



RECREATIONAL COACH HANDBOOK



Coach,

Thank you for volunteering your time to coach Recreational Soccer, this season. Whether you are a rookie or an experienced old-timer, your willingness to serve in this important leadership role is heroic and appreciated.

We encourage you to commit to your players' **long-term** growth and development—as athletes *and* people. As fellow coaches, we must put winning games in the perspective of the many goals we have for our team and players and league. The contributions you make to your players **this season** will likely pay the greatest dividends **years** down the road. As Reed Maltbie of “Changing the Game Project” puts it: youth coaches “should strive to create echoes we’ll never hear, resonating generation after generation. That is a true and worthy legacy.”

Ultimately, our goal is to develop leaders and skillful, lifelong lovers of soccer.

To aid you in this important endeavor, we are pleased to present our *Recreational Coaching Handbook*, with tools and resources — including access to the TeamSnap ONE Sports app — to help you and your players have a successful season.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact Jason Burnett, League Sports Coordinator (jburnett@auburnalabama.org or 334-501-2943).

Have a great season,

Board of Directors
Auburn Soccer Association



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THE AUBURN SOCCER WAY¹



WE PLAY THE RIGHT WAY

We uphold the true values of the game—not just on the field, but off it too. We are committed to supporting and improving our community.

WE GROW TALENT

We turn potential into excellence, and strive to produce intelligent, technically proficient players in a fun, challenging, and positive learning environment.

WE'RE FORWARD-THINKING

We will be successful tomorrow, as well as today. We spend our time and money wisely, and invest sensibly in the future.

WE PUSH THE BOUNDARIES

We lead, not follow. We constantly innovate beyond the expected in every aspect of our association and invest in quality facilities.

WE NEVER STOP

We constantly strive to be better in everything we do. Whatever the circumstances, whatever the pressure, we never stop believing in who we are and how we do things. We never stop moving forward.

¹ Adapted from "The Southampton Way"

COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS

AND EXPECTED BEHAVIORS



I WILL PLACE THE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING OF ALL PLAYERS AHEAD OF MY PERSONAL DESIRE TO WIN GAMES.

Expected Behavior:

- Using appropriate language in appropriate tones when interacting with players, league officials, game officials, parents and spectators.
- Treating all players, league officials, game officials, parents, and spectators with dignity and respect.
- Maximizing playing time for all players according to the equal participation rules established by the league, and abiding by the spirit of those rules.

I WILL TREAT EACH PLAYER AS AN INDIVIDUAL, REMEMBERING THE LARGE RANGE OF EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT FOR THE AGE GROUP.

Expected Behavior:

- Recognizing the differences of each child and treating each player as an individual person, while demonstrating concern for their individual needs and wellbeing.
- Encouraging all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team and to remain involved in sports.
- Recognizing that some physical tasks, activities, and demands are not appropriate for all players.
- Recognizing that youth often vary greatly in physical, social, and emotional maturation; and considering these factors when organizing competitions, and when interacting with them as a group.

I WILL DO MY BEST TO PROVIDE A SAFE PLAYING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL PLAYERS.

Expected Behavior:

- Maintaining a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions, including but limited to dangerous weather, inadequate field maintenance, and faulty equipment.
- Protecting players from sexual molestation, assault, physical or emotional abuse, and understanding the urgent necessity to immediately report such instances to the League Sport Coordinator when suspected.
- Seeing that all players are provided with adequate adult supervision while under my care.

I PLEDGE TO REVIEW AND PRACTICE THE BASIC FIRST AID PRINCIPLES NEEDED TO TREAT INJURIES OF MY PLAYERS.

Expected Behavior:

- Keeping basic first aid supplies available at all practice and games.
- Recognizing and administering proper basic first aid to an injured player, and not returning players to activity if I suspect that they are potentially compromised by injury.
- Demonstrating concern for an injured player, notifying parents, and cooperating with medical authorities for severely-injured athletes.
- Completing the CDC's free "HEADS UP to Youth Sports" Online Concussion Training Course.

I WILL STRIVE TO LEAD PRACTICES THAT ARE FUN AND CHALLENGING FOR ALL OF MY PLAYERS.

