natural stance

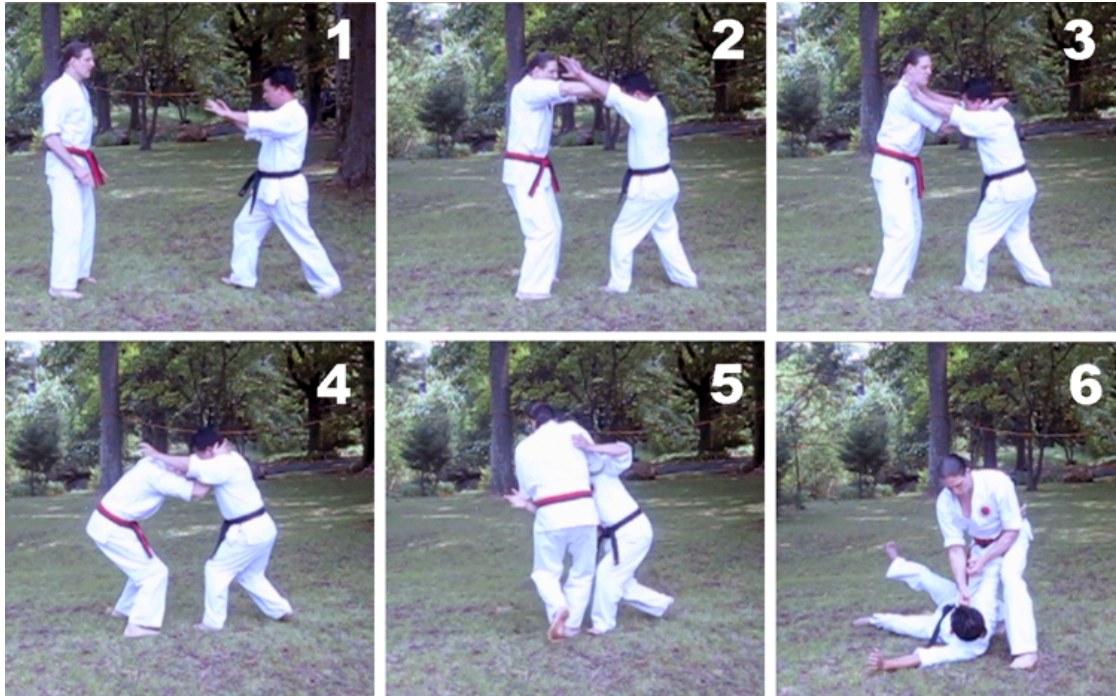


Finger Press: Against a right push to the chest (1), press opponent's hand against your chest with your right hand as you post his right elbow out from underneath with your cupped left hand (2). Step back with your right foot as you bow forward, applying backward pressure against the opponent's fingers (3). Pay close attention to sealing the palm heel of your opponent's hand to your body by applying pressure to the back of the wrist with the knife edge of your right hand. The pressure of your body should be directed against the opponent's middle finger, bending it back toward the forearm. With a partner we must obviously check our energy, but against an actual assailant, finish with a sharp motion pressing the opponent's forearm squarely against your chest. Flow from the finger lock (4) into a triangle hold trapping the opponent's lead arm against your chest (5). Unbalance the opponent to the rear and take him to the ground with a bowing motion (6).



Preparatory Posture: Assuming the Inward Stance

1. Straight stance, arms extended, back of hands touching
2. Pull both fists back to ribs and drop your weight
3. Open toes outward, heels touching
4. Pivot on the balls of your feet and open heels outward
5. Tuck your tailbone under slightly



Application

Inverted Arrow Block: Against a two handed choke (1), execute a double bong sao, deflecting the opponent's arms upward and outward as you deliver finger tip strikes to the opponent's eyes (2). Chop into the sides of the neck, targeting the carotid arteries (3). Immediately grab the opponent behind the neck, and deliver a head butt, sharply dropping your weight to pull your opponent's head into the top of your forehead as you look down to avoid taking any of the impact on your own face (4). Step your left foot behind your right and pivot 180 degrees for a takedown (5). Finish with chain punches (6).



