



Playing Formations and Player's Roles in various 7 vs 7 Formation

Colorado Soccer Association

Which is the best formation to use?

There is not one formation that is better than the other. Formations should be selected based on the talent pool of the players or the next system of play that the team will move in to at 9 vs 9.

Coaches should teach positional play to players opposed to positions. (Positions show players where to stand on the field; however positional play teaches players how to play the game.)

The number system comes from US Soccer and is used to standardize positions for communication purposes.

Check with your club to see if they have a preferred system and style of play.



7 vs 7 Formations
for the 9U and
10U age groups

Strengths and Weaknesses of a 1-3-2-1

Strengths of Formation

- Option of building up out of the back with the 3 Defenders and 2 Midfielders
- Allows the outside backs to push on and overlap into the attack
- Numbers up in the back allow for the team to stay compact and can allow for the forward to drop back and make two solid defensive lines.
- Allows the team to play direct to the lone striker.

Weaknesses of Formation

- Does not allow the team to win back possession early. High work rate from the striker to apply the pressure and lock it in on one side
- Need a willingness and high energy from the outside backs to provide the width, need to make sure that both don't go at the same time.
- Can be very conservative and force teams to play under pressure with only having the one central outlet and attacks coming from deep.



Player's Roles in the 1-3-2-1 formation

Players Roles

#1 Goalkeeper: Look to play out of the back with the defenders or midfielders.

#2/7 & #3/11 Outside Backs/Wingers: Get wide in the build up and look to move forward with the ball. Attacks have to start deep but must have the desire to get up and down to support in wide areas. When not in possession get compact and force play wide

#4/5 Center Back: Stays deep during buildup to allow the ball to be played back and to switch the point of attack. Attempts to remain in central areas and communicates with #6 of when to drop in.

#6 Defensive Mid: Create angles that split the oppositions strikers and try to shape up to play forward. Protects the back line and doubles up with outside backs when needed

#8 Center Mid: Looks to switch the point of attack and keep the ball moving. Needs to play off the strikers feet and make supporting runs from deep. Should look to be the covering defender when defending in the attacking third

#9/#10 Striker: Should try to play in between the oppositions lines and defenders. Dictates when to press and when to hold



Strengths and Weaknesses of a 1-2-3-1

Strengths of the formation:

- Creates natural triangles or diamonds when playing through the thirds.
- Provides more natural width higher up the field, to create good crossing opportunities
- Allows the team to tempt the opposition to play out of the back and then press high by applying immediate pressure.
- Extra cover and support in the central defensive areas.

Weakness of the formation:

- Requires the Center Midfielder to be very mobile and could be vulnerable if wide players don't pinch in
- Can leave wide areas left open in the defensive third. The Center Mid has to be willing to drop back in
- Does not allow the team to win back possession early. High work rate from the striker to apply the pressure and lock it in on one side



Players Roles in the 1-2-3-1 formation

Players Roles

#1 Goalkeeper: Look to play out of the back, but can play centrally direct.

#4/5 Center Back: Stays deep during buildup to allow the ball to be played back and to switch play. Attempts to remain in central areas and must organize and may have to step in to the wide areas to defend the flanks

#6/8 Center Mid: Needs to be very mobile and requires a very good fitness level to be able to move up and down the flanks. Got to maintain possession and requires a good range of passing. May have to drop back and defend centrally more than in wide areas

#2/7 & #3/11 Outside Backs/Wingers: Need to stay wide when in possession of the ball to create 1v1 situations. Willingness to track back and defend the flanks, need high work rate.

#9/ #10 Striker: Runs need to be timed well and should try to play on the shoulder of the last defender. Should try to play in between the oppositions lines and defenders. Dictates when to press and when to hold



Strengths and Weaknesses of a 1-3-1-2

Strengths of the formation:

- Creates numbers up in the back, allowing the team to be compact and provide options to play out short
- Extra attacking player allows the team to win the ball high up the field in central areas and work off each other to combine.
- Less work for the outside backs, as they have an option to play forward quicker to one of the two strikers.
- Attacks can be more central

Weakness of the formation:

- Requires a lot of work and discipline from the center midfielder. Lots of space to move the ball around
- Not great for a possession based style of soccer, with two strikers team may go more direct
- Requires a high tempo when the ball is with the midfielder (one-two touch)



Players Roles in the 1-3-1-2 formation

Players Roles

#1 Goalkeeper: Good communication and organizer of the back line. Scan the field to read the opposition on whether to play short or long.

