

Pressure Points (Vital Points) Basics

The information provided in this document is for reference only. Proper instructions for using pressure points must be learned only from a qualified instructor.

Pressure Points in Martial Arts

Pressure points (vital points) are used in a number of martial arts techniques and can provide significant advantage to the user if applied properly. These points can produce significant pain or other effects when struck or manipulated in a specific way. Martial artists often incorporate these points in their techniques to help subdue an opponent. Some major martial arts that include pressure point usage are Hapkido, Aikido, Jujutsu, Karate, Kyusho Jitsu, and certain styles of Kung Fu. While there are over 300 pressure points (acupoints - mainly for acupuncture use) located on the various meridians throughout the body, common martial arts techniques incorporate only about a third of them.

Pressure points can be categorized into several types based on the application and the effects produced by the points. The following sample selection of pressure points illustrates two of such types.

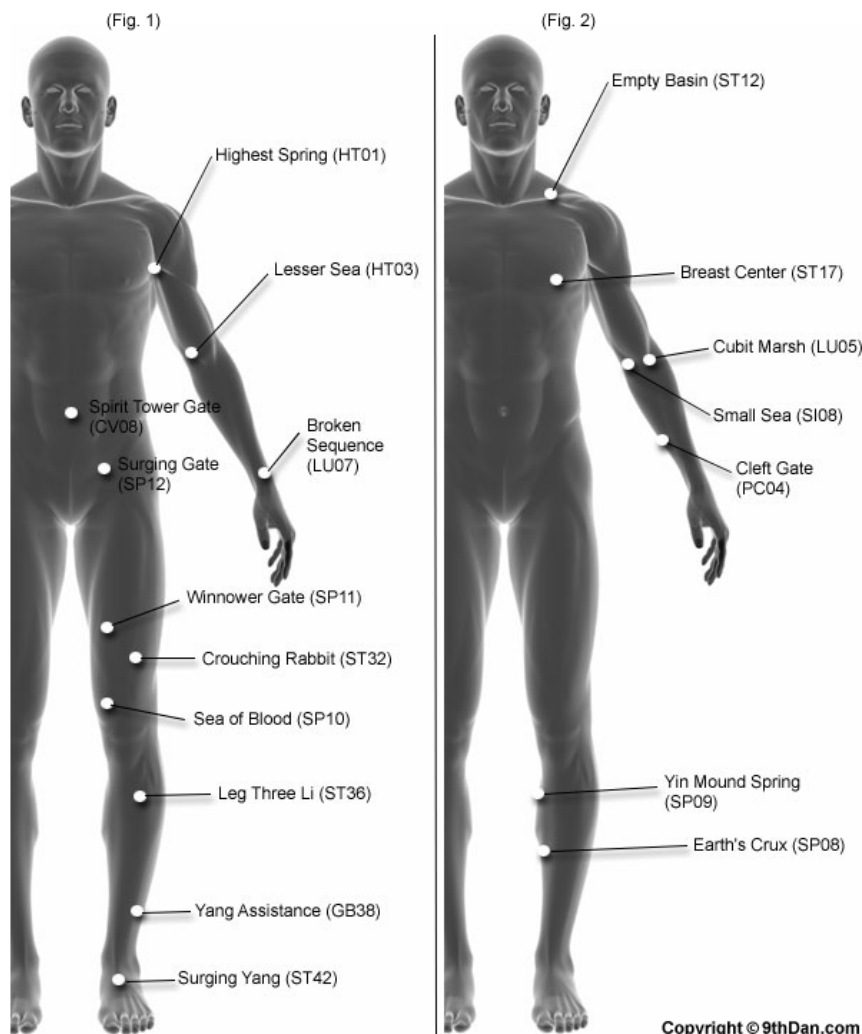


Figure 1 showcases a sample of points which may help immobilize an opponent when struck. These points may cause temporary paralysis in specific body parts, cause unconsciousness, or produce difficulty in breathing. Combining the use of these points and the proper techniques one can temporarily immobilize an attacker, providing an opportunity for the user to escape.

Figure 2 shows a sample of reflex points which may cause body parts (for example, muscle) to reflex, move, or react in certain ways that may be strategically beneficial. For example, manipulating certain pressure points on the forearm may reduce an attacker's grip, which may help in performing counter-attack techniques.

Meridians & Vessels

Meridians can be considered as energy paths connecting organs and the limbs. On the surface of these meridians there are accessible pressure points. There are 12 meridians located symmetrically on both sides (left and right) of the body.

Vessels are also energy paths connecting to the meridians but without a direct connection to any of the organs. There are only two vessels which have accessible pressure points.

The following is a list of meridians and vessels with accessible points. Please note that in martial arts not all of these points are used; in fact, only a fraction of them are commonly used.

Bladder Meridian (67 points)

Gallbladder Meridian (44 points)

Heart Meridian (9 points)

Kidney Meridian (27 points)

Large Intestine Meridian (20 points)

Liver Meridian (14 points)

Lung Meridian (11 points)

Pericardium Meridian (9 points)

Small Intestine Meridian (19 points)

Spleen Meridian (21 points)

Stomach Meridian (45 points)

Triple Warmer Meridian (23 points)

Conception Vessel (24 points)

Governing Vessel (28 points)

Using Pressure Points in Martial Arts

To effectively and accurately apply pressure points one must train with a well qualified master. Simply knowing the location of the points is only the beginning. One must understand the proper technique and reason for striking a particular point in order to yield effective result. Such knowledge can only be passed down to a student from a trained master – this is the only way to learn. Misusing pressure points not only yields unpredictable and ineffective results in your martial arts techniques, but also risks causing serious irreversible damage not intended by the user. Pressure point techniques must, and can only, be taught by a trained instructor.

New Reference Tool

For those already studying pressure points in their arts, 9thDan.com offers a new interactive pressure points reference application currently offered for the iPhone, iPod Touch, and iPad.



Martial Points is a convenient pressure point reference tool that allows user to locate commonly used pressure points in martial arts from an anatomically accurate 3D model or glossary list. Useful information for each point is provided along with the proper pronunciation of the point's name in either Korean or Chinese spoken by a native speaker.



Martial Points is currently available in both Korean and Chinese versions. Please go to <http://www.9thDan.com/site/Apps.html> for more details.