

PUSH HANDS COMPETITION

Rules and Responsibilities - Push hands, also known as sparring, is a component of Tai Chi that involves two people in constant contact with each other. The goal of pushing hands is to keep your balance while getting another person off balance relying on nei jia principles to apply pressure as opposed to relying on grabbing techniques. Grappling with an opponent should be reserved for Shuai Jiao. Push hands training teaches how to affect a person's balance through direct pressure and connection to affect another persons' center and root.

Skills learned in push hands will help with achieving better position, maintaining better position and should allow the practitioner to keep a more solid or fluid root while defending incoming attacks. Training in this way should help a person grapple more efficiently with different abilities to respond to and apply varying offsetting types of pressure. Any rules that get in the way of this overall goal to redirect pressure while keeping ones' root should be avoided.

The Fall Classic has three forms of Push hands competition:

- Fixed Step: Off balancing is determined if a person's foot lifts off the ground or a person pivots excessively to maintain balance.

**Fixed step attacking area, hips to neck, no direct leg attacks or wrapping allowed (i.e. single leg, double leg, etc.)*

- Restricted Step: Off balancing is determined if a person is taken off the side of the straight track, switches stances to maintain balance, or is driven out of bounds to the rear

**Restricted step attacking area is the same as fixed step, except leg attacks to thigh are allowed, no switching stances and must stay in a straight line if stepping off the line will constitute a point and reset. Restricted step shuffling is allowed, no leg sweeps where foot leaves contact with the ground*

- Moving Step: Off balancing is determined if a person's foot is lifted for more than 5 seconds, a person makes contact with the ground with anything other than their feet, and or is taken out of bounds.

**Moving step switching stances are allowed, leg attacks with upper and lower body are allowed from the knee up, sweeps are allowed as long as the foot of the attacker stays on the ground. If a person's foot is lifted in a moving step push hands for more than 5 seconds, it constitutes an off balance.*

Fixed step and restricted step push hands have a total of two 1 minute rounds with 30 seconds rest in between with a possible tie breaker round w/ a coin toss to determine which foot starts forward.

Moving step push hands rounds are two 2 minute rounds w/ 45 second rest in between with a possible tie breaker round w/ a coin toss to determine which foot starts forward.

Push Hand Competition proceeds as follows:

- Competitors feet will be at shoulder width and length for fixed step (feet can be a bit wider for restricted and moving step)
- Feet should keep all contact on ground, major pivoting will constitute a loss of balance in fixed and restricted step, i.e. twist stance.
- Rounds will be judged by three judges one front center, and two at the rear corners
- Front feet will be parallel to one another, feet placement will be mirrored with one another about 1-2 fists from each other.
- Center judge will start the round by feeling the points of contact and signal the start on release of the hands. Competitors will circle three times before free pushing begins. At the start of the round and at every reset, once an off balance or out of bounds has been achieved, hands will be connected at wrist and elbow, and circle three times before free pushing begins. This setup will be the same for each form of pushing hands regardless of the person's stylistic background.
- Throughout every round, practitioners should strive to stick and yield to the best of their ability without breaking contact of either hand/limb

Scoring -Points will be awarded per off balances that were achieved using internal principles, i.e. those done without sacrificing one's root while keeping nei jia principles. No points will be given for those who lose balance of themselves in order to make their opponent make a step, practitioners will be reset without a point given to either person

At the end of the round, all judges will raise their hand toward the person who achieved the most off balances and/or exhibited the most use of appropriate yielding, and exhibiting the tai chi energies of jins, peng, lu, ji, an, tsai, li, shao, kao.

Fouls/Disqualification

- No double hand grabs. One handed gripping of the wrist for 2 seconds is allowed
- No gripping of clothing
- No hooking the head; No attacking of the head directly, forearm at sides of neck is allowed, no hooking the head
- No hard tackling
- Hooking using wrist is allowed behind the arm and on other parts of the body
- No extended holding i.e. clinching > 5 seconds
- No Chin Na (joint locking) techniques

- No Striking, need to contact first before pushing
- No attacking or twisting of the knees directly
- No foot sweeps where the foot leaves the ground, reaps are allowed in moving step
- No wrapping the legs
- No spear handing/ jabbing
- Specific rules to fixed, restricted and moving step

Weight Classes

Male

- Light: under 60kg (132.3 lbs)
- Middle C: 60.1 – 65kg (upper limit: 143.3 lbs)
- Middle B: 65.1 – 70kg (upper limit: 154.3 lbs)
- Middle A: 70.1 – 75kg (upper limit: 165.3 lbs)
- Heavy C: 75.1 – 80kg (upper limit: 176.3 lbs)
- Heavy B: 80.1 – 86kg (upper limit: 189.6 lbs)
- Heavy A: 86.1 – 92kg (upper limit: 202.8 lbs)
- Super Heavy: 92.1 – 98kg (upper limit: 216 lbs)
- Infinite: over 98.1kg

Female

- Light: under 55kg (121.3 lbs)
- Middle B: 55.1 – 60kg (upper limit: 132.3 lbs)
- Middle A: 60.1 – 65kg (upper limit: 143.3 lbs)
- Heavy B: 65.1 – 71kg (upper limit: 156.5 lbs)
- Heavy A: 71.1 – 77kg (upper limit: 169.7 lbs)
- Infinite: over 77.1kg

**Tournament officials reserve the right to combine weight classes.*

Arbitration and Disputes - Any instructor or competitor disputing the results of a match and wishing to have arbitration of a match for any reason must notify the Tournament Director within 15 minutes of the end of the division. They must then provide a written request and \$300 arbitration fee to the Tournament Arbitrator within 30 minutes of the end of the match to have resolution that same day. If the arbitration is settled in favor of the arbitrating parties, a full refund of the arbitration fee will be given. If the arbitrating parties are not settled in their favor, no refund for the arbitration fee will be given.

***A round or match may be stopped by any of the ring judges, the Tournament Official (s), if so desired, based on a breach of these rules herein.**