

Position Numbers and Playing Characteristics

The numbering system relates position on the field to numbers. Talking tactics with soccer numbers is much easier than using position names, since the positions are called so many different names in various systems. According to Dave Chesler, a Coach Educator and Performance Analyst at US Soccer, “A standard numbering system for positions and their roles provides a concise and common method of communicating technical information about individual and team play.”



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| 1 | Goalkeeper
Technically proficient, Solid technical passing abilities, Strong distribution decisions, Gifted athlete |
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| 2 3 | Outside Backs (Right and Left)
Ability to play great long service, Strong at defending 1v1, Speedy player able to cover ground on the flanks, Solid technical passing abilities |
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| 4 5 | Center Backs (Left and Right)
Consistent players who are organizers and leaders, Tall and Strong, Ability to cover ground — especially laterally and vertically, Technically strong defensively, Strong tackler, Strong in the air |
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| 6 | Defensive Midfielder
High work rate, Ability to keep the ball (vision and technical passing), Tactically astute, Strong in air, Strong tackler |
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| 8 | Center Midfielder
Endless work rate — speed and endurance, Good leadership and organization, Creative playmaker, Good in air, Long range finishing ability, Ability to provide defensive pressure |
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| 7 11 | Winger (Right & Left)
Very fit, High Work Rate, Ability to make long runs and recover, Strong 1v1 attacking ability, Flank service, Long range shooting |
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| 10 | Attacking Center Midfielder
Finishing ability, Clinical passing in final third to create scoring opportunities, Strong 1v1 in final third, Makes play predictable through putting pressure on defense |
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| 9 | Forward / Striker
Ability to play with back to the goal, Creativity and technical finishing abilities, Strong and tough |
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US Soccer's Position Number System

