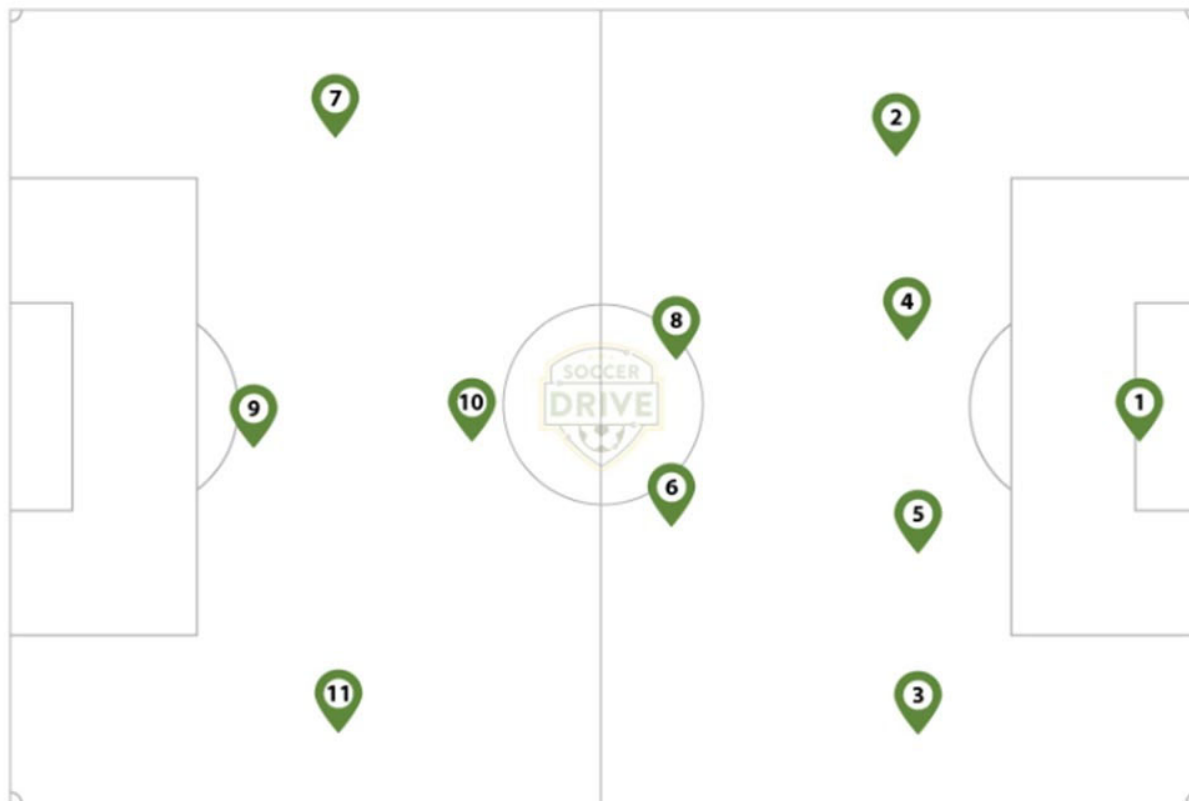


ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH POSITION



Confused about the roles and responsibilities of each position? Take a look at the below guide in order to help clear things up. This is presented for a 4-3-3 formation for an 11v11 game (U13+), but the roles are still very similar no matter how many players are on the field. In order to see the different formations, you can place players in, no matter which size, [please visit this link](#).

In US Soccer, different positions are now given numbers in order to help explain their roles. So, for example, as players get older you can now tell them they are playing as a #7 instead of a right forward/midfielder.

GOALKEEPER (#1)

- **Traits:** Fearless, good at catching, athletic, vocal.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Must be willing to collect the ball on the ground around other players' feet. Likes to try and get their hands to balls rather than relying on feet to save shots. In charge of keeping the ball out of the goal, and

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help organizing their defenders in front of them in order to deny a shot from happening. Very difficult position to play, as kids will often blame themselves when a goal is scored on them when, in actuality, the ball already beat every other player on their team before getting to them.

