

## The Stance Sequence: Horse-Kneel-Horse-Cross-Crane-Dragon-Arch-Cat-Back Cross-Horse

**Horse-**The horse is the first and last stance. This stance will be the foundation for all of the other movements you will find in Kung Fu. The feet are parallel, heel to toe. The knee stays between the ankle and the balls of the foot. The hip has a range from high to low. High Horse is when the hip is above the knee. Standard Horse is when the hip is lined up with the knee. Low Horse is when the hip is below the knee. The shoulders stay directly above the hips. This should keep the back in a straight line.

**Kneeling Stance-** This stance is to get under or duck under a high attack/block. The front foot stays in the same position as the horse, but the rear leg will tuck under the body with the heel pointing to the ceiling. The front knee will be in the same position as the horse. The rear knee should be directly under the torso. Hips and Shoulders have turned perpendicular to the position in the Horse. The stance looks like a lunge but is smaller than a lunge; it is more like plugging in a golf tee or picking up your keys by your feet. The back is straight shoulders over hips.

**Horse-** Same as above.

**Front Cross-** From Horse to Cross is here considered a forward movement. The rear leg steps in front of the lead/front leg and stops at a place shoulder width distance from the now rear foot. Both knees are bent to about 90\* with the rear foot touching the ground with only the balls of the foot. The front foot is completely on the ground. The shoulders and hips stay the same as they were in the horse and do not move.

**Crane-** This is a single leg stance the base leg is slightly bent at the knee. The back is straight and the shoulders line up with the hips. The foot that is in the air will point the toes to the ground. The base foot is completely on the ground. The Crane is for balance and preparing the hip for most of the kicks found in martial arts since they can be done from a crane. This is practice for "chambering" your hip before the kick is released. The Crane has two levels, knee and hip parallel, or knee above the hip.

**Dragon-** This is a one sided stance in that most of the body's weight is carried by one leg. The lead leg is straight and in front of the body the foot is completely on the ground. The rear leg is completely bent at the knee, hip, and ankle and the foot is also completely on the ground. The torso (hips to shoulders) is turned to the lead foot.

**Arch-** This is the opposite of the Dragon Stance. The front leg is bent like when in a Horse Stance. The rear leg is straight, but remember the toes of the rear leg point to the front. The torso (hips to shoulders) faces the front knee. The back is straight.

**Cat-** The best way to explain this is to think of tip toeing across a frozen river. The front foot is light and not completely touching the ground. The toes or balls of the foot are enough on the front foot. The leg in front is bent at the knee. The feet are shoulder width apart. The rear leg is also bent, the body's weight is mainly on the rear leg. The shoulders are over the hips and the back is straight. The torso (hips to shoulders) is facing the front knee.

**Back Cross-** Same as front cross except the rear foot moves behind the front foot.

**Horse-** Same as above.