

Traditional Thai Massage



Thai massage is a great way to relax. It is a wonderful thing to share with a friend. Like *shiatsu*, Chinese and Korean massage, Thai massage moves energy. Thai massage works with 10 “meridians” (energy lines [*sen*]) through the body. It is a strong massage. Some people say it is almost like “yoga for lazy people”. The person doing the massage does the work.

You will read about Thai massage. Then you’ll have a chance to try it.

Words you’ll need.

Client – your partner. The one you are massaging.

rotate – move in a circle.

Body parts:

Knee – the middle of the leg (*hi-za*)

Ankle – the joint (connection) of the foot to the leg.

Calf – the leg, between the knee and ankle.

Thigh – the leg, between the knee and the groin.

Groin – the place your 2 legs meet.

Butt – *the part of your body you sit on (often called “hip” in Japanese but that isn’t correct in English)*

Palm – bottom of the hand

Wrist – joint (connection) between the hand and the arm

Forearm – arm between wrist and elbow. (fore= front (as in before))

Things to remember.

- Keep a slow, steady, peaceful rhythm.
- Check the strength with your client. Ask: *Stronger, Too strong, Is this OK?*
Be strong but **don’t hurt your client** and **don’t hurt yourself**.
- Do **NOT** massage the knees. That takes special training.
- Always start with a prayer. Put your hand together Thai style. Pray for your client’s health.
- The clients start on their back. With a women, start with the left foot. With a man, start with the right foot.

Massage techniques:

- **Butterfly** – Both hands open. Touch wrists.

They look like a butterfly. Push strongly.

- **Palm press** – Push with your whole hand.

Fingers are relaxed.

- **Thumb press.** – Push with the thumbs (biggest fingers)

- **Walk** – Imagine your hands and fingers are feet. “Walk” with them, push left, then right, then left, etc. Move forward or back each time.

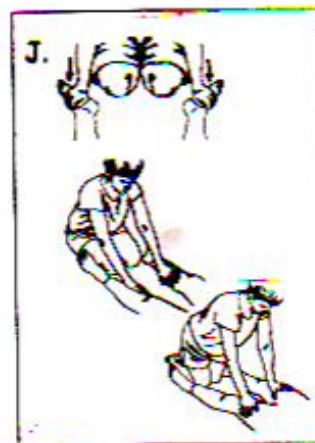


butterfly

**Cut out the pictures. Read the steps.
Match the pictures to the descriptions.**

1. Warm up the feet/ walk up the legs.

1. Do strong palm presses on the bottoms of the feet: left – right – left – right – left – right – etc.
2. Slowly do palm presses up the client's legs. It is like your hands are "walking" up the legs. Use your full body weight. Use a slow, gentle rhythm. This rhythm makes your client calm.
3. "Walk" back down the legs.



2. Working the feet.

1. Do thumb presses on the six points on the bottom of the foot. Push both feet at the same time. Push each point about five seconds. Use the flat part of your thumb, not the point. Press the tops of the feet. Stretch them.
2. Do "thumb circles" on the lines on the top of the feet.
3. Work the other five points on the bottom of the foot.
4. Put the foot over your knee. Rotate the foot five times in each direction.

3. Working the legs

22 1,2

1. Sit facing the legs. Start with the leg far from you.
2. Do palm presses from the ankle to the groin
3. There are three lines on the inside of the leg. Do "walking thumb presses" from the ankle to the groin. Go back down the leg with palm presses.
4. Do this with all three lines.
5. There are 3 lines on the outside of the leg. Do the same massage technique on the outside. Use your fingers instead of your thumb.

4. Working the calf and thigh

1. Bend the clients knee. Hold the knee straight up.
2. Do butterfly presses from above the knee to the groin. Then go back.
3. Stretch the thigh by pulling it toward you.
4. Put your fingers on the back of the calf. "Walk" down the calf, then back.
5. Do this with the other leg.

5.Circle the hip and jackknife

1. You sit with one knee and the other foot on the floor. Put the client's foot inside your leg.
2. Make large, gentle circles with the client's foot and leg. Go three times each way.
3. Slowly push the knee toward the chest.

6. More footwork.

1. The client's foot is placed just above the knee of the other leg.
2. Stand up. Lift the other straight up. Gentle push the leg forward to stretch the client's body.
3. Work the six points of the foot with your elbow. Press each about five seconds.

7. Working the arms and hands

1. Palm press from the wrist to the shoulder and back.
2. Press the six points of the hand. You are pressing the palm and the back at the same time.
3. Turn the hand over. Do circles on the back of the hand.
4. Gently, pull each finger back. It looks like the hand position of a Thai dancer.

8. Working the back.

1. Have the client lie on her side.
2. Palm walk along the back bone, from the waist to the neck. Then go back. Do this three times.
3. Put your feet on her back. Pull the arm.
4. Thumb walk the back (as in step 2). Do this three times.
5. Have the client lie on the other side. Do 1-4 again.

9. The back and the neck.

1. Have the client lie face down with feet in the air.
2. Sit on the feet. Do palm presses from the waist to the neck and back. Repeat a few times.
3. Do finger presses on the shoulder a few times.
These should be strong. Ask your client if they are too strong, too soft or OK.

10. The Cobra

1. Do palm presses up the back, then down the arms.
2. Hold the client's wrist. The client holds your wrist, too.
3. Gently put your knees on the client's butt. Pull her arms so you lift her head and chest.

11. Cross leg push and pull.

1. The client is on their back.
2. Cross the legs. Push them to the chest.
3. Put the client's crossed legs against your calf.
4. Hold the client's wrists. The client holds your wrists, too.
5. Slowly lift the client. Do this three times.

12. Shoulder and neck press.

1. The client sits with crossed legs.
2. Press down on the shoulders with your palms.
3. Do the same with your thumbs. Ask the client if it is too strong, too soft or OK.
4. "Iron the neck" by rolling your forearm across it.
5. Repeat step 4 on the other side.

13. Chop and finish.

1. The client is still sitting.
2. Put your hands in a "prayer" position.
3. Chop along the head, shoulders, neck and upper back. (Do NOT touch the backbone.)
4. Say a prayer for your client's health.

Adapted from *The Thai Massage Workbook* By Kay Rynerson.
Illustrated by Kim Reading.