

## e-lesson: Schools of Feng Shui

### Feng Shui--Schools, Systems, and Formulas

Feng Shui, (pronounced *fung shway*), literally means wind/water and is the Taoist art of living in harmony with the environment. The ancient Chinese people have relied on feng shui for urban development, building homes, city-planning, temples, and even to bury the dead. In our modern world, feng shui is practiced as a sophisticated science in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Taiwan and is part of everyday life. The business community consults a feng shui master prior to selecting an office, business location or even a business venture/investment. Homeowners rely on feng shui to find the optimum site to build or find a new home in order to ensure family health and prosperity. Feng shui was introduced to the Western world about 25 years ago. Now architects, real estate agents, interior designers and homeowners are interested in feng shui. Since the body of knowledge is extensive, Feng Shui has become very confusing to many, even for those who are well-read on the subject. There are currently over 300 published books on Feng Shui (*feng shui is one of the five major categories of Chinese metaphysics*), thousands of websites and hundreds of Feng Shui courses offered on the market. The popularity and resurgence of this ancient practice has also produced the over-night experts, the charlatans, and even self-proclaimed Feng Shui "Masters".

The mass amount of information on the subject of Feng Shui does not however make the enthusiasts clear, quite the contrary. It is the purpose of this tutorial to introduce the reader to the schools and various formulas used by a genuine feng shui master or practitioner. There are essentially only two major "Schools" or "Universities" of Feng Shui; **San He** (*Three Harmonies*) and **San Yuan** (*Three Cycles*), everything else in the practice of Feng Shui falls under their auspices and we will discuss a large portion of them; however this article is by no means exhaustive. The following are some of the **basic tools** the feng shui master or student should have extensive understanding and knowledge of: the Yin and Yang/Tai Chi principle, the Eight Trigrams/Guas, the Cosmic Trinity, the code of the He Tu (*"river map"*) the Lo Shu (*"magic square of 9"; the "nine palaces"; "ming tang"*), the Five Element Theory (*Wu Xing, and its three cycles*), the Heavenly Stems/Earthly Branches



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- 1) Denise in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, graduating Mastery-Level with the Yap Cheng Hai Feng Shui School of Excellence, September, 2001.
- 2) Chinese symbols for Feng Shui (Wind/Water).



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## The Method of Assessing Landform--San He

The ancients became masters at observing and interpreting the landscape and the effect it had on human fortune. They studied all forms and shapes of the environment, the rivers, streams, mountains, and so forth. Poetic ways of describing certain areas of the external environment brought about the Celestial animals.

(*Ganzhi system*), the 24 mountains (“mountain circle” or directions), the twelve phases of growth/birth, (*essential for application of water formulas*), how to use a Lo P’an, the Early Heaven Ba Gua (*Xien Tien or Fu Xi*), and the Later Heaven Ba Gua (*Ho Tien or the Wen Wang*). Please refer to other tutorials on these subjects within this website for more information.

### Form School

There is really no such thing as “Form School” per se; this is a term that was made popular by a famous Feng Shui author. This method of assessing the landforms, specifically the water/mountain relationship, falls under the San He System. Observing the environment is one of the oldest methods of feng shui practiced, dating back thousands of years to when Feng Shui was in its infancy and known as K’an Yu. The ancients became masters at observing and interpreting the landscape and the effect it had on human fortune. They studied all forms and shapes of the environment, the rivers, streams, mountains, and so forth. Poetic ways of describing certain areas of the external environment brought about the Celestial animals— the White Tiger (the West or the right-hand side), the Green Dragon (East direction or the left-hand side), the Black Tortoise (North or the back), the Red/Crimson Phoenix (the South direction or the front) and the center is always occupied by the Yellow Dragon. The early practice of K’an Yu also incorporated the use of the Five Elements (Wu Xing) and the principles Yin and Yang. All classical Feng Shui schools use the analysis of “forms” as part of the Feng Shui design/diagnostic.

### Compass School

This is yet another term that does not truly relate to a “School” of Feng Shui. The use of a compass or Chinese Lo P’an is the quintessential tool of any genuine Feng Shui Master or practitioner. All authentic and traditional schools of Feng Shui use a compass or Lo P’an to perform assessments. The technology of the compass was invented by the Chinese during the Chou dynasty, and later it was developed into a complicated and intricate tool known as the Lo P’an used by Feng Shui Masters. This beautiful instrument may contain as many as 36 rings, each ring containing formulae used to



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assess and adjust the Feng Shui. There are specific “rings” used to measure water (known as the *heaven* plate), mountains (known as the *human* plate) and buildings (known as the *earth* plate). As Feng Shui developed over hundreds of years, it gained considerable complexity, and often Feng Shui Masters were among the Scholars and Sages of their day. There are three main types of Lo P’ans used by masters/practitioners today—the **San He Lo P’an**, the **San Yüan Lo P’an** and combination of the two known as the **Chung He Lo P’an**. A feng shui master would eventually design his own Lo P’an containing his “secrets” to pass on to his filial students.

