

## 2-3-1



2-3-1 is the most classic 7v7 formation out there. It offers fantastic balance in any team and is incredibly easy for young players to grasp. Two defenders being helped by three hard-working midfielders offers plenty of support at the back without overloading defensive areas. Simultaneously, the midfield can get forward and the wide players allow for plenty of width in attack. A lone striker is often supported by a central midfielder who can play as a 6 or 10 depending on the situation and has the best of both roles wrapped up in one. Goals are not hard to come by whatsoever in this formation and it is incredibly effective to defend against all of the formations listed below.

### ADAPTABLE FORMATIONS FOR 9v9

- 2-4-2
- 3-3-2

### PLAYERS/SKILLS REQUIRED

- Hard-working midfielders who can get up and down the field. Particularly a hard-working central midfielder.
- Wingers who don't get drawn to the middle and can also get up and down the line in short sprints.
- A center forward who can hold the line all on their own.
- Defenders who do not create too big of a gap between themselves.

### PROS

- Attack-minded and possession oriented.
- Achieves fantastic balance in both wide and central areas; defense and attack.
- Every player has a clearly defined role.
- Creates lots of opportunities for goals.

### CONS

- If defenders play too far apart, a massive gap is left in the center of defense.
- Midfielders are required to be non-stop runners and help out in both attack and defense.
- Striker can become isolated if opposition midfield shuts down central areas.

## 3-1-2



For a more defensive approach, coaches and managers should look no further than the 3-1-2. The formation provides excellent balance and a three-player defensive base to ease the future transition into 9v9 and 11v11 formations. Although the central midfielder may look isolated on paper, playing with a 3 in behind and a 2 up front offers loads of tactical flexibility and positional fluidity, which often happens with younger players either way. Defenders can be given the license to fill in gaps in wide areas, while strikers learn that they have to be more than just goal scorers and have to do a job in defense as well.

### ADAPTABLE FORMATIONS FOR 9v9

- 3-3-2

### PROS

- With three strong defenders, teams can be indestructible in defense.
- Forwards get accustomed to working in a two-striker system.
- Easy for strong, less skillful teams to bully more skillful teams that will often be playing with more fluid attacking formations such as the two above.
- Teaches forwards to defend from the front.

### CONS

- Central midfielder is required to do a lot of running. If they fail in that quest, the other team will dominate.
- Can become overly defensive if fullbacks don't push up with the play.
- Not rooted in a possession-based style of play.

### 3-2-1



The 3-2-1 is an increasingly popular choice for teams that wish to adopt a less attacking- based style of play. It allows teams to play a solid defensive back-line of three players without negating too much control in midfield areas.

The formation helps to emphasize how crucial it is for the central defender to step up in central areas when required as there is no 'central midfielder' in this formation.

#### ADAPTABLE FORMATIONS FOR 9v9

- 4-3-1
- 3-3-2

#### PROS

- With three strong defenders, teams can be indestructible in defense.
- More midfield support than the 3-1-2 and better suited to a possession-based style.
- Easy for strong, less skillful teams to bully more skillful teams that will often be playing with more fluid attacking formations.

#### CONS

- Wide midfielders may become confused as to how and when to come central as opposed to staying wide.
- Width can also be lacking if wide midfielders stay too central.
- Although it looks very balanced, it's easy for the formation to upset the rhythm of a team as roles are less well-defined.
- Central defender required to step up into midfield when the time is right.