

A new Tai Chi application: Catching a fly bare-handed

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Grandmaster Chen at Grand Canyon

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Many people practice [Tai Chi](#) for health and fitness purposes. Some practice it for cancer recovery or physical re-hab after surgery. Of course, there are die-hard martial artists just want to empower themselves with awesome Tai Chi fighting techniques. But if you are really good at the art, you can also catch a fly with your bare hand.

Recently, I was visiting [Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei](#) in his home in Los Angeles, California. The temperature was comfortable in high 60's. They left the sliding door open to enjoy fresh air and breeze. A fly got in and hovered over the delicious dishes that Simo (a common Chinese address for a teacher's wife) Chen just prepared. Without any fuss, Grandmaster stepped forward softly as he extended his right arm and waved it agilely and lightly. Then he looked at the fly and said it leisurely "I got it." I wasn't sure exactly what just happened. He raised his right fist and threw it down. As his fist opened, I saw a small black object hitting against the surface of the side table and heard a plop sound,

then saw the flyer bounced off the side table.

In *Tai Chi Mecca: Chenjiagou*, Mr. Cui Chun Dong wrote that legend has it that one of Grandmaster's Chen's ancestors was so skillful in Tai Chi that he could control a mosquito and did not allow it to fly away from his skin. He did it by sensing the mosquito's weight shifting and sinking his skin surface in the opposition direction as a mosquito was about to take off. In Tai Chi jargon, he "yielded" to the mosquito. This story might be a little bit far-fetched. But the 19th Chen Style lineage holder Chen Zhenglei's fly catching was no joke. So now you know what you can do with your superb Tai Chi skill once you develop it.

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SUGGESTED LINKS

- **Chen's Taichi For Health & Wellness by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei**
- **Chen's Tai Chi Old Frame One and Two by Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei**
- **Grandmaster Chen Zhenglei donated Tai Chi books and DVDs to Pacific Asia Museum**
- **Standardization of Tai Chi teaching**
- **Are you practicing Taichi Chuan or Taichi Cao?**



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