

Drawing on Chi

Seann Xenja

If I give a student one-fourth of what he should know, I expect him to get the other three-fourths himself, otherwise I do not want him as a student.

Confucius

Throughout Chinese history, teachers and scholars have followed the example of Confucius to varying degrees. Written information is presented incompletely, often with key parts left out. Over time, the student is expected to search out what he or she needs to know, thus supplementing the instruction of teachers and growing with the experience. This process of learning can be very frustrating for the Western mind. In Western society, information is disseminated quickly, systematically, and completely in a well-packaged form. Its methodology is based on facts, details, and scientific inquiry.

As a student of Feng Shui, you are faced with a unique challenge. If you approach the intuitive art of Feng Shui as a list of external or internal factors, you do not get very far. By trying to follow the traditional methods, you come up against a culture gap. Without clear, comprehensive guidelines, you begin to learn in bits and pieces and to practice in fits and starts. Often you know only a minimal portion of *how* and *what* and even less of *why*. But what appears as a frustration may, in fact, be a blessing. With no guidelines or rules, you become free to experiment, learn, practice, and most of all, to discover new ways to deepen your understanding of Feng Shui.



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Where do you start?

**The essentials of Feng Shui can be felt, perceived, noticed,
and most easily accessed through intuition.**

Getting to a place where you can feel and understand Feng Shui in your body¹ gives you the ability to always return there for the answers. Remember:

The essential truth is inside you.

The flow of Chi

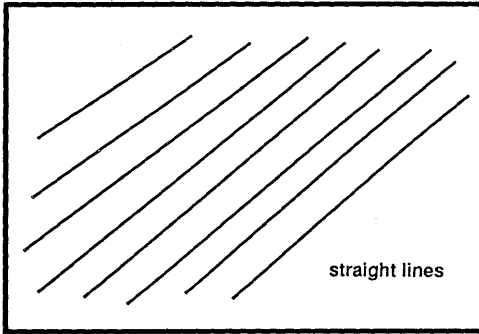
An appreciation of the all-pervasive nature and power of Chi ² is central to understanding Feng Shui. Chi underlies all life and all realms of existence. The more clearly you perceive the quality, flow, and interplay of personal and environmental Chi, the easier it is to practice Feng Shui. Chi can rise and fall, disperse, pool, or settle. Its flow can be fast, slow, or static. Cross currents of Chi can generate energetic patterns of conflict. Chi can be of the earth, the atmosphere, or of people. The quality of Chi is expressed through form, shape, color, or the feeling it generates.

To experience the spirit of Chi, you can use an approach that integrates your body, mind, and intuition. This method involves making a series of drawings. You will need five or six large sheets of paper, a crayon, a small mirror, and a round cut glass crystal.

Do not simply read these exercises. Do them! This is the interactive age, so let's see what the process reveals. Pick a spot where you can stand and draw with ease along with full body motion.

¹ Please refer to "Utilize All Your Resources," p. 189.

² Please refer to "The Power of Chi," p. 49.

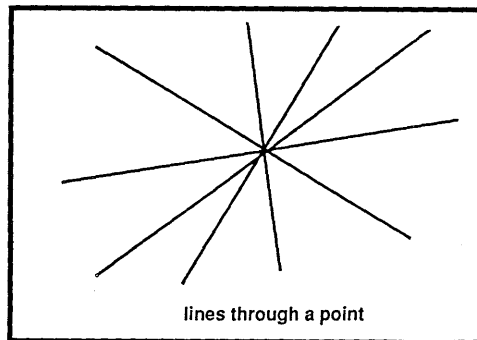


Start by drawing a straight line of Chi across your paper. Notice your feelings and sensations. Then draw a series of straight lines. These could be lines of Chi flowing down a long corridor or straight street.

The experience of freedom, acceleration, and purposeful direction is characteristic of this Chi flow pattern, which is so common in our modern world.

If your paper is filled, turn it over. Draw a point; this is, in its essence, a unique place on the time/space continuum.

Now draw a line through the point. Do you have trouble hitting it? As you get closer to the point, there is often a sensation of slowing down.

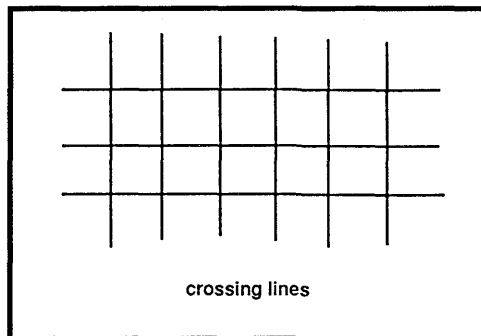


You may feel this sensation in your body near your navel. This is the Tai Chi of your body. As the line moves away, you may feel an increase of energy. Lines of Chi interact with the places they pass through.