#4/5 Center Back: Stays central defensively and communicates to the outside backs, may have to step into the midfield when in possession.

#2/7 & #3/11 Wing Backs: Need to have a high level of energy and endurance as may cover a lot of space. Comfortable in both attacking & defending 1v1. May cross the ball from deeper areas.

#6/8 Center Mid: Needs to stay very disciplined and maintain their position in the middle of the pitch. Needs to keep the ball moving quickly and control the tempo of the game

#10 Striker: Needs to drop back into the midfield and be a link between the CM and the other striker. Looks to provide the cover when the striker is applying the pressure

#9 Striker: Runs need to be timed well and should try to play on the shoulder of the last defender, should look to stretch the field and make runs from inside out.



Strengths and Weaknesses of a 1-1-4-1 formation

Strengths of Formation

- Numbers up in the midfield allow the team to win possession and maintain it. The midfield can be played as a flat four or a diamond
- The wide players can concentrate more on providing width in the attacking half, if the defensive midfielder holds their shape
- Allows the team to create better passing angles, avoiding square passes

Weaknesses of Formation

- Team must be very active while in possession, especially in the midfield
- Can create a lot of passing options, meaning players have to be quick thinkers
- Lots of space in wide areas of the defensive half, wide players drop back or defensive midfielder drops centrally. Centerback has to be comfortable defending 1v1
- Difficult to build up short out of the back



Players Roles in the 1-1-4-1 formation

Players Roles

#1 Goalkeeper: Be comfortable knowing that defensive support in front may be lacking (play a sweeper role). Comfortable on dealing with crosses and playing the ball out over a longer distance.