Series 1: High and Low Joined Hands Blocks

1. Cross tan sao high (right hand in front)
2. Cross guan sao low (left hand in front)
3. Cross tan sao high (left hand in front)
4. Pull fists back to ribs (sao kuen/hikite)



Application

Lap Sao/Tan sao: Block a right punch (1) with upward double tan sao (left hand on outside – 2 above). As your left hand rolls into bong sao immediately grasp the opponent's right wrist with your right hand (3). Lap sao with your right hand as your left hand executes a tan sao to the opponent's eye or neck (4). Drop your left hand into the crook of the opponent's right arm (5) as you step forward and deliver a right roundhouse elbow strike to the opponent's head (6). Follow up with a right chop to the carotid artery (7) and finish with an upward knee strike (8).

For more, be sure to check out the full length application videos online at Satori-Dojo.com!



Series 2: Vertical Punches

1. Left vertical punch (jung kuen)
2. Left huen sao (6 count breakdown)
 1. Hand snaps open (vertical spearhand)
 2. Turn hand palm up (tan sao)
 3. Turn hand palm down (huen sao)
 4. Close hand into fist
 5. Turn fist palm up
 6. Pull left fist back to ribs (sao kuen/hikite)

Repeat on right side



Series 2: Vertical Punches

The Intercepting Fist: Block a right punch to the outside with either a left or right vertical punch (1), taking the centerline early and using your forearm to redirect the opponent's attack off target as you direct your fist to the opponent's head (2). Deliver multiple chain/rolling punches, being sure to check the arm on each one. If a punch comes up short of its target, use the snapping movement of the huen sao to strike the opponent's eyes (3). Grab the opponent (4) and pull him into your next punch. You should get better results by targeting the soft tissues of the neck over the bony structures of the face and head (5).



Series 3: Tan Sao / Fook Sao

1. Left tan sao (palm up spearhand thrust)
2. Left huen sao into jum sao (sinking hand)
3. Withdraw hand to wu sao (guarding hand)
4. Left fook sao (first wrist strike #1)
5. Left huen sao into jum sao (sinking hand)
6. Withdraw hand to wu sao (guarding hand)
7. Left fook sao (wrist strike #2)
8. Left huen sao into jum sao (sinking hand)
9. Withdraw hand to wu sao (guarding hand)
10. Left fook sao (wrist strike #3)
11. Left huen sao into jum sao (sinking hand)
12. Withdraw hand to wu sao (guarding hand)
13. Left pak sao (slap hand) to right
14. Left vertical palm strike (jik jeung)
15. Left tan sao (palm up spearhand)
16. Left huen sao (circling hand) into punch
17. Pull left fist back to ribs (sao kuen/hikite)

Repeat on the right side.



Series 3: Tan Sao / Fook Sao Application

Block a right punch (1) to the outside beginning with a left pak sao (2) into a right tan sao (double blocking). Use your forearm to redirect the opponent's attack off target as you drive your fingertips into the opponent's neck or eyes (3). As the opponent throws a left follow-up punch, huen sao to pick it up with your right hand (4) and directing the attack with a wu sao (5). Grasp the attacking limb with your left hand as you counter with a right fook sao wrist strike (6). As the opponent throws a left follow-up punch, direct the attack with a wu sao (7). Grasp the attacking limb with your left hand (8) as you counter with a right fook sao wrist strike (9). As the opponent throws a right follow-up punch, huen sao to pick it up with your right hand (10) and direct the attack with a wu sao, grasping the attacking limb with your left hand as you counter with a right fook sao wrist strike (11). As the opponent throws a final left punch, pick it up with your right hand (12) and directing the attack with a wu sao (13). Grasp the attacking limb with your left hand as you counter with a right palm strike (15). Finish with a huen sao (inner

ridgehand) to the carotid artery (15). Grasp behind the neck and pull the opponent into a left tan sao to the throat (16).