Imagine this point as your house, and the line is a long stream of traffic coming toward you. This is when the mirror and crystal save the day. Hold the mirror so it touches the paper and faces the line just before it reaches your point. Looking in the mirror, you can see how that line is reflected away. Using the crystal instead of the mirror, place its bottom point on the line, and look through the top of the crystal. You can see the line split into many little

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lines that all go in separate directions. This is how a crystal works to redirect and disperse Chi. If you prefer an alternate solution, draw a wall, a row of trees, or a horse-shoe shaped path to redirect the flow. Remember that every point in time and space receives energy flowing to, through, and around it. The nature and quality of the various energies determine the outside influences on the site.

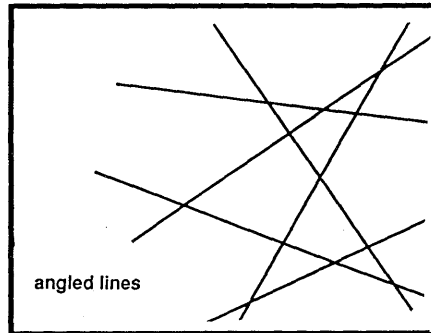


Lines of Chi can also cross and intersect. Starting with a new sheet of paper, draw a series of parallel straight lines. Then draw a second set of parallel lines at right angles to the first.

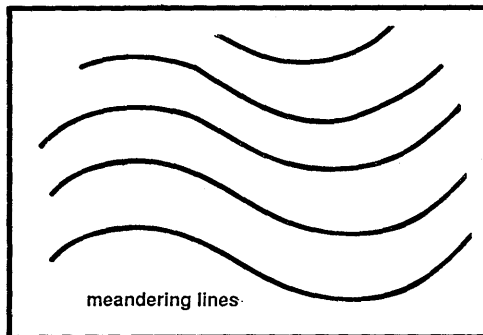
You have created a grid pattern similar to the layout of many cities, office buildings, and even the interiors of some homes. Again, notice your feelings and bodily sensations as the lines cross and the grid takes shape. Some people feel discomfort when creating the intersections while others may feel relief from the sense of order and control the grid gives them.

Crossing lines of Chi can generate conflict and friction. On busy streets, this energy is controlled by traffic lights and signs, which is not by any means a perfect system as car accident statistics and grid lock problems show. The resulting energy patterns affect the buildings and people located in and around these intersections. Similar energies occur within buildings when doors oppose each other or where hallways intersect. By holding your crystal over an intersection and looking through it, you can see why it is often chosen as an interior remedy to disperse potentially conflicting flows of Chi.

Angled lines are very common in modern design and have a unique effect. To experience the sensation they create, begin drawing a series of angled lines.



Notice how one or two send energy in new directions, but as the numbers increase, the resulting corners, shapes, and pattern complexity can quickly become overwhelming and unpleasant.



Keeping in mind that straight lines are rarely found in the natural world, discover the feeling of drawing curved or meandering lines. Begin by drawing a gently curved or wavy line.

This has a very soothing and calming effect. It is the natural form of a stream, river, or pleasant-feeling pathway. No mirrors or crystals are needed here.

Shape, Design, and Arrangement

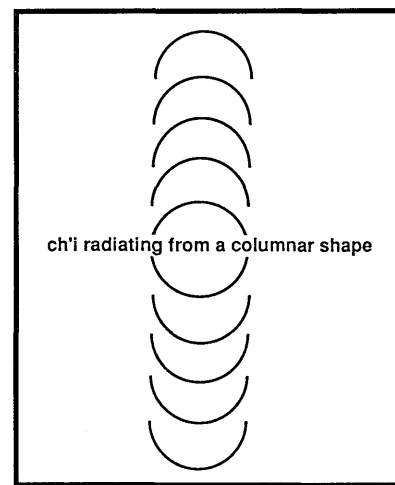
You can also approach the study of Feng Shui by examining the perceptual and psychological effects of shape, design, and arrangement. Physical conditions which result in unbalanced perceptions are often negatively manifested in your life. Having your back to a door, a split view, angled or blocking walls, and sloped ceilings can destabilize your nervous system. Odd or incomplete shapes can create a sense that something is missing. Mundane factors such as the first room you see when entering a home can have

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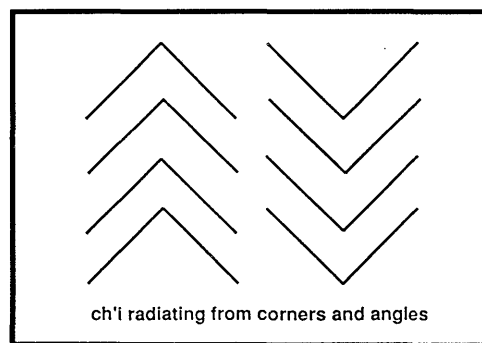
behavioral effects.³ The transcendental domain of ghosts, spirit, and thought energies also plays an important role.⁴

To give a sense of how some of these variables operate within the framework of Feng Shui, use the drawing tools again. Objects attract and radiate the same Chi as the shape they resemble or symbolize.⁵

Draw a columnar shape and sketch curved lines of Chi radiating off the curved surface. How do these lines feel when they are coming toward you? How do they feel when you draw them moving away from you? This is the same energetic condition found in such natural forms as trees or in man-made objects like round tables or walls with rounded corners.