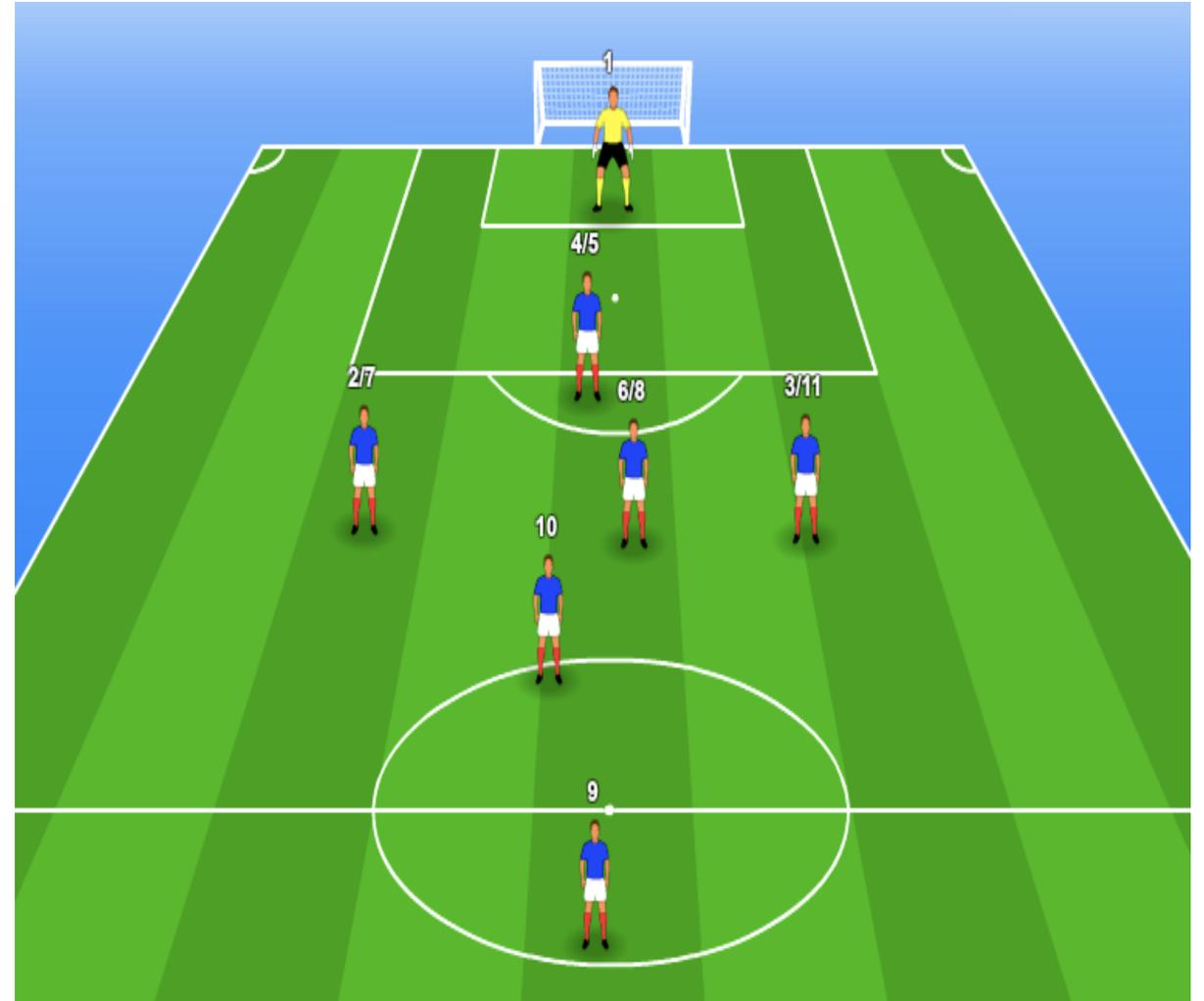
#4/5 Center Back: Very comfortable defending 1v1, have decent speed and able to force the play wide. May not be used too much in the build up play, but must always make themselves available for a ball to be dropped back.

#6/8 Midfield: Needs to be comfortable on the ball and have a good range of passing. Has to be willing to drop back and support the center back when not in possession

#2/7 & #3/11 Outside Backs/Wingers: Get wide in the build up and drop back at an angle to receive the ball. must have the desire to get up and down the field to support in wide areas. When not in possession get compact and force play inside.

#10 Attacking Mid: Drop back into the middle to gain possession. Has to stay very active when is possession and always be offset from the other CM and CF. Provides defensive cover to the striker.

#7/#11 Wingers: Should look to stay central and have good ability to play with their back to the goal as well as run in behind. Should show smart runs in the box to finish of crosses.