Series 4: Gum Sao (pinning hand)

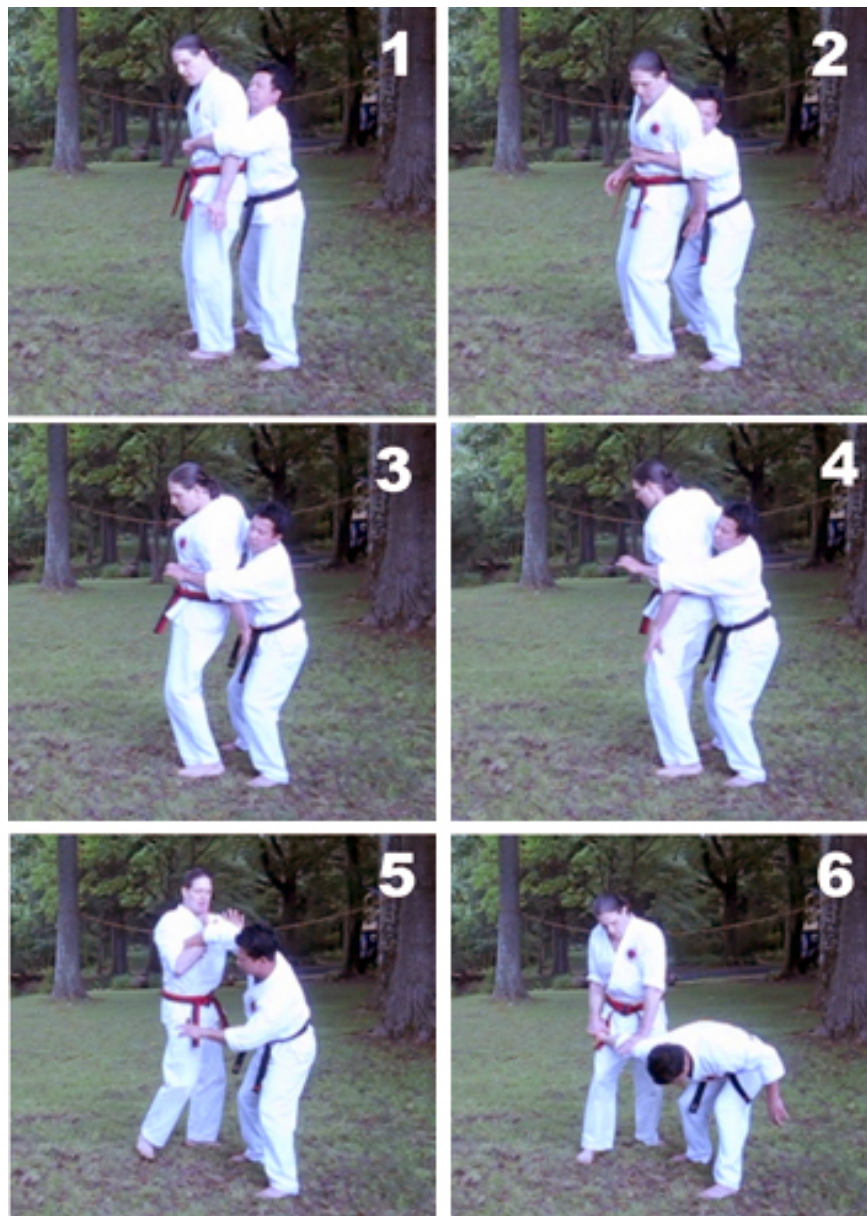
1. Left gum sao to the left side
2. Right gum sao to the right side
3. Double gum sao to the rear
4. Double gum sao to the front



Series 4: Gum Sao (pinning hand)

Gum Sao Escaping Drills: Against a standard cross-hand grip (1), bring your fingers up to the outside of your opponent's arm, rotating over the opponent's wrist (2), then snapping down to escape his hold and grasp his wrist (3). This motion can be performed to the inside of his arm as well. If your wrist is grabbed by two hands, you can circle to either side or bring your hand up between the opponent's arms and gum sao either wrist (not shown).

From reference #1, opponent could also grasp your hand and elbow and attempt an inverted goose-neck style arm lock. As he attempts to secure his lock on your arm, twist your hand and drive it down to free it from the opponent's grip. A similar move can be used to escape from an attempted hammerlock where your arm has been brought up behind your back. Remember that this technique must be done early on; once one of these holds has been firmly applied, it will be difficult if not impossible to break the hold using the gum sao escape.