Expected Behavior:

- Using Auburn Soccer Association's official curriculum and lesson plans.
- Devoting appropriate time to the individual improvement of each player over the course of the season.
- Conducting practices of reasonable length and intensity appropriate for the age and conditioning of the players.

I WILL LEAD BY EXAMPLE IN DEMONSTRATING FAIR PLAY AND SPORTSMANSHIP TO ALL MY PLAYERS.

Expected Behavior: • Exhibiting gracious acceptance of defeat or victory. • Abiding by and supporting the *Laws of the Game*, as well as the spirit of the league rules. • Using the influential position of youth coach as an opportunity to demonstrate, promote, teach, and expect sportsmanship and fair play.

I WILL NOT CHEAT OR ENGAGE IN ANY FORM OF UNETHICAL BEHAVIOR THAT VIOLATES LEAGUE RULES

Expected Behavior: • Never encouraging or utilizing improper methods for the purpose of gaining an unfair advantage. • Displaying respect for the game of soccer by being honest in all dealings with players, parents, officials, and league administrators. • Respecting and abiding by the rules of the league and never engaging in or promoting any form of unethical behavior in an attempt to circumvent established policies. • Instilling in players the mindset that skills are learned and developed through the course of continual practice and hard work, and that the use of performance-enhancing drugs is a form of cheating that has no place in youth sports.

I WILL PROVIDE A SPORTS ENVIRONMENT FOR MY TEAM THAT IS FREE OF DRUGS, TOBACCO, AND ALCOHOL, AND I WILL REFRAIN FROM THEIR USE AT ALL YOUTH SOCCER RELATED EVENTS.

Expected Behavior: • Refraining from providing any type of alcohol, drug, or tobacco products to any of my players. • Refraining from using any type of such products at all team activities or in the presence of my players. • Encouraging parents to refrain from the use of tobacco or alcohol products at team activities.

I WILL BECOME KNOWLEDGEABLE IN THE *LAWS OF THE GAME*, AND I WILL TEACH THEM TO MY PLAYERS.

Expected Behavior: • Becoming knowledgeable, understanding, and supportive of all applicable *Laws of the Game*, league rules, regulations, and policies. • Teaching and requiring compliance to these rules among players and parents.

I WILL USE COACHING TECHNIQUES THAT ARE APPROPRIATE FOR EACH OF THE SKILLS THAT I TEACH

Expected Behavior: • Teaching only appropriate skills, techniques, and strategies of soccer. • Discouraging intentional dangerous play, and administering swift and equitable discipline to players involved in such activity. • Striving to improve my coaching knowledge through ongoing reading, research, and education.

I WILL REMEMBER THAT I AM A YOUTH SPORTS COACH, AND THAT THE LEAGUE IS FOR CHILDREN AND NOT ADULTS.

Expected Behavior: • Maintaining a positive, helpful, supportive attitude. • Exercising my influence as a coach to manage the behavior of the fans and spectators. • Placing the emphasis on fun, participation, love of soccer, and long-term athletic development, while encouraging players to strive to do their best in all things. • Encouraging players to try new skills, make mistakes, improve, and learn.