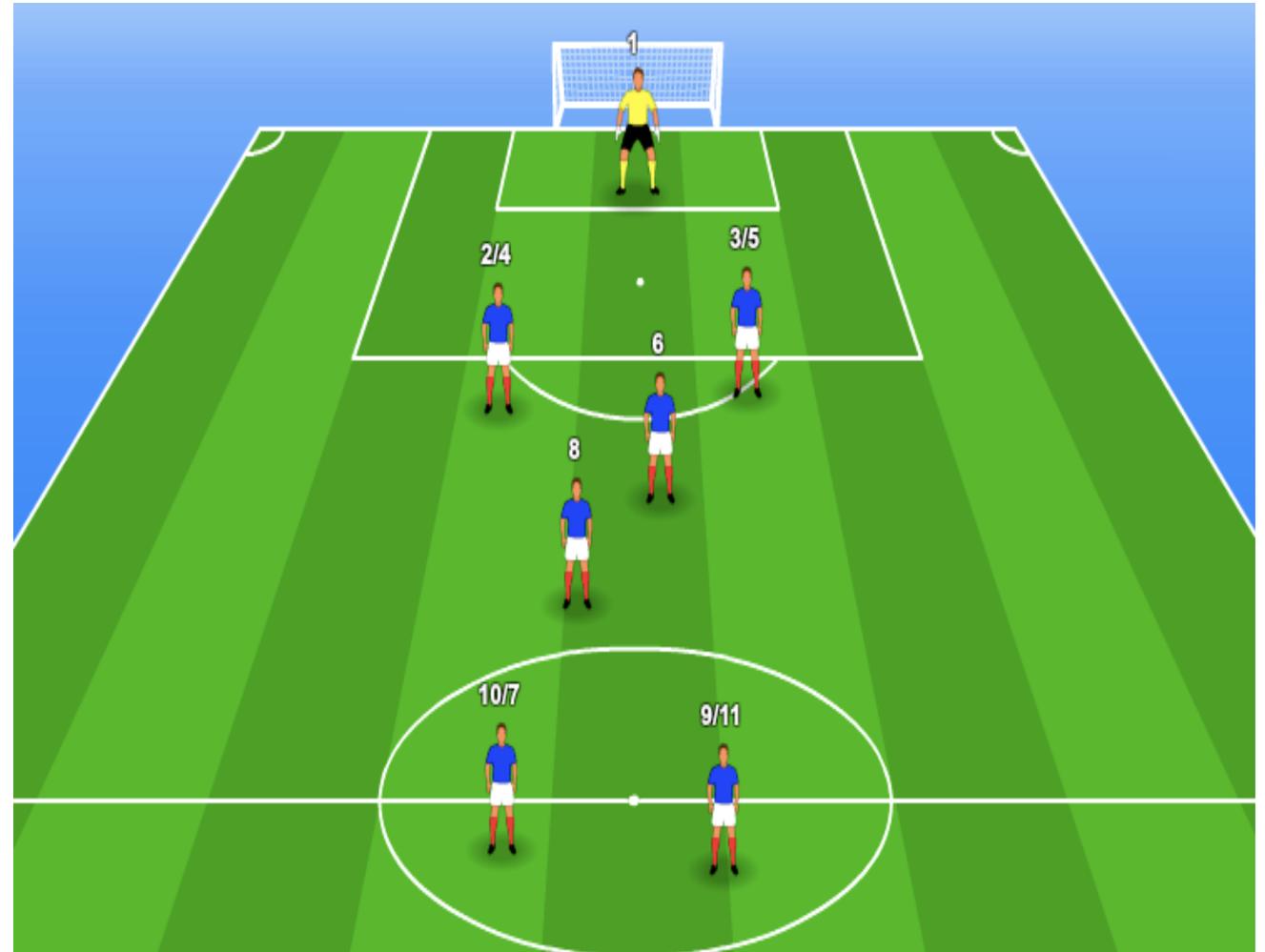
Strengths and Weaknesses of a 1-2-1-1-2

Strengths of Formation

- Good strength down the middle of the field, adding depth
- Allows the team to win possession back high up the field, or create two defensive lines of three players
- Can create a natural triangle in the attack as well as defensively.
- Allows the team to go direct quick and apply pressure on the opponents in central areas.

Weaknesses of Formation

- Wide areas are left exposed when not in possession of the ball
- May find it hard to create width when team is in possession of the ball
- Lines can be very rigid and players can be caught square of each other, forcing square passes.
- Players can be caught chasing the ball, allowing the opposition opportunities to combine and get in behind



Players Roles in the 1-2-1-1-2 formation

Players Roles

#1 Goalkeeper: Will be a bit more direct with their distribution. Should have decent ability in dealing with crosses and angles from wide areas

#2/4 & #3/5 Defenders: Will predominantly stay back and not look to join in the attack that much. Need to stay connect and able to shift across the field.

#6 Defensive Mid: Provides a shield in front of the defenders and doubles up in wide areas. Tries to be an outlet when building up and must have body open to try and play forward.

#8 Midfielder: Must work on an opposite angle with the #6 and in the gaps of the oppositions midfielders. Provides the cover to the front two when defending higher up the field

#9/11 Left Wing/Striker: May have to make runs from inside out, to create attacking opportunities in wide area. Must make opposites movement of their strike partner, never to be caught on the same line.

#10/7 Right Wing/ Striker: Same as above

