

Wushu

Wushu, known abroad as kung fu or martial arts, has been practiced for several thousand years by Chinese people for physical training and self-defense.

In ancient times, it was also used in medicine. The famous surgeon Hua Tuo, who lived in the period of the Three Kingdoms, designed the *wuqinxi* (five-animal exercises) for curing diseases and for physical training, which have been handed down to the present day.

As *wushu* builds strong bodies, strengthens the willpower and gives training in fighting skills, it is still immensely popular in China. This unique Chinese national sport has also aroused interest among foreigners and is taught in many countries throughout the world.

Traditionally, a *wushu* school was named after its founder or the region, mountain, or river where it originated or developed, or according to its technical features.

Wushu are practiced in various types of set exercises, either barehanded or with weapons, based on movements employed in fighting, such as kicking, striking, throwing, and catching, etc.

Today *wushu* generally falls into five categories: *quanshu* (barehanded exercises), *qixie* (exercises with weapons), *duilian* (dual combats), or group performances, and combat using offensive and defensive skills.