Auburn Soccer Association Curriculum



Stage; Cognitive Principles	Age; Physical Principles	Technical Developmental Principles	Tactical Developmental Principles	Training Environment; SSG's; Scrimmage #'s
Early (4v4) Limited understanding of time and space. One ball per player and single-task-oriented activities. Introduce concept of boundary lines, rules of the game.	Up to U-8 No significant gender differences Soccer-related running, jumping, twisting, bending, and turning activities. Movement of ball using varied parts of the foot.	Dribbling • Inside of foot • Laces • Sole of the foot • Running with the ball Passing • Inside of the foot – 5 yards Receiving • Inside of the foot – on ground w/ soft 1st touch Finishing • Inside of the foot (1v0 and 1v1 to goal)	<i>Tactics are not an area that should be focused on with this age group as their cognitive/technical development does not allow them to understand/train tactical theories and strategies.</i> All players should rotate through all positions	1v0 1v1 3v3 4v4 (No GK's)
Stage; Cognitive Principles	Age; Physical Principles	Technical Developmental Principles	Tactical Developmental Principles	Training Environment; SSG's; Scrimmage #'s
Beginner (7v7) Keep activities to no more than two players per ball, if possible Limited ability to address more than 1 task at a time leaves little capacity for "tactical" decision making Activities should incorporate 1v1 attacking/defending situations as fully opposed (pressured) activities develop decision making skills.	U9-U10 Minimal gender differences Combination of balance and coordination to execute a soccer skill at speed and accurately Aerobic training through competitive and fun activities	Dribbling • Speed Dribbling (and changing speeds) • Turning with: ○ Inside/outside/sole of the foot Fakes/Feints/Speed Moves • Shoulder drop • Scissors/Dbl Scissors • Cruyff • Cut-Catch (Croqueta) Passing • Inside of the foot – 10-15 yards Receiving • instep - on ground w/ forward 1st touch • instep - on ground w/ lateral 1st touch • Out of the air with the instep - soft first touch • Pivot (aka "pull") Turn • Cruyff Turn • Outside of the foot Turn Finishing • Inside of the foot - 8-12 yds • Inside of the foot - 6-8 yds on breakaway vs. GK Defending • Closing down attacker: body shape and distance • Poke Tackle Juggling (Starting from hands) • Thigh – Single then alternating (1-2 reps) • Foot – Single then alternating (1-2 reps)	Defending • Pressure (Role of the 1st Defender) • Delay Attacking • Role of the 1st Attacker • Shape – use width-based Training Games (see glossary) • Playing out of the back • Combination play: wall pass (1-2)	1v1 2v1 2v2 3v2 ^a 4v0 Rondo ^b 4v1 Rondo 4v4 (5v5 with GK's) 7v7 (6v6 with GK's)
			All players should rotate through all positions	



Auburn Soccer Association Curriculum



Stage; Cognitive Principles	Age; Physical Principles	Technical Developmental Principles	Tactical Developmental Principles	Training Environment; SSG's; Scrimmage #'s
Intermediate (9v9) Lengthened attention span, ability to sequence thoughts and actions. Starting to recognize fundamental tactical concepts Tactical issues may be presented. Roles and responsibilities of the players may be introduced. Focus on groups of players working together in attacking and defending situations. A range of numbers up (i.e. 2v1), numbers down (i.e. 2v3), and balanced numbers activities are used to teach group concepts.	U11-U12 Gender differences increasing as girls enter puberty; girls can be as much as two years ahead Aerobic endurance training within the game. Dynamic stretching is critical as are warmups and cooldowns Repetitive technique very important, but must be dynamic, not static.	Dribbling • Shielding • Change of Direction/Speed Fakes/Feints/Speed Moves • Matthews • Scoop (hook) turn • 360/Maradona • Roulette (pull back 360) • Stop-n-go • Zico (sole roll) • Stepover-takeaway (back to defender Zico) Passing • One touch passing, on the ground, with inside of the foot – 10-15 yards • Inside of the foot – 20-25 yards • Outside of the foot – 10 yards • Laces: ground 10-15 yds; in air 20-25 yds; chip • Feints Receiving • Out of the air with: ○ inside of the foot - lateral first touch ○ chest - forward first touch ○ thigh - lateral first touch • Back to goal: ○ Inside/Outside of the foot ○ Pivot Turn ○ Cruyff Turn ○ Reverse Matthews Heading • Basic Technique Finishing • Shooting with the instep - 12--20 yards • One time shot - inside of the foot - 8-12 yards Defending • Body shape and angle of approach • Block Tackle • Slide Tackle Juggling (Starting from hands) • Thigh - Alternating (5-10 reps) • Feet - Alternating (5-10 reps)	Defending • Role of the 1st Defender • Cover (Role of the 2nd Defender) • Delay • Compactness Attacking • Role of the 1st Attacker • Roles of the 2nd Attacker • Possession • Playing out of the back • Penetration - passing on the ground • Mobility - Creation of space for teammates • Combinations: Wall Pass; Overlap; Takeover • Shape - Height and Depth; Linking Player • Flank Play • Crossing to the Slot • Slot Run to Receive • Timing of Runs Transition • From attacking to defending • From defending to attacking Final Third • Basic movement/combinations ○ Give and go (wall pass) ○ Service from the flanks ▪ Near post run ○ Getting endline and serving cut-back ▪ Near post and PK spot run	1v1 2v1 2v2 3v2 ^b 4v1 Rondo ^c 3v1 Transition Rondo 5v5 (4v4 + GK's) 7v7 9v9 Positional rotation continues but (field player) specialization should begin to be factored into training. Some goalkeeper training can be built into sessions, but in most cases individual goalkeeper training is inappropriate