RIGHT DEFENDER AND LEFT DEFENDER (#2 AND #3)

- **Traits:** Good at 1v1 tackling, fast, likes to get forward and attack as well as defend.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** In the modern game, outside defenders (#2 + #3) are as much attackers as they are defenders. They should be encouraged to get forward when your team has the ball, but get back when your team doesn't. The right/left defenders are usually competing against fast players who like to dribble, so it's important that they be good 1v1 defenders, and be able to keep up with speed. Also referred to as an "outside back".

CENTER DEFENDERS (#4 AND #5)

- **Traits:** Big and Strong. Good in the air, 1v1 tackling, and must have good organization. Should have decent speed, and can pass well.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Plays between the right/left defenders and is in charge of organizing the defenders and keeping the ball from penetrating through the center of the field. Must be disciplined enough to make "smart" decisions when they have the ball on who/when to pass or dribble. Very important that they don't lose possession, because losing it means that the other team doesn't have far to go until goal. Must be strong and brave going into challenges with attackers. Also referred to as "Center backs".

CENTRAL DEFENSIVE MIDFIELDER (#6)

- **Traits:** Must be disciplined, an excellent tackler, and have the ability to "slow down" play. Must be an excellent passer, and have a poised personality.

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- **Roles and Responsibilities:** The #6's job is to sit in-between the attacking midfielders and the backline. Their job is to disrupt the opponents attack before they get to the defenders. Without this role, your team will leave too much space between the midfielders and defenders for the attacking team to pass or dribble into, making it easier for them to score. When the #6 has the ball, they need to connect with their teammates, and make "safe" decisions on who to pass to. It's important that they don't lose the ball when in possession.

CENTER MIDFIELDER (#8)

- **Traits:** Good endurance, likes to run, strong passer and creative with the ball at their feet. Should be one of the most technical players on your team.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** The center midfielder is one of the links between your defenders and your forwards. They should be very mobile, like to move into space, and be very comfortable with the ball at their feet. If they have space to create a dangerous dribble, pass or shot, they should be encouraged to do so. They have more freedom than the defenders to try things with the ball, because it's not as dangerous for the team if they lose it. The center midfielder plays in any space between the #6 and the #9, and can explore the width of the field as well with their movements. You can also designate this player to play more as a #6 (like in our visual example) or as an additional #10.

RIGHT MIDFIELDER/FORWARD AND LEFT MIDFIELDER/FORWARD (#7 AND #11)

- **Traits:** Fast, like to take players on 1v1, good endurance, willing to help defend, good passer, and likes to shoot.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** These players help provide width on the field, and should be looking to get behind the opponent's outside defender by dribbling or receiving a pass. Need to be attack minded and looking to exploit space quickly. Should always be looking to play a pass to someone who can score, or dribble and shoot themselves. Defensively, if playing as an outside forward (like example), they need to drop back into midfield to help defend. If playing in a

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formation where they would be an outside midfielder (like a 4-4-2), they need to be willing to drop back into the backline if defenders get too stretched out.

ATTACKING MIDFIELDER (#10)

- **Traits**: Very comfortable with ball at feet, very creative, likes to score and assist goals. Mobile, and always looking for space.
- **Roles and Responsibilities**: The #10 is your most creative player. They should always be looking to penetrate the opposing team's defenders with a pass, dribble, or shot. They should have reign to explore the attacking half of the field, and find space for when they receive the ball to create havoc and be dangerous. They should find themselves usually in the space behind the central forward, but should have the freedom to move where they need to in order to get the ball.

CENTRAL FORWARD (#9)

- **Traits**: Very mobile in their movements. Strong and/or fast, likes to shoot and should always be looking to score goals. Understanding space and how to exploit it is a huge bonus.
- **Roles and Responsibilities**: The #9 should be your goalscorer and always looking for ways to get a shot off. They should be very mobile, as the more they move the more difficult they are to defend against. They should look to link with their teammates in order to create more space for themselves to get the ball back and go to goal. The #9 plays as the highest person up on the field.