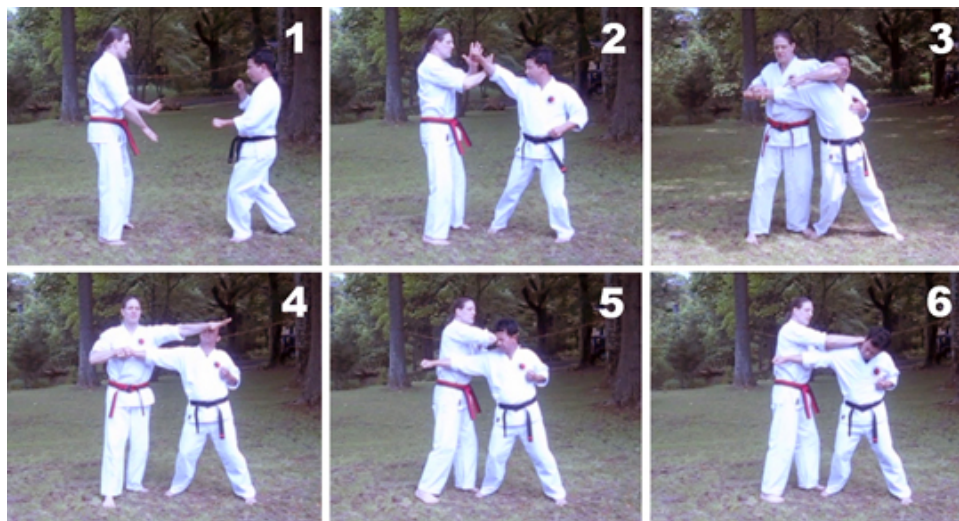
Vs. a rear bear hug: An opponent pins your arms (1). Execute the rear gum sao to create some “wobble room” (2) followed immediately by spreading your arms to break his grip (3). Trap his wrist in the crook of your right elbow (4). Spin to your

right, stepping with your left foot as you place your left hand behind the opponent's right elbow (5). Grasp his wrist with your right hand and finish by locking his arm out at the elbow with the front double gum sao motion (6).



Series 5: Lan Sao (bar arms)

1. Lan sao to front (left arm on top)
2. Double fak sao (inner chops) to the sides
3. Right lan sao to front (right on top)



