



Nederlandse Federatie voor Krijgskunsten

Chinese Internal Martial Arts

Ji and Duan System

The NFK's Chinese Internal Martial Arts Domain

The Chinese Internal Martial Arts (CIMA) of Baguazhang, Taijiquan, Xingyiquan and Yiquan form a single training 'domain' at the NFK. From the third duan and up, progression in the CIMA focuses on the mastery of 'jin' and its applications. The underlying principles of these Martial Arts are based on the ancient Chinese health exercise Qigong¹ and it also makes them very suitable for health maintenance.

For centuries, Xingyiquan, Baguazhang and Taijiquan have been practiced by numerous Chinese martial artists and they are very efficient in training one's body and mind. Yiquan, which was created out of Xingyiquan, is the youngest of these martial arts and has developed into a very effective training system. The most distinguishing characteristic of Yiquan is its formlessness and efficiency in activating the body's power. It is very practical in self-defense applications.

As with most Chinese martial arts, the most prevalent problem is that there is no standard method on how to judge a student's level or proficiency during his or her training process, let alone on how to become a 'master' of the art. Traditionally, a student finds a martial arts school and falls under the tutelage of the teacher (the Master). After many years of training, the teacher will promote the student to 'master' status.

This is why lineage has become very important in the recognition of one's ability. Unfortunately, this system does not function well with our Western lifestyle in addition to lacking a systematic and verifiable method of training and evaluation. In the days of old, one's level of skill was determined by a 'boxing' match between two pugilists. The winner was the 'master' and the loser had to train harder. The master's favoritism of a student also played an important role in their progression.

The examination criteria of the NFK's CIMA department has been aligned to the other major martial arts styles, with the goal of professionalizing the training and examination process and to providing the practitioner with a clear path of progression in the CIMA system. The two main CIMA training goals are to:

- Provide the practitioner with a clear training path from the elementary to the advanced (Duan) levels.
- Ensure that the practitioner is well versed in the mastery of 'jin' and its applications.

¹ All high level Chinese Internal Martial Arts practitioners will have mastered Qigong techniques.



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General Prerequisites Ji System

The purpose of the Ji system is to help the practitioner in their growth and mastery of the Chinese Internal Martial Arts and to help prepare for the first Duan examination. The Ji examinations are performed by the head trainer of the school where the practitioner is a member of. No exam certificates will be issued. The head trainer will mark the Ji level off in the examinee's NFK passport.

In order to participate in a Ji examination, the practitioner must meet the following prerequisites:

- He or she is a member of the NFK and the school that he or she is a member of is also member of the NFK.
- He or she has read the NFK Chinese Internal Martial Arts Ethics and Standards document.
- There are no age requirements for Ji levels.
- The examinee is expected to have sufficient knowledge of all aspects of the style for the specific Ji level.
- The exam is either pass or fail. In the event of failure, the examinee can retake the exam no earlier than six months after the initial examination.
 - A failure in one section results in an overall failure. The examinee is only required to retake the failed portions of his or her exam.
 - Failure to pass the failed sections on the second try results in taking the entire exam over at a date no earlier than six months from the exam date.

In order to qualify for the first Duan examination, the examinee must have attained the first Ji grade at least one year prior to the first Duan examination date. It is possible to petition the Technical Committee for dispensation of this requirement if one has a duan (dan) in another martial arts style or if they have trained in the art for more than seven years. See the Duan section for more information.



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The Ji Levels

The Ji levels start at the 6th Ji and end with the 1st Ji, where the 6th Ji is the lowest level and the 1st Ji is the highest level. The examinee is to show their proficiency in the respective style, in accordance to the criteria listed below. The following applies to the four styles (Taijiquan, Baguazhang, Xingyiquan and Yiquan).

The Examination Standards of 6th Ji (Belt Color: White)

- He or she must accurately perform the following basic techniques in one the four styles:
 - Punching (with the fist)
 - Strikes (with the palm/open hand)
 - Kicks (two types)
 - Blocks (two types)
 - Yiquan Rooting for Health (Cheng Bao Zhuang)

The Examination Standards of 5th Ji (Belt Color: Yellow)

- He or she must accurately perform the following stepping techniques of one the four styles:
 - Stepping Drills
 - Xingyi Stepping
 - Bagua Circle Stepping
 - Taiji Cat Walking
 - Yiquan Mo Cha Bu

The Examination Standards of 4th Ji (Belt Color: Orange)

