

b. Clean Movements:

The emphasis is on moving the hands and feet together so that the hands and feet arrive at the same time. *Xingyi* theory states, “the mind and breath strike together, the four limbs move together.” If you can get your hands and feet to work together then all the movements will be correct, the upper and lower body will hit together, and your whole body will be coordinated. When training “obvious power,” in order to hit with the hands and feet together there can be a clear sound as the foot hits the ground which comes at the same time that the upper limbs strike. When hitting the ground, the foot should stick close to the surface, and slide forward (or backward), stamping down. The foot should not lift up and whack at the ground. Once you have built a good foundation, you can gradually shift to “subtle power” and make little or no sound with the feet, which is the next step in the coordination of the whole body.

c. Smooth Footwork:

Techniques are always done in movement, so it isn't enough for the hands and feet to move cleanly, you also need to have smooth footwork before all body segments can work together. When you can advance and retreat, dodge and turn, while keeping the line of movement, direction, and timing of each part of the body, and the angles and position of the set postures exactly as they need be, only then can you avoid the errors of losing your centre, tightening up, breathing tensely, and losing balance. For example, when doing *cannon punch*, if you hit and step at the same time, but turn the front foot in or out too much, then the waist and hip will be twisted, and your whole body will tense up and destabilize. If the rear hand blocks too high or too much to the side, then the shoulder could lift, causing the body to tilt. If the hands and feet aren't smooth this will cause problems with breathing. Classical texts make exactly this point, “If it isn't smooth outside then it isn't together inside.” From the very beginning you must try to be coordinated and smooth, keep the “three points” working together and the