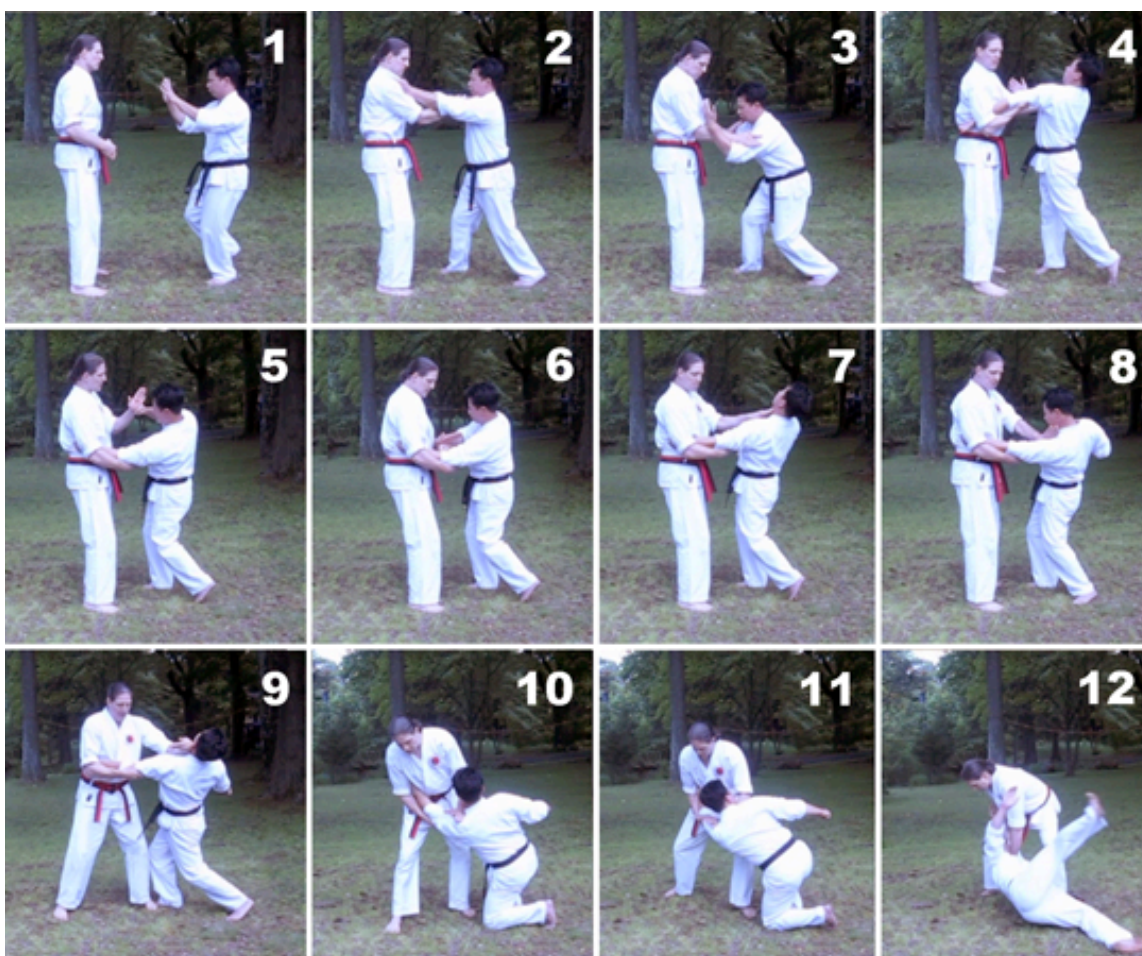
Criss-Crossing Monk: Parry an incoming right punch (1 above) with a left sweeping block and grasping the opponent's wrist with your right hand (2), pulling him into a left elbow strike while simultaneously pulling your right hikite back and hyperextending his elbow across your body (3). Extend the left arm and chop to the face (4). Grab behind his head with your left hand and pull him into a right roundhouse elbow strike (5). Extend your right arm, chopping across the side of his neck (6). Grab the opponent behind his neck with your right and pull him into a right knee strike (7). Finish with a left elbow to the spine (8).



Against two opponents grasping both wrists (1 above), snake around the opponent's wrists with each hand from the outside and step backwards (2), drawing them together in front of you forcefully (3). Follow up with a chop attack (4).

Series 6: "The Gate"

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Double jum sao (sinking blade blocks) | 5. Double gum sao (pinning hands) |
| 2. High double tok sao (lifting hands) | 6. Double upward wrist strikes (tai sao) |
| 3. Double jut sao (jerking hands) | 7. Pull both fists to ribs (sao kuen) |
| 4. Double biu tze sao (thrusting fingers) | |



Vs. Double hand lapel grab (1 above), execute double tan sao to opponent's throat (2), followed by jum sao strikes to inside of elbows (3), then snake around outside the opponent's right arm and lift the elbow (4). As the opponent throws a left counterpunch (5), jut sao (6) into biu tze sao to throat (7). Deliver a palm strike take-down to the opponent's upper inner arm (8). If he resists and does not go down, strike to his neck with a wrist strike (9). Immediately reapply the throw (10) and take the opponent down (11). Finish with consecutive chain punches to the head (12).



Series 7: Pak Sao

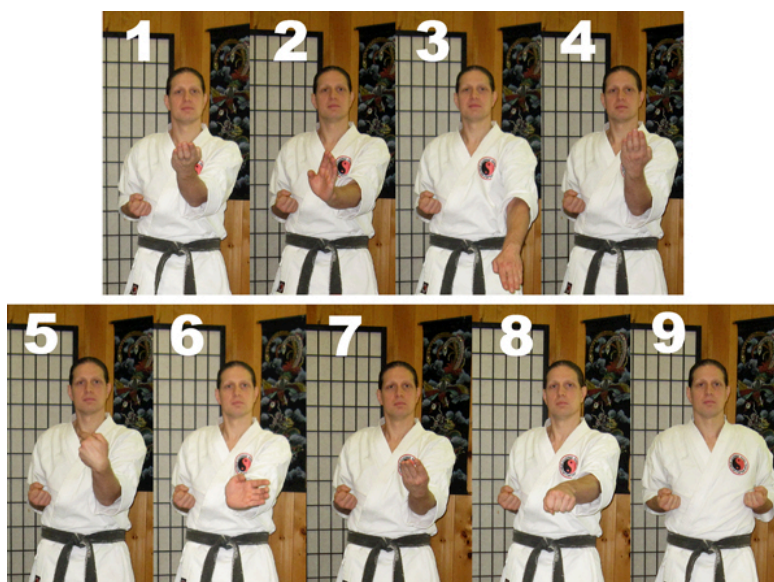
1. Left pak sao to the right
 2. Left juk jeung (side palm) to the front
 3. Left tan sao (palm up spearhand)
 4. Left huen sao into punch
 5. Pull left fist back to ribs (sao kuen)
- Repeat on the right side.