- He or she must accurately perform the following techniques of one of the four styles:
 - Xingyiquan (Five Elements)
 - Baguazhang (Palm Sets 1 and 2, left and right sides)
 - Taijiquan (six postures from a Taiji form)
 - Yiquan Rooting for Health
 - Yiquan Rooting for Self Defense (Hun Yuan Zhuang)

The Examination Standards of 3rd Ji (Belt Color: Green)

- He or she must accurately perform the following techniques of two the four styles:
 - Xingyiquan (12 Animal Forms)
 - Baguazhang (Palm Sets 1, 2, 3, and 4, left and right sides)
 - Taijiquan (twelve postures from a Taiji form)
 - Yiquan Rooting for Self Defense (Gou Gua Zhuang)

The Examination Standards of 2nd Ji (Belt Color: Blue)

- He or she must accurately perform the following techniques in two of the four styles:
 - Xingyiquan (Long Forms)
 - Baguazhang (Palm Sets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, left and right sides)
 - Taijiquan (eighteen postures from a Taiji form)
 - Yiquan Rooting for Self Defense (Tui Tuo Zhuang)

The Examination Standards of 1st Ji (Belt Color: Brown)

- He or she must accurately perform the following techniques of two of the four styles:
 - Xingyiquan (5 Element, 12 Animal and the Long Form)
 - Baguazhang (Palm Sets 1 through 8, left and right sides)
 - Taijiquan (twenty four postures from a Taiji form)
 - Yiquan force testing for self-defense (Shi Li)



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General Prerequisites Duan System

The purpose of the Duan examinations is to help the practitioner in their growth in the mastery of the Chinese Internal Martial Arts. Duan candidates are expected to attain mastery in Xingyiquan, Baguazhang, Taijiquan, and Yiquan.

In order to qualify for a Duan examination, the examinee must meet the following prerequisites:

- He or she is a member of the NFK and the school that he or she is a member of is also member of the NFK.
- He or she has submitted the 'Duan Examination Request' form before June 1st, at least 12 months prior to the examination date. Examinations are held each year at the end of June (actual date is determined by the Technical Committee). This form can be requested via email from the Technical Committee.
- Dispensation of the first Duan can be requested via email from the Technical Committee. The examinee is required to petition the Technical Committee stating his or her case for Dispensation. Dispensation is available if an individual has a Duan (Dan) in another martial art style or has seven or more years' experience and in the practice of either Taijiquan, Xingyiquan, Baguazhang or Yiquan.
- He or she has ready knowledge concerning the history, forms and stratagems of the style(s) practiced.
- He or she has had an initial briefing from the Technical Committee on how the exam will be conducted and what is expected of the examinee.
- He or she has read the NFK Chinese Internal Martial Arts Ethics and Standards document.
- He or she will wear a uniform as prescribed by their own school.
- He or she must be at least 17 years of age by the examination date.
- The exams are divided into the following seven sections:
 - Traditional Forms (Weapon Forms possible)
 - Yiquan rooting
 - Force testing of Yiquan
 - Cat walk or Mo Cha Bu in Yiquan
 - Fa Jin theory
 - Techniques and applications of Fa Jin²
 - Pushing hands
 - Sparring
- The examination committee can ask the examinee to perform all of the style's forms or a subset of them. The choice is at the committee's discretion. The examinee is expected to have knowledge of all aspects of the respective style.
- The exam is either pass or fail. In the event of failure, the examinee will confer with the examination committee on the next possible exam date.
 - A failure in one section results in an overall failure. The examinee is only required to retake the failed portions of his or her exam.
 - Failure to pass the failed sections on the second try results in taking the entire exam over at the next official exam date.

² The term Fa Li in Yiquan is interchangeable with the term Fa Jin from other three styles.



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The Lower-Level Duan

The Lower-Level Duan are the first, second and third Duan. The examinee is to show his or her proficiency in the style, in accordance with the sections stated below. The examinee must prove that he or she can defend one's self. The free-form defense routines should demonstrate the examinee's martial capabilities and his or her ability to deal with self-defense situations.

An examinee can request to take either the first, second or third duan exam if they have sufficient training experience and can meet all of the duan requirements listed below. The examinee can request a CIMA Duan Dispensation Request form if they have Duan (Dan) in another martial art or seven or more years of practice in one of the four styles. The Technical Committee will decide if the individual has sufficient background to take the exam.