#### **The Eight Mansions (Pa Chai, also known as the East/West System)**

Eight Mansions or Pa Chai falls under the San He School. There are two popular methods of Eight Mansions—one from the classic text “*Kam Kwong Dou Lam King*” and one from “*Ba Zhai Ming Jing*” (Eight House Bright Mirror). The Eight Mansions use the Life Gua formula to determine favorable and unfavorable directions for every person. Other important Pa Chai considerations are given to door location, door direction, stove location, toilet placement, location of staircases, and the house/building orientation. There is also advanced Pa Chai methods that assist in fine tuning the Feng Shui for people in the same household that are from different groups.

#### **San Yüan (Three Cycles) and the Flying Stars**

San Yuan is one of the two major “Universities” or Schools of Feng Shui and has many sub-sectors that fall under its umbrella. Xuan Kong (“mysterious subtleties,” “time and space”) is a division of the San Yüan “University”. **Xuan Kong Fey Xing** is one the most recognized of the San Yüan systems, often referred to simply as Flying Stars. Flying Stars is one of the techniques used to take into account the time dimension aspect of Feng Shui. This method relates to the changing forces during different periods of time. Flying Stars is the process of extracting information from the intangible influences of the numbers and combination of numbers of the magic Lo Shu square or nine palaces. Flying Stars explains why no structure will forever enjoys good or bad Feng Shui as it cycles through time. Each building or structure will have a Natal Flying Star Chart, and there are special

## Use of Compass, or Lo P’an

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- 3) Peaceful environment in China.
- 4) A Luo pan is always used by a professional feng shui master or practitioner.
- 5) Detailed rings of Luo pan.

## San He (San Hur) Three Harmonies

This system is used for and has applications for large-scale feng shui projects, such as a Master-planned community, city planning, high-rises, hotels, resorts, airports, hospitals and so forth. It has the technology of considering the macro-level view of the project and the best placement of; the dragon (mountain), the land (topography), and the water (real or virtual) in relation to each other—thus its name the “three harmonies.”

Flying Star charts for buildings that can be exceptionally auspicious. They are the **Pearl String Formation** (*Lin Cu San Poon Gua*), the **Combination of 10** (*two formations—one good for money, the other good for people*), and the **Parent String Formation** (*Fu Mo San Poon Gua*). Other techniques such as the **Tsing San, Ling San** (*proper location of water aka as Direct Spirit and Indirect Spirit*), and the **Castle Gate Theory** (*Sent Mun Kuet*) are used to tap the energy of a natural body of water for greater prosperity.

Also under the San Yuan, are the **Zi Bai** (Purple-White Flying Stars), the **Xuan Kong Da Gua** (Big 64 Hexagrams Method), **Xuan Kong Shui Fa** (Time-Space Water Method) and the **San Yuan Dragon Gate Eight** (*Long Men Ba Da Ju*) method. Formulas such as **Robbery Mountain Sha** (*Chor San Kibb Sart*), the **Three Killings** (*Sam Sart*), the **Great Sun Position** (*Tai Yang Dou San Pan*), the **Tai Sui** (Grand Duke) and the **Sui Po** (Year Breaker), the calculation of the daily, monthly and yearly “stars” are other techniques used to assess the Feng Shui, all part of the San Yuan School.


### San He (Three Harmonies)

San He (*pronounced San Hur and also known as San Hup*) is one the major Feng Shui Schools. This system is used for and has applications for large-scale feng shui projects, such as a Master-planned community, city planning, high-rises, hotels, resorts, airports, hospitals and so forth. It has the technology of considering the macro-level view of the project and the best placement of; the dragon (mountain), the land (topography), and the water (real or virtual) in relation to each other—thus its name the “three harmonies.” These considerations are paramount before the feng shui “micro-engineering” is designed into the buildings.