Against a right punch (1 above), parry the attacker with your left hand (2) and into your right, which grabs the attacking hand as your left hand delivers a palm strike to the opponent's face or neck (3). Parry the attacker's left punch (4) into your left hand as your right blocking hand delivers a palm strike to the opponent's face or neck (5). Use the huen sao to turn the opponent's head (6) and unbalance him. Drop your right foot back to complete the takedown (7) and follow-up with chain punches (8).

The two styles that most influenced the development of Wing Chun were white crane and snake style kung fu. These animals are still commonly used to represent Wing Chun.





Series 8: "The Clock"

1. Left tan sao (palm up)
2. Left jum sao (sinking block)
3. Left low guan sao (lower chop)
4. Left tan sao (palm up)
5. Left huen sao (circling hand)
6. Low side palm strike (dai juk jeung)
7. Left tan sao (palm up spearhand)
8. Left huen sao into punch
9. Pull left fist back to ribs (sao kuen)

Repeat on the right side.



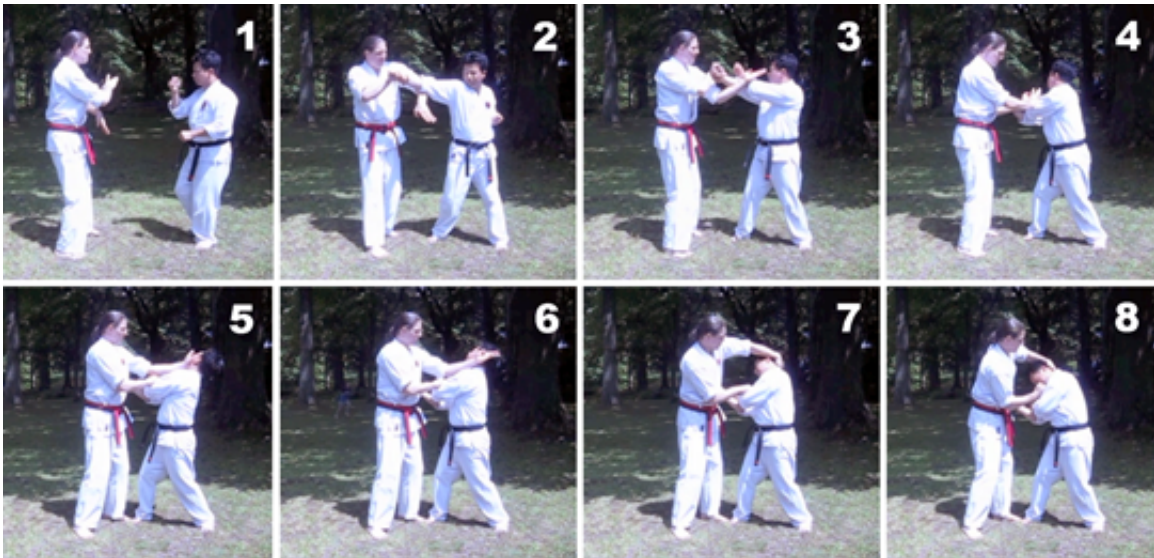
Against a right punch: Parry attacker's right punch to the outside (1 above) and into your waiting wu sao (guarding hand). With your left tan sao, check the opponent's elbow while simultaneously striking to his eyes with your finger tips (2). Drop your jum sao into the crook of his elbow to break his balance before continuing your motion (3), applying an arm lock by snaking around his arm (4) into a tan sao at the shoulder (5). Bend the opponent over into knee strike (6). Deliver a right chop to the back of the neck (7). If the opponent is still trying to stand up, use your right hand to turn his head as you maintain the shoulder lock (8).



