



Terminology - The Starting 11

The positional numbering system has been around since the 1920's. It was first established to help fans identify players on the field, but more importantly, it gave coaches a common language when discussing players and their roles on the field.

In an effort to get our coaches to start “speaking the same language”, I have set up examples of the most common used systems in our club, the numbering system for each, and a brief description of the player’s role within that system.

1 Goalkeeper

- Saves, Clearing, Directing the Defense, Distributing the Ball

2,3 Flank Defenders (Wing backs, Fullbacks)

- Prevent attackers from passing or receiving, block shots, advance up the field to help in the attack.

4, 5 Center - backs (Center-Half, Central Defenders)

- Good at timing tackles, good in air, strong, fearless

6 Holding Midfielder (Defensive Midfielder)

- Stationed in front of defensive line, prevents ball from reaching defensive line

8 Central Midfielder (Box to Box Midfielder)

- Plays both in attacking and defensive role from box to box

10 Attacking Midfielder (Playmaker)

- Plays in advance of midfield, creative, brain of the attack

7, 11 Flank Midfielders/Wingers (Wide Midfielders)

- Plays in advance of midfield, focuses attacks from the flanks (width)

9 Center – Forward (Striker)

- Score goals, create space for other attacking players

Note:

In a 4:4:2, the number 11 can operate as a **Withdrawn Forward** (2nd Striker, Deep Lying Forward).

- Plays in behind Center –Forward, good passer