The San He School of Feng Shui has extensive systems and formulas—several to assess formations for disaster and others to bring wealth and good luck. For example the **Peach Blossom Sha Formation** (bad romance & illicit affairs), **Eight Roads of Destruction** (*Pa Loo Hwang Chuen, disasters*), **Eight Killing Forces** (*Pa Sha Hwang Chuen, adverse affect on health, money and romance*). Other formulas like the **Five Ghost Carry Treasure** (*a well-guarded secret from Taiwan*) and **Three Door Harmony** are used to attract wealth. The famous **Water Dragon Formulas** fall under this School.

### Water Dragon Feng Shui

Famous Feng Shui author, Lillian Too, first brought public awareness to the water dragon methods with her book “**Water Feng Shui for Wealth—An Advanced Manual on Water Feng Shui Based on the Water Dragon Classic**,” published in 1995. This book, unfortunately, has omitted the most significant aspect of the water formulas—the water **exit** degrees. It is not recommended to use this book to create a water dragon as it could bring extremely



undesirable results. There are many ancient texts on water formulas and water castle formulas, although the Water Dragon Classics is one of the most respected and well-known. Water dragons are created to bring extreme wealth to the recipient, in Feng Shui water *equals* money. Water Dragons must have the correct directional flow (right to left or left to right depending on the door direction), it must be seen from the front door/entrance and must have the exact exit degree in order to attract wealth. Otherwise, the improper placement of water or the incorrect implementation of a water dragon can bring disaster. Both major schools, San Yuan and the San He, have numerous wealth-producing water formulas.

### **Black Hat Sect (BHS or BSTB)**

This method of Feng Shui was developed and brought over to America by Professor Thomas Lin Yun, a Tibetan monk about 25 years ago. Professor Lin Yun created this simplified version of Feng Shui with a mixture Tibetan Buddhism. He took the Ho Tien or Wen Wang Ba Gua (Later Heaven) and created the “Eight Life Stations.” He proposed that these “life stations” are that the North (Kan trigram) is the Career Area, the South (Li trigram) is the Fame Area, the South-west (Kun trigram) is the Marriage Area, and so forth. This interpretation of Feng Shui rapidly gained the attention and appeal of the Western World. The concepts were easy to grasp, it had a spiritual slant, and no real study was needed to put it into practice. A compass or Luo Pan is not used and all structures are oriented to the North. This system does not belong to either the San He or the San Yuan School and is not recognized as valid or authentic Feng Shui, but rather considered a New Age practice. To date, it has a huge, loyal following all over the world.

### **Western Feng Shui**

There are many other schools derived from the roots of The Black Hat Sect—with some minor changes. These schools also use the Eight Life Stations or Eight Life Aspirations. Many of Professor Yun’s students are writing books and becoming very famous, all repeating this over-simplified version of Feng Shui. None of these Western Schools are considered authentic by the Masters of the Far East, and is deemed to be more aligned with a New Age spiritual practice than Feng Shui.

Black Hat Sect and the various schools of Western Feng Shui were, until the last 4 years or so, the most practiced and recognized Feng Shui in the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe. Now some of these famous authors and teaches can be seen in classes around the world learning genuine, Classical Feng Shui. Public awareness has risen to the level that if they wanted to retain their status as Feng Shui “experts” they should learn to use the Luo Pan and study the complex formulas of the San He and San Yuan Schools.

## Lillian Too brought public awareness to Water Dragons Method

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## 6) Chinese Calendar

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### Intuitive Feng Shui

William Spear was the first to make Intuitive Feng Shui popular and coined the phrase. There again, this is not classical Feng Shui. A humans we all use our intuition to assist us in whatever we have studied and learned—this adds dimension to our knowledge. Feng Shui requires years of study and practice, to simply “intuit” someone’s home/office without a real understanding of authentic Feng Shui principles can be irresponsible.

### Practices Used in Conjunction with Feng Shui

Dowsing, Bau-biologie, Space Clearing, Clearing Clutter, The Four Pillars of Destiny (Chinese Astrology, aka Ba Zi), Nine Star Ki, (Japanese Astrology), Creating a Sacred Space, Zi Wei Dou Shu (Chinese Astrology) are often mistaken for Feng Shui. These are all acceptable things to use in conjunction with feng shui if you wish, but do not confuse them with Feng Shui. They are separate practices all together. And they are not necessary to Classical Feng Shui.

### Feng Shui for the Modern World

Feng Shui has enjoyed some serious media attention for the last few years, being featured on prime time TV programs and premier tabloids and it seems that the interest in this fascinating subject has not waned. For the first time ever, Feng Shui Masters around the world are now offering classes for those who wish to devote serious amounts of time to its study. This once secret knowledge is now being revealed, as in the ancient tradition—from Master to student.



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