Series 9: Bong Sao/Tan Sao

1. Left bong sao (wing arm)
2. Left tan sao (open hand palm up)
3. Left inverted palm strike (tok jeung)
4. Left tan sao (palm up spearhand)
5. Left huen sao (circling hand) into punch
6. Pull left fist back to ribs (sao kuen/hikite)

Repeat on the right side.



Against a right punch (1 above): Parry attacker's right punch to the outside and into your guarding hand with your left bong sao, hyper-extending and possibly even breaking the opponent's elbow (2). As the opponent follows up with a left punch, turn your bong sao over into a tan sao (3), trapping the opponent's left arm against his right (4), leaving you clear to deliver an inverted palm strike to the opponent's neck/jaw (5). Use huen sao to deliver a follow-up strike (6), grab (7), and pull the opponent into another attack (8).



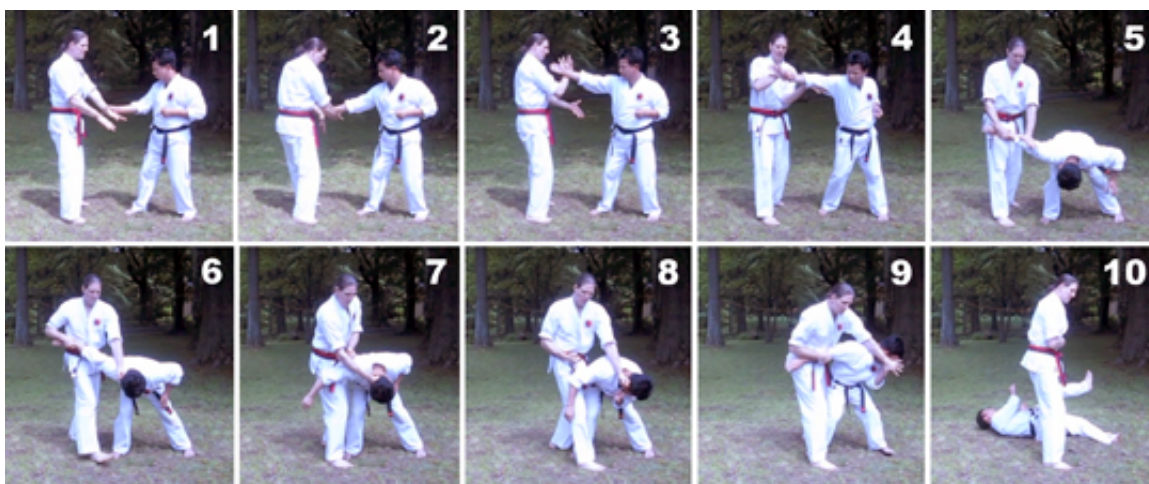
Series 10: Lut Sao - "Freeing Hand"

1. Left low biu tze sao to right
2. Right lut sao (freeing arm)
3. Left lut sao (freeing arm)
4. Right lut sao (freeing arm)
5. Left lut sao (freeing arm)



Rolling Punches

1. Left vertical punch (jung kuen)
2. Right vertical punch (jung kuen)
3. Left vertical punch (jung kuen)
4. Left huen sao (6 count breakdown)
 - 4.1. Hand snaps open
 - 4.2. Turn hand palm up (tan sao)
 - 4.3. Turn hand palm down (huen sao)
 - 4.4. Close hand into fist
 - 4.5. Turn fist palm up
 - 4.6. Pull left fist back to ribs



Series 10: Lut Sao and Chain Punches

Against a grab (1 above): Use the spearhand and scooping motion to escape the grab by moving against the gap between the opponent's thumb and forefinger (2). Grasp his right wrist with your right hand (3) and apply an arm bar by applying upward pressure on the elbow (4) and finish by chopping down into the groin (#3). As the opponent resists your motion, turn the eye of the elbow down into ude osae (5). Finish with rolling punches to opponent's head (6-8). Use the final huen sao motion to turn the opponent's head away (9) and throw him to the ground (10).