

## The Eight Trigrams and their Correspondences

<i>Trigram</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Related Phase</i>	<i>Qímài</i>	<i>Function</i>	<i>Master Point</i>
<b>Gèn:</b> mountain	stillness	hard Earth	yīn wéi mài	unifying self	Pericardium 6
<b>Zhèn:</b> thunder	arousal/action	hard Wood	yáng wéi mài	synchronizing	Triple Heater 5
<b>Xùn:</b> wind	yielding/gentle	soft Wood	dài mài	limiting	Gall Bladder 41
<b>Lì:</b> fire	join/gather/cling	Fire	rèn mài	take on, admit	Lung 7
<b>Kūn:</b> earth	respond/sustain	soft Earth	yīn qiāo mài	supporting	Kidney 6
<b>Dùì:</b> lake	exchange/reflect	soft Metal	dū mài	supervising	Sm. Intestine 3
<b>Qián:</b> heaven	transform/create	hard Metal	chōng mài	permeating	Spleen 4
<b>Kǎn:</b> water	unknown/caution	Water	yáng qiāo mài	stepping out	Bladder 62

Traditional texts describe correlations between the earthly five phases and the heavenly eight trigrams. This is achieved by dividing three of the phases into their yīn (or “soft”) and yáng (or “hard”) complements while water and fire remain undivided (being primarily yīn or yáng already). Other authors have proposed a one-to-one correlation between the five phases and five of the trigrams (zhèn/wood, lì/fire, kūn/earth, dùì/metal, kǎn/water) while the remaining three trigrams represent those unique activities needed for all aspects of mindful manifestation (gèn/stillness, xùn/gentleness, qián/breathing). Either way, the universal influences of the trigrams tend to affect and be affected by related earthly five-phase forms; in the body this occurs through the extraordinary vessels. These associations cannot be viewed as exclusive relationships, however, as the trigrams cover broad issues spanning and uniting multiple phases.

**Earth:** Hard types of Earth are mountains, rocks, and pebbles. Mountains suggest solidity, stability, and grounding. This enables and is enabled by forthrightness in all relations. Soft types of Earth are soil, sand, and mud. The fertile soil shepherds things upward and outward into the world and supports their presence.

**Wood:** The yīn aspect of Wood is the yielding quality of twigs and branches, swaying with the wind rather than fighting it. This quality is enabled by knowing one’s personal boundaries, and enables easy flow through the personal space of others. The yáng aspect of Wood is that ability of all things to spring forth and manifest themselves. This requires synchronization with the other phenomena in one’s context of manifestation, which in turn requires outward communication.

**Fire:** This is predominantly a yáng phase. The light of one’s conscious awareness (shén) attracts others to its flame, bringing beings together for companionship, sharing, learning, and creative endeavors. This flame can consume others, however, if the relationship involves clinging or possessiveness.

**Metal:** The yīn aspects of Metal are its ability to reflect the truth (both to oneself and to others), its ability to exchange passively with the outside world (the way iron exchanges oxygen and carbon dioxide), and its malleability (enabling flexible expression while maintaining personal truth). These attributes enable and are enabled by diversity in one’s relations with an eye to selecting the most appropriate path. The yáng aspects of Metal are exemplified by crystals and gemstones, often described as the most condensed earthly form of universal heavenly energies. Crystals have been revered for generations as conduits for spiritual transformation and healing, able to convert ethereal energies into something usable in the physical realm. Texts on crystal healing state that when one is permeated by universal energies channeled through crystals, and applies them to personal transformation, one is in turn able to synthesize and emanate creative energy. In physics crystals are known as transducers, able to change mechanical energy into electrical energy (piezoelectric effect) and able to generate an electrical potential when heated or cooled (pyroelectric effect). Both these effects are exhibited in bone, a connective tissue made hard by hydroxyapatite crystals (primarily calcium phosphate). Applied to qián, the transduction capacity of “hard” Metal enables the conversion of universal influences into something which can then be used for personal transformation and creativity.

**Water:** This is predominantly a yīn phase, though in this context relates to movement. Water fills everything it comes across before continuing its onward flow. It also carries

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the qualities and influences of where it's been to where it's going. This is necessary for one to move on in the cycle of co-creative transformation, enabling and enabled by new experience.