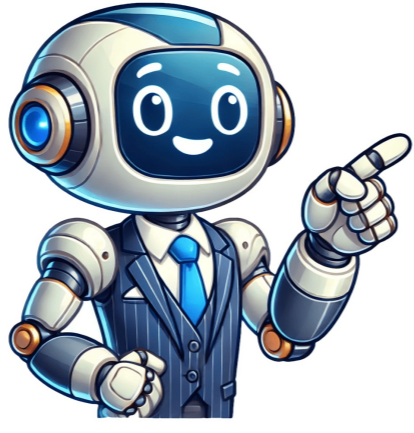


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teammates, to anticipate opponents moves and to clear loose balls. Perhaps the most well-known sweeper of all time is German legend Franz Beckenbauer, who once played for Germany with a dislocated shoulder. Center-backs / Central Defender (CB/Center-Back/Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Numbers: 2, 3 & 4in temporary football, center-backs occupy the last defensive line in the central area of the field. Their responsibility is to block rival forwards and to do anything in the team's way to stop them from getting face to face with their goalkeeper. Center-backs are often tall, strong, and have good heads and passing attributes.Paolo Maldini, Sergio Ramos, Carlos Puyol, Gerard Piqu and Leonardo Bonucci are typical central defenders. Carlos PuyolFull-backs [Right & Left] (RB/LB)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Numbers: 2, 3 & 6Full-backs are in charge of blocking the other teams wingers and wide midfielders and to prevent them from crossing dangerous balls into their box. While full-backs may on occasion venture into more attacking positions, their chief responsibility is to defend and help hold a line with the center-backs.Full-backs are often lighter than the center-backs and run up and down the field marking rivals. Brazilian stars Roberto Carlos and Caf are two of the most legendary full-backs of all time. Roberto CarlosWing-backs [Right & Left] (RBW/LWB)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Numbers: 2, 3 & 6The wing-back position is similar to the full-back in that wing-backs play close and along the sidelines of the field. The main difference is that wing-backs have much more attacking responsibility than full-backs do. Many full-backs have played as wing-backs and wing-backs have played as full-backs.A wing-back's role depends on the team formation and specific moments of the game. For example, if you have a defensive line of four defenders (two center-backs and two full-backs) and your team is in need of a goal, you will want the full-backs to behave more like wing-backs and attack.If, on the contrary, you are clinging to a narrow advantage, you will want your wing-backs to play more defensively. Also, if you have five defenders (three center-backs and two wing-backs), this allows more liberty for the wing-backs to venture attacking. Remarkable wing-backs are Marcelo, Dani Alves, Dani Carvajal and David Alaba. Embed from Getty Images

MIDFIELDERSDefensive/Holding Midfielder (DM)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Numbers: 5 & 6The defensive midfielder plays directly in front of the center-backs. His or her job is to collaborate with defense, retrieve as many balls as possible and organize attacking plays from the back. Holding midfielders are usually rugged, strong players capable of physically disrupting the ball with opponents. Some defensive midfielders have a more creative role. While they anticipate rival's passes and plays, they also creatively structure attacking plays and contribute with assists. Famous holding midfielders include Sergio Busquets, Xabi Alonso, Andrea Pirlo, N'Golo Kanté and Casemiro.Embed from Getty ImagesAndrea Pirlo, "The Architect"Center Midfielders (CM)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Numbers: 6 & 8Center midfielders are the foremost organizers and creative playmakers in the game. Having a strong midfield is key to establish a dominating playing style. When FC Barcelona had Sergio Busquets, Andrs Iniesta and Xavi Hernandez as midfielders, they were arguably the best team in history because they handled the ball so well, establishing the so-called tiki-taka style that consisted in endless passing of the ball from one side to the other with remarkable accuracy and tempo.Center midfielders are tasked with linking the defense with the offense and contributing with goals, assists and key decision making. Exemplary center midfielders are aforementioned Xavi Hernandez, Andrs Iniesta, Paul Pogba, Luka Modric, Mesut zil and Arturo Vidal. Andres IniestaAttacking Midfielders (AM)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Number: 10Their role is similar to that of the center midfielders, but more focused on attacking (shooting, assisting, scoring). Some of soccer's best players of all time have been attacking midfielders. Exquisite technique and accuracy are a must for this position. Characterized by field vision, ball control and technique, attacking