Auburn Soccer Association Curriculum



Stage; Cognitive Principles	Age; Physical Principles	Technical Developmental Principles	Tactical Developmental Principles	Training Environment; SSG's; Scrimmage #'s
Advanced (11v11) Have a sense of belonging, status, and recognition. Ability to stay focused over a longer period of time. More responsive to group activities and their role in being an individual. Encourage creative solutions and personal accountability. Team building exercises may be incorporated. Team tactics are typically taught using 7v7 to 11v11 scenarios that connect the three lines of team shape (defense, midfield, and attack)	U13 and above Introduction to pure speed training within structured soccer activities. Aerobic and anaerobic specific training. Position specific physical conditioning. Fitness periodization.	Passing • Inside of the foot – bending passes 20-30 yards • Outside of the foot – 15-20 yards • Instep - 30 yards • Chipping • Out of the air with inside of the foot - 10 yards • Out of the air with laces – 30 yards Fakes/Feints/Speed Moves • Review/perfect all • encourage players to create new ones ☺ Receiving • Outside of the foot - on the ground with a lateral first touch • Turning with back to goal: outside of foot; cruyff; pivot ("pull") turn Heading • Defensive heading • Attacking Heading • Protecting Oneself Finishing • Front Volley • Side Volley • Long Range - 18-25 yards • Half Volley • Bending Shot Defending • Shoulder challenge • Body positioning to prevent the attacker from turning Juggling (Starting from the ground) • Feet - Alternating (25-50 reps)	Defending • Balance (Role of the 3rd Defender) • Shape • Recovery Runs • Transition to Defense • Tracking • Zonal Defending • High/Low Pressure Defending Attacking • Role of the 3rd Attacker • Possession vs. Penetration Decisions • Penetration – Passing through the air • Playing in the final third • Counter Attack • Mobility – Creation of Space for Oneself • Changing the Point of Attack • Combination - Double Pass; 3 Player Combinations • Flank Play • Crossing to the Near Post • Crossing to the Far Post • Near Post Runs to Receive • Far Post Run to Receive • Timing of Runs • Recycling Runs	3v2 4v3 6v4 4v1 Rondo 3v1 Transition Rondo 5v2 Double Rondo 7v7 and up <i>Field player positional specialization should be factored into training.</i> <i>Individual goalkeeper training is appropriate, but a continued emphasis on functional and technical training as the "11th field player" is vital</i>

