

Simplified Tai Chi 24

By Balanced Life Tai Chi

Simplified Tai Chi 24 (aka Yang Tai Chi Chuan 24, Short Form or Yang 24) was sponsored by the Chinese Sport Committee in 1956 as an “exercise for the masses.” Yang 24 is also known as the “Beijing Form” or “Peking Form” (because of its place of origin). Yang 24 is the national standardized form of China.

It is believed that 4 Tai Chi master instructors created and shortened the family style Tai Chi form (which was 85-108 postures depending on how one counted them) down to 24 postures. They removed most (if not all) repetitions. Yang 24 form retained all the “grace, beauty, and many fundamentals” of longer Tai Chi forms.

Yang 24 form takes approximately 6 minutes to perform and gives the beginner a chance to learn the foundation and elements of Tai Chi. It could also be taught to students of almost every age in a few weeks or months.

One advantage is that Yang 24 form can be done by large groups in rows. This is due to Yang 24’s straight line choreography. Because it is less physically demanding than most other forms, older beginners found (and find) it appealing. Yang 24 gives beginners an opportunity to learn the foundation and elements without a great time investment or commitment. In fact, many practice only Yang 24 throughout their lives.

Yang 24 is said to be the most popular Tai Chi form “worldwide.” What is true is that because Yang 24 is “standardized,” it is used in “performances and competitions around the world.”

Remember, simplified does NOT mean easy. There are heel kicks, low postures, and other postures where you stand on one foot. Therefore, Yang 24 is still quite challenging. However, many students use Yang 24 as an introduction to Tai Chi and move on to learn other forms or longer versions of Yang.

There is a tendency for forms to evolve and change over the years. Though Yang 24 is a “standardized form,” there are many nuances depending on the lineage, the student and instructor’s interpretation, where and who you trained under, and even personal preference.

The benefits of Yang 24 are the same as other Tai Chi forms: strengthening muscles, tendons, and joints; blood and energy circulation; improved immune system, balanced, coordination, concentration, alertness, and cognitive abilities.