midfielders are often in charge of free-kicks and penalty kicks. Notable examples are Zinedine Zidane, Francesco Totti, Kak and Ronaldinho. The Frenchman is regarded as one of the most elegant players ever to play the game.Wide Midfielders/Wingers [Right & Left] (RW/LW)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Numbers: 7 & 11Wide Midfielders or Wingers play offensively along the sidelines. They are normally light, fast and extremely fit. This position is one of the most explosive and opportunily generating. Wingers are tasked with attacking and dribbling at full speed, crossing, assisting and scoring. Well known wingers are n'gel di Mara, Eden Hazard, Neymar, Arjen Robben and Cristiano Ronaldo, particularly when he was younger (and faster). FORWARDSCenter Forward (CF)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Number: 9A center forward is typically a strong player that can win balls in the air, shield the ball from defenders while waiting for backup, perform link up for the striker. Of course, every once in a while you get center forwards who are not as physically strong but compensate with skill, like Kun Agueru or Lionel Messi. Moreover, in contemporary football, the center forward has also defensive responsibility. He or she is considered to be the first defender of the team.Exemplary center forwards are Zlatan Ibrahimovic, Luis Suarez, Lionel Messi, Harry Kane and recently Cristiano Ronaldo. Zlatan Ibrahimovic, a fierce center forward.Striker (S)Traditionally Assigned Soccer Position Numbers: 10 & 11As this name suggests, strikers are tasked with the most commonly celebrated thing in football: scoring. While Center Forwards typically have defensive responsibilities, strikers are almost exclusively concerned with attacking. Strikers are quick and unpredictable, profit from defenders mistakes and are at times defined as goal poachers.Excellent examples of natural born strikers are Javier Chicharito Hernandez, Thierry Henry, Ronaldo (Brazilian), Didier Drogha, and Samuel Eto. Ronaldo Nazario "The Phenomenon"Those are the basics. There are almost more soccer positions than players allowed on the field. As you can guess, there are a lot different formations in soccer that allow for play and creativity. You can always go for a traditional 4-4-2 (four defenders, four midfielders, and two forwards), opt for a 5-3-2 (3 center-backs and 2 wing-backs, 3 midfielders, 1 center forward and a striker), or join the contemporary trend of 4-3-3 (four defenders, three midfielders, one center forward, and two wingers). The combinations are infinite.That is an insight into why football managers earn so much and why their job is so fascinating! Attack wins you games, defence wins you titles Sir Alex Ferguson Defence is undeniably one of the most important components of any successful football team. And no position embodies the notion of defence more than centre backs. Centre backs come in various shapes and sizes and all possess different unique characteristics. But what makes a great centre back? In addition to that, what are the different types of centre backs? In summary, there are three variations of centre backs; stoppers, ball playing centre backs and liberos. A stopper is a physically dominant defender that purely stops attacks. A ball playing CB shares many of the characteristics of a stopper but also possesses great passing ability and ball control. A libero is a specialised ball playing CB that sits behind traditional centre backs. I did a bit of research to unpack what all of this means. A centre back (CB) is the second last line of defence in a football team, followed by the goalkeeper. At the onset of modern football, teams would line up in a very attacking formation, known as a 235. The defensive component of the team consisted of two fullbacks and three half backs. 235 formation with halfbacks and fullbacks When defence became more of a priority to football teams, four-man defensive systems were implemented. The fullbacks were pushed out wide (and retained their name) and two of the half backs were pulled back to form what we now know as a conventional four-man defensive line. The half backs that were pulled into the defensive line were then renamed centre halves. Nowadays, we refer to them as centre backs, but the words centre half and centre back are frequently used interchangeably. 