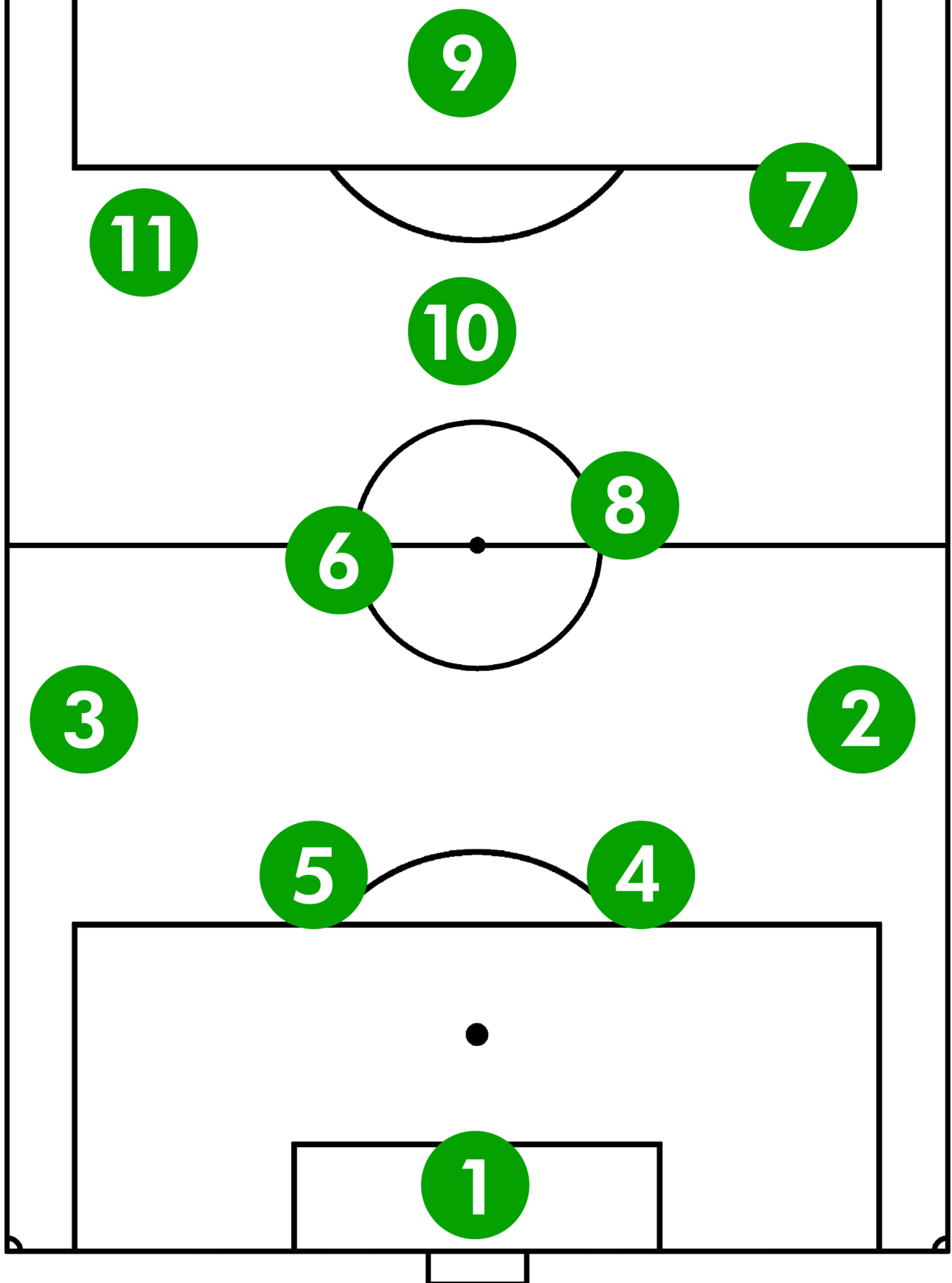
Position Numbers and Playing Characteristics