Objects and forms with square, acute and, to a lesser degree, obtuse angles, create a completely different feeling.



Again, start with an angle corner, and draw lines of angled Chi. Draw them coming toward you. This is the classic cutting and dividing energy, and in Feng Shui, it is associated with a variety of ailments and problems.

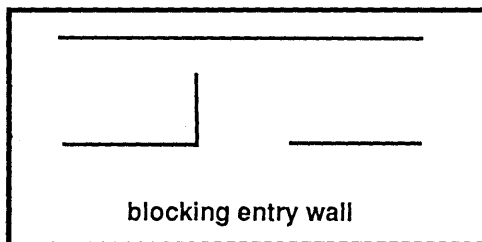
³ Please refer to "The Room of First Impression," p. 207.

⁴ Please refer to "The Bones of Your Home," p. 399.

⁵ Please refer to "The Five Phases of Energy," p. 81.

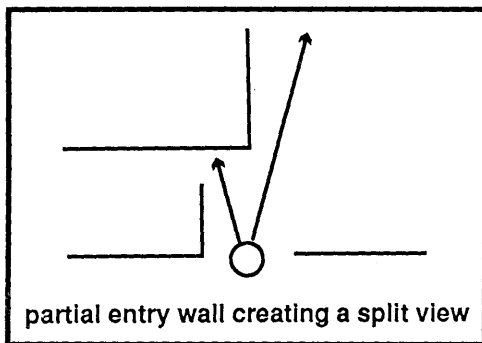
Wind chimes or strings of bells are often used to deflect or disperse this energy. Experiment with your crystal to discover⁶ its dispersing ability. Watch the ease with which a mirror reflects an equal set of angles to meet and cancel the negative of the original angles. Angled Chi drawn with the points heading away from you will have a very different feel than those which are drawn toward you.

Using Chi flow drawing techniques also allows you to experience the effects of wall and doorway alignment.



Draw a blocked entry, one with very little distance between the doorway and the first wall seen beyond the threshold.

Notice how the energy stops abruptly and then must change direction. No wonder people who have this problem in their home or office have trouble making progress. Now place the edge of your mirror on the line representing the blocking wall. Instantly you have twice as much space.



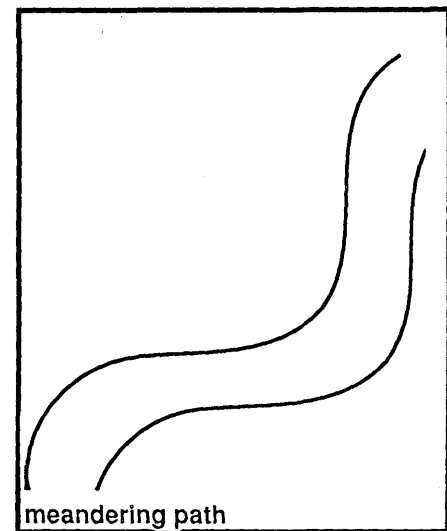
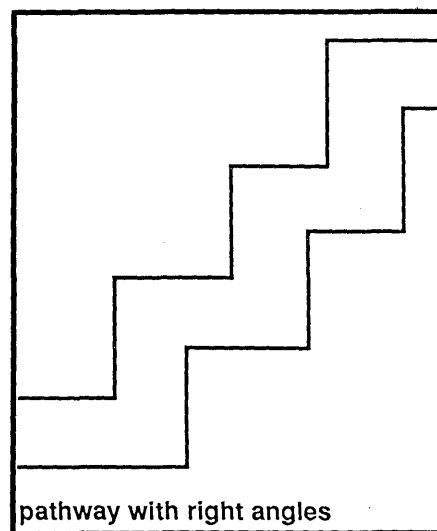
Another problematic configuration is an entry wall that obstructs part of the view of a room's interior. This arrangement creates a split view and causes an imbalance between the information received by the visual fields.

⁶ Dowsers have discovered that positive ions radiate off the pointed portion of an angled shape or wall corner and that negative ions or life enhancing energy radiate from the wide portion backward.

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Because the left and right portions of your visual field are processed respectively by the right and left halves of the brain, this condition can lead to mental destabilization. As with the blocking wall, see how your mirror can even out the depth of field.

To complete this section, draw two pathways, one with only straight and right-angled lines, and a second with gentle, meandering curves. Now trace the path of a person walking or of Chi flowing on the path. Which feels best for your journey through life?



I encourage you to use Chi flow drawing as a tool to help you analyze and understand the energy of life in its many forms of expression. By feeling the flow of Chi within your body, you can sense and determine problems and generate solutions without having to know Feng Shui rules or principles. After all, that is what the first Feng Shui practitioners did. They had no written language, no books, videos, or workshops - just Chi, people, the spirit of place, and the ability to discern and encourage the best ways for Chi to flow.

Excerpted from
The Feng Shui Anthology

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