



11v11 Formation & Tactics

Category: Tactical: Functional

Difficulty: Moderate

Gordon Ferguson, Blaine, United States of America

Description

11v11 Formations

It is important to remember that your team's formation is ultimately a starting point for how your teams wants to defend and the natural options you want to provide your team in the attack. Teams playing the same formation can look and operate entirely differently based upon their team's style of play (high press or defending in a low block or building out of the back in a patient possession oriented way or playing direct and looking to get in behind immediately) and also the individual qualities of the players on the team.

Not every team or every player has the capability to perform in the same manner and your formation and tactics can change within your team based on when you sub.

As you determine the best formation for your team it is important to gauge:

- The traits of your players and put them in the best positions to be successful. Determine the quality of your defenders to understand how much cover they need in the back and how aggressive you can be with your pressing and keeping playing forwards.
- Determine how you believe your team will be able to best successfully defend as a group (high pressure, low block, where to create your line of confrontation) and how you should utilize a formation that supports it.
- Determine how your team can be most successful attacking. Do you have more natural wide players, do you have two strong central forwards who need to be on the field in that spot, or is your team going to be built around central midfielders controlling the game with shorter passing through the middle.

When determining your formation remember to teach your team how the principles (team defending and attacking) move and work in your formation and that your players and team will change as the season progresses so your formation can be fluid and change with their abilities.

Here are what the numbers represent on the field:

- 1– Goalkeeper
- 2– Right Fullback
- 3– Left Fullback
- 4– Center Back
- 5– Center Back
- 6– Holding Midfielder
- 7– Right Midfielder/Winger
- 8– Box-to-Box Midfielder
- 9– Striker
- 10– Attacking Midfielder/Playmaker
- 11– Left Midfielder/Wingers

4-2-3-1 w double pivot

4-2-3-1 Formation

This formation features two holding midfielders to create a balance for the team and a playmaker to have the freedom to create.

You can look to activate your outside backs into the attack aggressively with two holders.



4-1-4-1

4-1-4-1

This formation features one holding midfielder and a more advanced box to box midfielder.

There is less cover for counters by the other team but provides an aggressive pressing shape defensively.



4-3-3

4-3-3- Formation

This formation is similar to the 4-1-4-1 but you keep your wide players higher up in the attack and give them more freedom to create and move around the field. You still play with a box to box midfielder and a playmaker who has more freedom to stay high in the attack.



4-4-2 diamond

4-4-2 Diamond

Strong formation to use to help defending in a deeper low block. Clogs up the middle and helps prevent counters.

Two forwards up top need to be able to hold the ball and work off each other and ideally should have outside backs who can get forward and contribute in the attack.



4-4-2 empty bucket

4-4-2 2nd Option

This formation is played with more of defensive minded 8s. Creates space in the middle part of the field for wide midfielders to tuck in or for a forward to check back into. Forces the other teams defenders to have coordinate different movements in your attack. Really good formation to defend deeper and counter out of.



5-3-2/3-5-2

3-5-2 / 5-3-2 Formation

Great formation for teams with 3 really strong center backs or with teams who do not have strong enough defenders to play with a back 5.

Ideally wing backs can get forward and create in the attack but a lot of freedom given to the 10 and two 9s to create on their own.