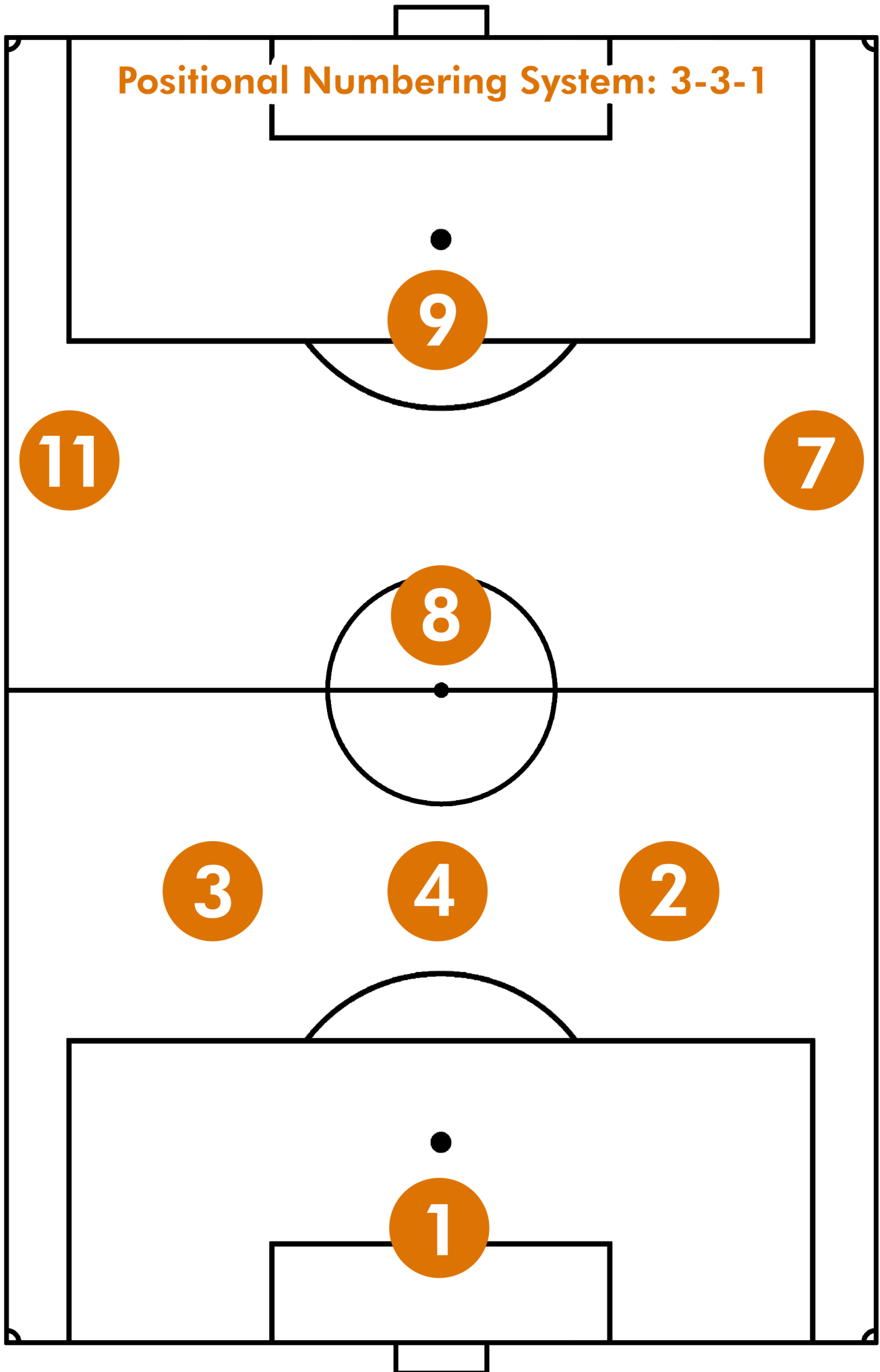
The numbering system relates position on the field to numbers. Talking tactics with soccer numbers is much easier than using position names, since the positions are called so many different names in various systems. According to Dave Chesler, a Coach Educator and Performance Analyst at US Soccer, “A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

