

One Open, One Close — And Where The Knee Gets Hurt

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TLDR / 80-20

The whole posture is one opening and one closing — both hands reverse-coil to open, both forward-coil to close.

Everything else is placement. And the knee injury people blame on the move actually comes from failing to withdraw the hip first.

The Keys

1. The engine: a coiling pair, not a sequence of positions.

Turn left, right hand pierces up while the left turns down, **both in 逆缠 (counter-clockwise coiling)** — that is the open. Weight shifts left leg → right leg → back to left, then the left hand turns up and the right turns down, **both switching to 顺缠** — that is the close. "These are the opening and closing of Lazily Tying Coat." Two events, not eight.

2. The stepping rule, stated as a couplet.

"Right first when meeting left, left first when meeting right" — the body turns *before* the leg goes. The step itself is specific to Chen style: **toe raised and closing inward, heel's inner edge landing first**, then twisting the ground to slide out. He warns against opening the foot fully — without the inward close there is no closing jin, which should sit around 45°.

3. The injury mechanism, named exactly.

Most people squat down and let the knee travel over a vertical line while the hip stays put. "If the hip cannot relax well, it is easy to make this jin **prop up to the knee joint and cause joint hurt**." The order that fixes it: **hip withdraws backward first**, then the knees support an open crotch, then both knees pull apart as the hip sinks. The knee of the weighted leg must stay lined up over its own toe.

4. The finish is a cross-closing, and it is measured.

Relax and sink, middle finger leading the jin, right palm vertical to the ground, left hand coiling to the waist and resting on the hip. Weight settles **70% right, 30% left**. Shoulder closes with hip, elbow with knee, hand with foot — upper and lower body symmetrical, which he calls cross closing. "This Lazily Tying Coat is closing, actually."

AI's Take

Unusually good instructional source: slow, named coiling directions, explicit weight percentages, and a stated failure mode with its cause — not just "don't do that." The classical couplet opens it, then he drops straight into mechanics, which is the right order.

For your own work this is the standard against which your variation sits. Worth noting he never treats the posture as a shape to reach; he treats it as a coiling that happens to end somewhere.

One line to keep: **if a joint hurts in a stance, look one joint up the chain — the load is being parked there because something above it never moved.**