Chair Tai Chi for Seniors

The eight-movement seated routine on one page

Sit on a sturdy chair with no wheels and no swivel, toward the front third of the seat, feet flat and hip-width apart. Breathe in as the arms rise or open, out as they lower or push. Never hold your breath. Move slowly — the slowness is the exercise.

Warm-up · 3 min
Settle the breath, shoulder rolls, neck turns, wrist and ankle circles

8 movements · 12–13 min
In the order below

Cool-down · 2 min
Hands on the lower abdomen, breathe, then stand slowly

#	MOVEMENT	WHAT TO DO	BREATH	REPS
1	**Opening Form** *Wuji*	Float both hands up to chest height, palms down, then let them sink.	In as the hands rise, out as they sink.	**6 times**
2	**Cloud Hands** *Yun Shou*	One hand at chest height, one at waist height. Turn gently from the waist, swapping the hands.	Steady and even.	**6 each side**
3	**Parting the Wild Horse's Mane** *Ye Ma Fen Zong*	Hold the ball, then open the arms apart on a diagonal, turning slightly from the waist. Change sides.	In as you gather, out as you open.	**6 each side**
4	**White Crane Spreads Wings** *Bai He Liang Chi*	One hand rises beside the temple, palm out, as the other lowers to the thigh. Then swap.	In as the hand lifts, out as it lowers.	**5 each side**
5	**Brush Knee and Push** *Lou Xi Ao Bu*	One hand sweeps above the thigh (not touching) while the other pushes slowly forward at shoulder height.	Out as you push forward.	**5 each side**
6	**Grasp the Sparrow's Tail** *Lan Que Wei*	Hold the ball. Roll the forearms forward as if pressing away, then draw them back in a slow circle.	In as you draw back, out as you press.	**6 times**
7	**Rising and Falling Hands**	Arms forward at waist height. Raise one as the other lowers, so the hands pass like a slow wave.	Slow and continuous.	**8 waves**
8	**Closing Form** *Shou Shi*	Arms out and up, then float down the centre line to rest on the lower abdomen.	In as the arms rise, out as they settle.	**3 times**

Stop straight away if you feel chest pain, sharp joint pain, breathlessness or dizziness. Educational guidance, not medical advice — check with a doctor before starting if you have a heart condition, uncontrolled blood pressure, recent surgery or a fracture, severe arthritis, dizziness, or a recent fall.

Four weeks to the full routine

Don’t learn all eight on day one. Practise on the days in the plan, rest on the others — rest days are part of the plan, and repeating a week is fine.

WEEK	DAYS	LENGTH	WHAT TO PRACTISE
Week 1 — Learn	3 days	10 min	Warm-up, Opening Form, Cloud Hands, Closing Form
Week 2 — Build	4 days	15 min	Add Parting the Wild Horse’s Mane and White Crane Spreads Wings
Week 3 — Expand	4 days	15–20 min	Add Brush Knee and Push, and Grasp the Sparrow’s Tail
Week 4 — Full routine	5 days	20 min	All eight movements, with the warm-up and cool-down

Setting up your chair

- A sturdy chair with no wheels and no swivel. A dining chair beats an armchair.
- Sit toward the front third of the seat, back upright.
- Feet flat and hip-width apart. If they don’t reach the floor, put a book under them.
- Make sure the chair can’t slide — on a rug, or against a wall.

Pace and breath

- Slow breaths of about four to six seconds.
- You should be able to hold a conversation the whole time. If you can’t, slow down rather than stop.
- Move only within a comfortable range.
- At the end, stand slowly and hold the chair for a moment before you walk.

Want to see every movement drawn?

The illustrated edition draws all eight movements frame by frame, with an arrow for where the hands travel — one movement to a page — plus the illustrated warm-up, five things to watch, a practice tracker, a quick-reference card and a large-print edition. 24 pages, US Letter and A4: **shop.elderlydaily.com/l/chair-tai-chi-seniors-illustrated**