The Examination Standards of 1st Duan (Belt Color: Bronze)

- He or she must accurately perform one of the following styles:
 - For Xingyiquan:
 - Five Element Fists
 - 12 Animal Form
 - For Baguazhang
 - Eight Palms Form (Left & Right sides)
 - For Taijiquan
 - 48 postures of any style
 - For Yiquan
 - Two kinds of Self Defense Rooting
 - Two kinds of force testing for Self Defense
- He or she must perform Fa Jin in fixed step
 - Straight punch and push with two hands
- He or she must perform pushing hands in fixed step with an opponent
- He or she must be able to correctly answer any theoretical or abstract question concerning a topic that relates to their style.

The Examination Standards of 2nd Duan (Belt Color: Bronze)

- He or she has obtained the 1st Duan for at least one year prior to the 2nd Duan examination date.
- He or she must accurately perform one of the following styles:
 - For Xingyiquan:
 - Five Element Fists
 - 12 Animal Form
 - Long Form
 - For Baguazhang
 - Eight Palms Form (Left & Right sides)
 - For Taijiquan
 - 48 postures of any style
 - For Yiquan
 - Four kinds of Self Defense Rooting
 - Four kinds of force testing for Self Defense
- He or she must perform Fa jin in moving step
 - Straight punch and push with two hands
 - Hook Strikes
- He or she must perform pushing hands in moving step with own opponent



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- He or she must be able to provide an answer to two theoretical or abstract question concerning a topic that relates to any aspect of the style.
- He or she must participate in the following sparring activities:
 - Two 30 second round against a single opponent
 - One 30 second round against two opponents

The Examination Standards of 3rd Duan (Belt Color: Bronze)

- He or she has obtained the 2nd Duan for at least one year prior to the 3rd Duan examination date.
- He or she must accurately perform the techniques listed in one of the following styles:
 - For Xingyiquan:
 - Five Element Fists
 - 12 Animal Form
 - Long Form
 - For Baguazhang
 - Eight Palms Form (Left & Right sides)
 - For Taijiquan
 - 48 postures of any style
 - For Yiquan
 - Six kinds of Self Defense Rooting
 - Six kinds of force testing for Self Defense
 - Weapons Form (this is an optional requirement and can be done in conjunction with one of the four styles)
 - Staff/Spear
 - Saber
 - Sword
- He or she must perform Fa jin in moving step
 - Straight punch and push
 - Hook strikes
 - Downwards punch
- He or she must perform pushing hands in moving step with own opponent
- He or she must be able to correctly answer any theoretical or abstract question concerning a topic that relates to their style
- He or she must participate in the following sparring activities:
 - Three 30 second round against a single opponent
 - Two 30 second round against two opponents



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The Mid-Level Duan

The Mid-Level Duan are the fourth, fifth and sixth Duan. The examinee is expected to show superior knowledge in Xingyiquan, Baguazhang, Taijiquan, Yiquan, and Qigong. Superior knowledge is to be understood as the actual application of Fa Jin in various forms of execution and the ability to explain the respective forms and their training purpose.

In addition to this, the examinee must have at least 10 years of teaching experience in four of the styles in order to qualify in taking any of the Mid-Level Duan exams.

The Examination Standards of 4th Duan (Belt Color: Silver)

- He or she has obtained the 3rd Duan for at least two years prior to the 4th Duan examination date.
- He or she must explain theoretically and demonstrate the following forms of Fa Jin from a fixed position:
 - Basic Fa jin: Pushing a solid standing sparring partner ³ with two hands away at least 2 meters without the partner feeling pain or being hurt. The feet of the partner must be lifted from the ground by at least 4 cm.
 - Striking Fa Jin (fixed step)
 - Punching
 - Straight
 - Cross
 - Kicking Fa Jin (both Knees & Feet)
- He or she must demonstrate proficiency in Pushing Hands while moving and stepping
- He or she must demonstrate the sufficient skill/knowledge of Yiquan
- He or she must demonstrate the sufficient skill/knowledge of Qigong
- He or she must be able to correctly answer any theoretical or abstract question concerning a topic that relates to their style

The Examination Standards of 5th Duan (Belt Color: Silver)