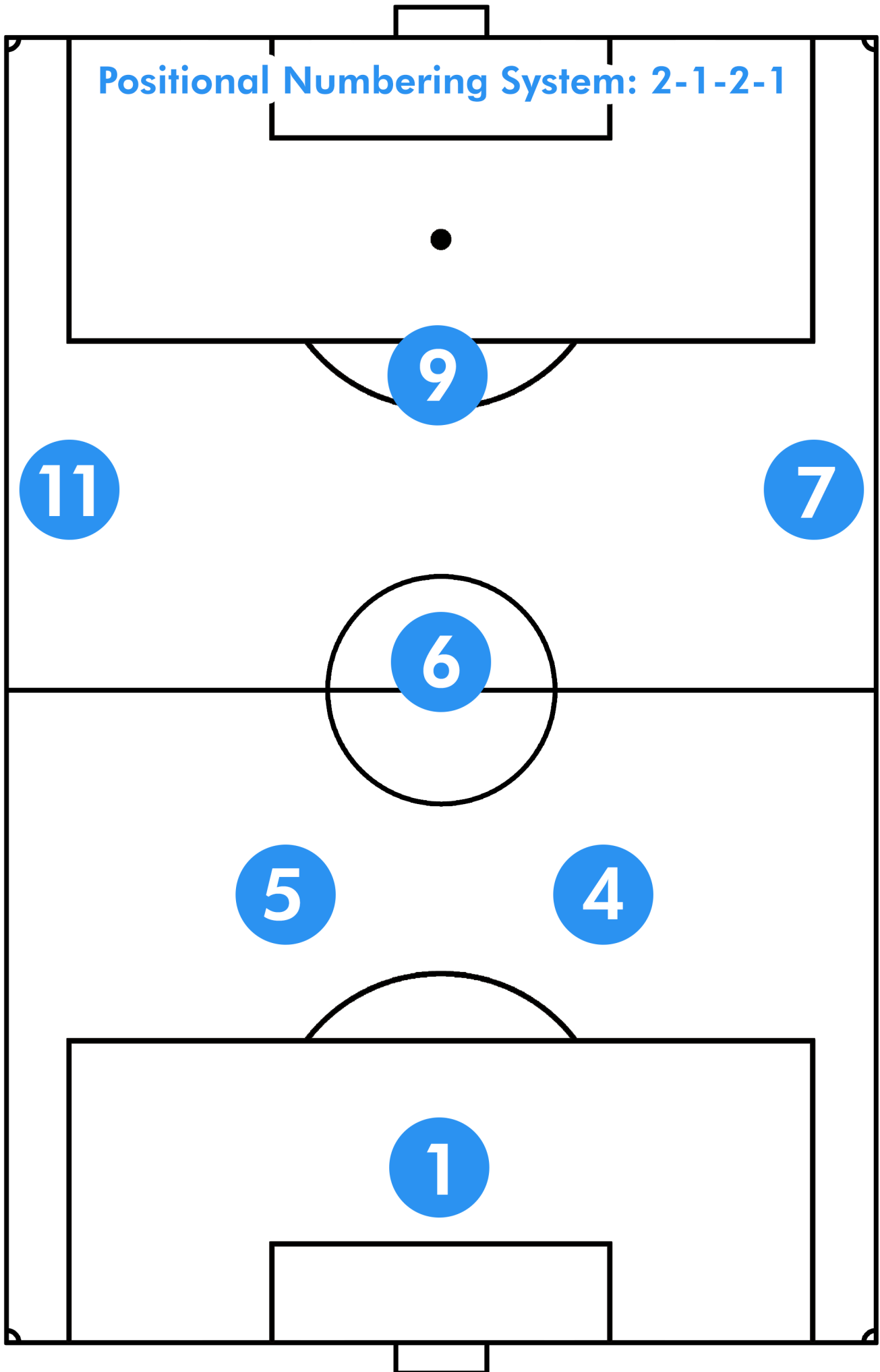


1	Goalkeeper Technically proficient, Solid technical passing abilities, Strong distribution decisions, Gifted athlete
2 3	Outside Backs (Right and Left) Ability to play great long service, Strong at defending 1v1, Speedy player able to cover ground on the flanks, Solid technical passing abilities
4 5	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
6	Defensive Midfielder High work rate, Ability to keep the ball (vision and technical passing), Tactically astute, Strong in air, Strong tackler
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
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
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
9	Forward / Striker Ability to play with back to the goal, Creativity and technical finishing abilities, Strong and tough

