

## NGS 9v9 Formation



The **1-3-2-3 formation** offers a balanced spread of players over the field with numerous triangles and diamond shapes which creates good opportunities for:

- Greater attacking options for teams with players who possess good long passing ability
- Increased ability to apply high pressure in the offensive third
- Three mobile attackers can be taught to easily unbalance a zonal defense
- Requires the Goal-Keeper to move up with the play and act as a sweeper-keeper
- Combination passing and Possession style soccer
- Creative and varied attacking play using the width of the field
- More offensive than a 1-3-3-2

### **TEAM DEFENDING PRINCIPLES**

If a mistake is made on attack an opportunity is lost. If a mistake is made on defense a game may be lost. Therefore it is critical solid defense will be a key to your success. In order to understand team defending, meaning all players are working together to defend.

**1) PRESSURE** the ball. The first step is to always apply immediate pressure on the ball. This does not mean diving in but closing down the players space on the ball.

**2) COVER** off the ball. The defense must move as one, providing support and coverage for one another. The primary thing to remember here is to have a good shape, being **BALANCED**. The main principle here is to not ball watch, cover dangerous space and keep an eye on your opponent while adjusting.

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**3) COMPACT** in the center of the field. When the team closes down the center of the field and has no gaps between players it is very difficult for opponents to penetrate and attack the dangerous space.

**4) DELAY** the attack. You don't always have to immediately win the ball. After attacking the space, to keep opponents from moving forward sometimes it is best to stall their progress and wait for your team to get into defensive shape. When your team has an attack delayed in a one-on-one situation another team member should move in as a second defender to attack the ball.

**5) EACH PLAYER MARKED** every defender should know where every attacking player is at all times. The primary thing to make this happen is constant communication.

**6) FALL BACK** every player is a defender when the opposition has the ball. If players are tired after an attack first sprint back to goal-side of opposition to rest; they shouldn't allow attackers to win the ball in front of them. When one defender steps up to play the ball other defenders should not remain square but, should immediately drop to support. This is also known as **DEPTH** in the defense.

### **TEAM ATTACKING PRINCIPLES**

To make all components of the attack work your team needs know what to do depending on where in the field they are. Though every situation will require different needs, it is helpful to think of the field in three parts.

**DEFENSIVE THIRD** (from the goal defending to about 20 yards beyond the penalty box)

When your team has the ball in your defensive end the main focus is **DISTRIBUTION**. Remembering that defensive mistakes lose games you want to get the ball out of the back quickly. As a team you want to avoid one-on-one dribbling out of the back, avoid passes to the center of the field.

**CENTRAL THIRD** (about 20 yards on both sides of the midline)

In this third you want to focus on **PENETRATION**. However you need to decide when to **Penetrate** V's when to **Possess** the ball. Deciding when to force the play when it is not on, but when you do have space in front of you, you want to penetrate forward. Good decision making on whether to penetrate or possess will help you be more effective.

Open up the defense and create the space for penetrating runs and passes.

**ATTACKING THIRD** (from 20 yards beyond the midfield to the goal line we are attacking)

In this area we want to focus on **CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO FINISH**.

The four **"S"** WILL HELP CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO FINISH

**1) SPEED** - On the ball the weight of the pass has to be good so it cannot be intercepted. Forward diagonal passes are key, to put the opponent on the back foot. Square passes slow the flow down and can be intercepted easily. When running with the ball this has to be at speed to suck a defender/s in to create the space for a pass to a team mate or create space for a team mates run. Movement off the ball is vital to speed the play up. Diagonal runs, overlapping runs, will help isolate defenders and create numbers up situations.

**2) SPACE** – To create space players be constantly on the move. Every time a player moves they create another space for another team mate. When in possession the space should be created with spreading the field with width and depth. This will allow movement to happen and good supporting angles and distances.

**3) SUPPORT** – When the ball is played it is important that players support the play. Good angles and distance of support is vital to allow space and time to play the next pass, dribble, cross or finish.

**4) SURPRISE** – It is important that players *do not* become *predictable*. Robotic players can become very easy to break down. Being creative in the attacking third can always create opportunities to goal. If this means dribbling 1v1, striking from distance, playing a free kick or corner quickly to create a goal scoring opportunity.

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## PLAYER ROLES

### In Possession

- Goalkeeper and defenders encouraged to be comfortable receiving the ball at their feet and playing out from the back. #2 & #2 (right & left outside defenders) encouraged to get forward to give extra numbers in attack, while providing support and width to the midfield.
- #4 should drop closer towards their own goal to create space and be available for a backwards pass, but push up again the ball goes further forward.
- #6 must be disciplined and should call for support from the #8 and play as a unit in the midfield 1/3, trying to create 2v1s and passing options. #8 also looks to get forward to support #9 as a front pair.
- #6, #8 always looking to receive the ball from all players on the field - goalkeeper, defenders, and when supporting the #9
- #9 generally is the furthest player forward. #7 & #11 provide width in attack.
- In general, all players look to 'stretch out' and make the field as 'big' as possible to create space and passing options

### Out of Possession

- Forward #9 is the first line of defense. #7 and #11 drop and recover behind the ball and pressure opposition defenders on the ball, aiming to 'funnel' them towards team mates.
- Midfield players #6 and #8 look to get compact while pressuring the ball to make it hard for opposition to play through them.
- #2, #4 & #3 work as a defensive trio. hard to get break down and play as a unit
- Goalkeeper should be alert and ready to come out to beat an opponent to a ball played over or through the defense.

### How it transfers to the 11v11

- Note how the player's numbers correspond to players with the same or similar roles in the 11v11 system.
- #2, #3 and #4 perform the same roles as in the 11v11 format
- #6 & #8 in central midfield, perform various aspects of the 2 central midfield players at 11v11, always trying to receive the ball, and being disciplined in when to attack and defend. A 1-3-2-3 system is popular at 9v9, but the formation can become stretched if players do not transition up and down field based on where the ball is located.
- #9 performs a very similar role as the central forward in the 11v11 system. However at times in the game its important #8 drops into space between midfield and attack to support the team when out of possession but also to offer a passing option when in possession. The term playing 'in the hole' is often referred to here.

### Look out for...

- Formation being stretched and holes appearing in midfield especially if the outside back and forwards don't work together.
- Be careful the midfield is not outnumbered especially if the wide attackers don't track back to defend
- #9 must stay high up on the field (on-side) to offer a point of attack and an outlet for a quick counter attack.