- He or she has obtained the 4th Duan for at least four years prior to the 5th Duan examination date.
- He or she must explain and demonstrate the following forms of Fa Jin from a fixed and moving step:
 - Basic Fa jin: Pushing a solid standing sparring partner ⁴ with two hands away at least 2 meters without the partner feeling pain or being hurt. The feet of the partner must be lifted from the ground by at least 4 cm.
 - Striking Fa Jin (Forward and Backward)
 - Punching
 - Straight
 - Cross
 - Hook
 - Palm (single hand)
 - Kicking Fa Jin (both Knees & Feet)
- He or she must demonstrate the application of Fa Jin with all of the above body parts.
- He or she must demonstrate exceptional proficiency in Pushing Hands, applying the pushing fa jin technique against the opponent through creating the opportunities
- He or she must demonstrate the advanced skill/knowledge of Yiquan
- He or she must demonstrate the advanced skill/knowledge of Qigong
- He or she must be able to correctly answer any theoretical or abstract question concerning a topic that relates to their style

³ Sparring partner is brought by the examinee and must be heavier weight (at least 6 kg) than the examinee.

⁴ Sparring partner is brought by the examinee and must be heavier weight (at least 8 kg) than the examinee.



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The Examination Standards of 6th Duan (Belt Color: Silver)

- He or she has obtained the 5th Duan for at least four years prior to the 6th Duan examination date.
- He or she must explain and demonstrate the following forms of Fa Jin from a fixed and moving positions:
 - Basic Fa jin: Pushing a solid standing sparring partner ⁵ with two hands away at least 2 meters without the partner feeling pain or being hurt. The feet of the partner must be lifted from the ground by at least 4 cm.
 - Striking Fa Jin (Forward and Backward)
 - Strikes
 - Straight
 - Cross
 - Downwards
 - Hook
 - Palms and Elbows
 - Kicking Fa Jin
 - Knees & Feet
- He or she must demonstrate the application of explosive Fa Jin with any striking body part
- He or she must show mastery of Pushing Hands from moving positions and can apply all the pushing hands techniques against the opponent
- He or she must demonstrate mastery of Yiquan
- He or she must demonstrate mastery of Qigong
- He or she must be able to correctly answer any theoretical or abstract question concerning a topic that relates to their style

⁵ Sparring partner is brought by the examinee and must be heavier weight (at least 12 kg) than the examinee.



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The Upper-Level Duan

The Upper-Level Duan are the seventh, eighth and ninth Duan. The examinee must have mastered both the technical application and the theory behind each of the three Chinese Internal Martial Arts and Yiquan. The nature of the exam is theoretical, but the examinee can be expected to demonstrate his or her point of view during the course of the examination.

In addition to this, the examinee must have at least 20 years of teaching experience in at least one of the four respective styles in order to qualify in taking any of the Upper-Level Duan exams.

The Examination Standards of 7th Duan (Belt Color: Gold)

- He or she has obtained the 6th Duan for at least five years prior to the 7th Duan examination date
- He or she must be at least 45 years of age prior to the 7th Duan examination date.
- He or she must show superior knowledge of all four styles in the following categories:
 - The knowledge of Jin, Yiquan and Qigong
 - Application of Fa Jin in its execution
 - Knowledge of the history of the styles
 - the ability to explain the forms and their applications
- He or she must have published at least two articles concerning one or more of the four styles in a Martial Arts journal, online blog or magazine
- The examinee must have published at least one video (available via DVD or internet) concerning one of the four styles.

The Examination Standards of 8th Duan (Belt Color: Gold)

- He or she has obtained the 7th Duan for at least seven years prior to the 8th Duan examination date.
- He or she must be at least 52 years of age prior to the 7th Duan examination date.
- He or she must show superior knowledge of all four styles in the following categories:
 - Application of Fa Jin, Yiquan and Qigong in its execution
 - Knowledge of the history of the styles
 - The ability to delineate forms and their meanings
- He or she must have published at least four articles concerning one or more of the four styles in a Martial Arts journal, online blog or magazine
- The examinee must have published at least two videos (available via DVD or internet) concerning two of the four styles.

The Examination Standards of 9th Duan (Belt Color: Gold)

- He or she has obtained the 8th Duan for at least eight years prior to the 9th Duan examination date
- He or she must be at least 60 years of age prior to the 8th Duan examination date.
- He or she must show superior knowledge of all four styles in the following categories:
 - Application of Fa Jin, Yiquan and Qigong in its execution
 - Knowledge of the history of the styles
 - The ability to explain the forms and their applications
- He or she must have published at least six articles concerning one or more of the four styles in a Martial Arts journal, online blog or magazine
- The examinee must have published at least four videos (available via DVD or internet) concerning all four of the styles.
- The examinee must have published a book on either Taijiquan, Yiquan and Qigong