442 formation with centre backs and fullbacks For the most part, a CB is normally a strong player that is capable of winning the ball back from attackers and commanding the defensive line. However, as Im sure you can imagine, there are several variations of CBs. These variations all depend on the tactics that a team employs and the specific characteristics each player. There are generally three centre back variations that we commonly see in the modern game. These three variations are known as stoppers, ball playing CBs and liberos. As the name suggests, the role of a stopper centre back is simply to halt the attacks of the opposition. They will execute this task by marking the opposing attackers and putting in decisive tackles to win the ball back. These players also specialize in winning aerial duels in and around their teams penalty area. A stopper is often a very tall (above 6ft2), physically dominant player that can outmuscle the majority of football players. They possess great aggression, tackling ability and jumping ability. However, due to their size, stoppers are usually slow in comparison to other professional footballers, and do not possess great agility. Embed from Getty Images Arguably the greatest stopper in English Premier League history, John Terry was a brick wall for Chelsea. In his prime, Terry would bully attackers all over the pitch and rarely made a mistake in his own half. He was not blessed with great pace or athleticism, but he more than made up for that with his leadership, physical characteristics and football intelligence. Perhaps his best defensive performance came in the 2004/2005 Premier League season where Chelsea conceded only 15 goals the entire season and won their first ever Premier League title. Tb to when John Terry wanted to block a shot with his head. Man would do anything to stop a goal pic.twitter.com/KMLnUoXMi All (6TheBeardedRaul) September 9, 2019 A testament to his commitment to defence is this attempted defensive header in the 2010 World Cup. Just because he was a great defender does not mean he wasn't crazy. Additional good examples of stoppers are Nemanja Vidic, Gary Cahill and Vincent Kompany. A ball playing centre back is essentially the epitome of the modern defender. They share many of the characteristics of stoppers. However, they are also expected to actively participate in progressing the ball and starting attacks, rather than only thwarting the oppositions attacks. As such, a good ball playing CB is expected have a wide passing range, exhibit composure on the ball in and around their own penalty area, and even possess some basic dribbling skills. Due to these requirements, ball playing CBs are often more athletic and agile than stoppers. Embed from Getty Images Virgil van Dijk is quite possibly the golden standard when it comes to ball playing CBs in world football over the past couple of years. He is physically dominant, fast, strong in the tackle, strong in the air and has the ability to play long range passes to any area of the pitch. In addition to this, he is incredibly athletic. Van Dijk has often been labelled as the most important player in the Liverpool squad, since signing for them in 2018. He absolutely revamped their defence and helped turn them into the best club in the world, as evidenced by Liverpool's Club World Cup victory in 2019. Other great examples of ball playing CBs include Sergio Ramos, Ricardo Carvalho and Rio Ferdinand. The libero is essentially a highly specialised ball playing centre back. This position is usually used in formations that include three CBs. In this setup, a libero typically plays as the most central CB
and sits slightly deeper than the other two. 3511 formation with a libero While the two CBs in front of the libero mark the opposition and thwart attacks, the libero sits behind and acts as the last point of defence. This way the libero can stop any attacker that breaks the initial defensive line. For that reason, a libero is also known as a sweeper and can somewhat be likened to the fullback position in rugby (not to be confused with a goalie or keeper. In Fifa tournaments, the number 1 must be the goalkeeper.See also Why Soccer Players Fake Injuries! (Reasons + Rules)This is a unique position. A goalkeeper (GK) within the penalty box can touch or hold the ball with their hands/arms. No other player on the team can handle the ball on the field when the ball is in play. The goalkeeper wears a different color kit to the outfield players. Its usually padded, offering extra protection. This is needed, as a GK experiences significant impacts when making saves. 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