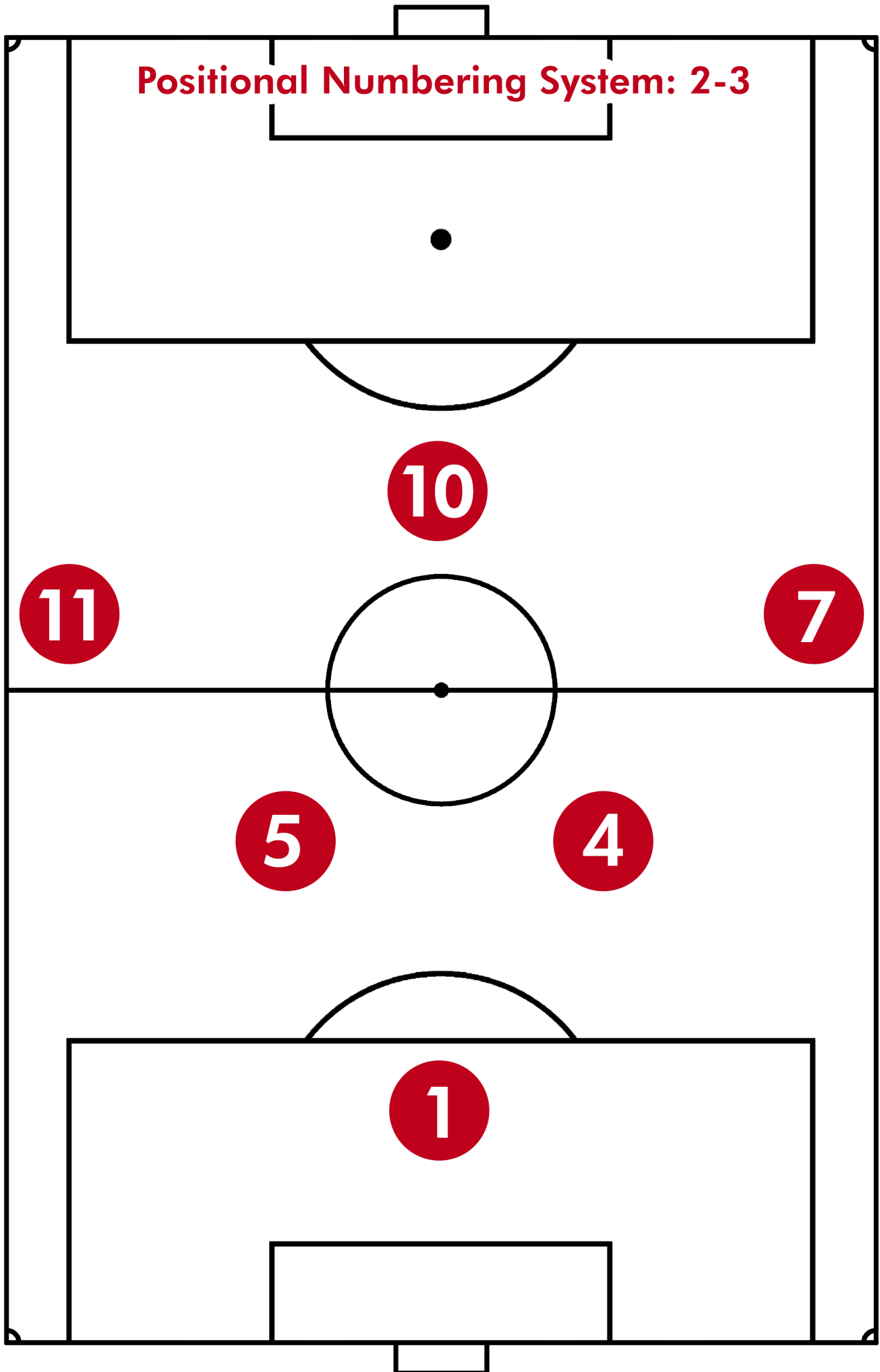
US Soccer's Position Number System







Positional Numbering System: 2-3



Supplemental Online Resources

Cleat Closet: Free Cleat Exchange — CleatCloset.org

The Cleat Closet is a player-organized club service project that collects gently-used soccer cleats, cleans and inventories them, and makes them available for free to Auburn Soccer Association players and families.

The following resources are available online at AuburnSoccA.org/Coach

- Coach's "Welcome Email" Template
- Soccer Complex Field Diagram
- Auburn Parks and Recreation's COVID-19 Guidelines
- **Soccer Parent Resource Center:** Free Membership for Parents
- Parent Complaint Form
- *Modified Soccer Playing Rules for Auburn Recreational Leagues*
- *Soccer Parent Handbook*
- U6 Match Demonstration Video
- *U10 Build Out Line Guide*
- Soccer Formations and Systems PDF Lineup Templates
- APRD's "Athletic Emergency Action Plan"
- "Why You Should Consider Scripting your Substitutions"
- "Ten Reasons to Not Coach the Player in Possession"
- "Use the Attacking Y to Teach Positioning"