4-4-2 Formation

The 4-4-2 system is probably the most common and simplest systems played today. The defense is best played as a conventional flat back four that requires compactness, balance and the capacity to play as a unit, up, down and across the pitch.

With the midfield four in horizontal line, this is easy to understand and organize especially for young players, the two wide midfield players need to provide width supplying crosses in attack and offering defensive cover for the full backs.

The two central midfielders are the nucleus of the team. A contrast in the two players would be ideal with one of the two getting forward as often as possible to support the forwards and the other to play a holding role and provide additional protection to the defense.

The central midfielders are also expected to compete with their opposite numbers, win the ball back and feed the wide midfielders and forwards.

The forwards responsibility is to score goals, they must accomplish this by working together constantly searching and creating space for shooting opportunities from a pass or cross mostly supplied by the midfielders.

The two forwards should constantly be communicating and develop an understanding where the others next move will be.

The forwards should also act as the first line of defense working hard to block or win the ball back in the attacking third.
The ideal CF would have pace, skill, strength, power and a good soccer brain, however what it comes down to is being able to put the ball in the back of the net. The CF should always look to get on the end of crosses and though balls, by creating space with the use of quick movement and cross over runs. CF's also have defensive duties that starts from the front.

The CM plays up and down the middle of the pitch. The CM requires combined abilities of being a strong tackler, strong in the air, the skill and vision to create opportunities for the forwards and the initiative to make forward runs to join the attackers. A crucial position, it’s in the center of midfield that matches are often won or lost.

The RM plays up and down the right channel. The RM plays right out on the touchline when the team are in possession; supplying crosses/creating chances for the forwards. When the team lose possession, the RM tucks inside playing as a unit across the middle and provides defensive cover for the RB.

The LM plays up and down the left channel. The LM plays right out on the touchline when the team are in possession; supplying crosses/creating chances for the forwards. When the team lose possession, the LM tucks inside playing as a unit across the middle and provides defensive cover for the LB.

The CB primarily plays against the center forwards. The CB needs to challenge/tackle for the ball and compete in the air. They also need to communicate frequently with the team, particularly with the defenders. The CB needs to play as a unit to maintain compactness in the defensive half of the pitch.

The RB plays on the right side of the four defenders. The RB main role is to prevent the opposition attack down the right side and importantly to play as a unit supporting the centre backs. The RB also plays a role in supporting in attack down the right channel by getting forward to supply crosses.

The LB plays on the left side of the four defenders. The LB main role is to prevent the opposition attack down the left side and importantly to play as a unit supporting the centre backs. The LB also plays a role in supporting in attack down the left channel by getting forward to supply crosses.

The GK needs to be brave and possess many attributes such as agility, quick feet, sharp reflexes, and good hands. GK's have to be able to retain concentration during long periods without action. GK's sometimes need to act as a sweeper with more emphasis on the control and kicking skills. GK distribution is just as important than stopping goals.
The 4-3-3 system is rarely used in today's game, however it is an attacking line-up. The system can be used as a tactic by a coach if goals are needed primarily late in the game.

The defense is played similarly to the 4-4-2 system as a conventional flat back four that requires compactness, balance and the capacity to play as a unit, up, down and across the pitch.

The three midfielders will usually play quite narrow as one unit across the pitch that provides attacking support for the forwards and protection to the defense.

The midfielders are also expected to compete with their opposite numbers; win the ball back and constantly feed the forwards at every opportunity.

With the luxury of an extra player upfront, the three forwards responsibility is obviously to create many chances and score goals.

They must constantly be searching and creating space with the use of overlapping and cross over runs for shooting opportunities.

From wide positions, e.g. the right winger needs to create chances for the center forward and left winger (who should tuck inside nearer to goal), by delivering crosses to the near and far post.

The forwards should constantly be communicating and develop an understanding where the others next move will be.
4-3-3 Formation

The ideal Forward would have pace, skill, strength, power & a good soccer brain, however what it comes down to is being able to put the ball in the back of the net. The Forward should always look to get on the end of crosses and though balls, by creating space with the use of quick movement and cross over runs. Forwards also have defensive duties that starts from the front.

The Midfielders plays up and down the middle of the pitch. The Midfielders requires combined abilities of being a strong tackler, strong in the air, the skill and vision to create opportunities for the forwards. In a 4-4-3 system, the Midfielders often play fairly narrow to their maintain shape. A crucial position, it’s in the center of midfield that matches are often won or lost.

The CB primarily plays against the center forwards. The CB needs to challenge/tackle for the ball and compete in the air. They also need to communicate frequently with the team, particularly with the defenders. The CB needs to play as a unit to maintain compactness in the defensive half of the pitch.

The RB plays on the right side of the four defenders. The RB main role is to prevent the opposition attack down the right side and importantly to play as a unit supporting the center backs. The RB also plays a role in supporting in attack down the right channel by getting forward to supply crosses.

The LB plays on the left side of the four defenders. The LB main role is to prevent the opposition attack down the left side and importantly to play as a unit supporting the center backs. The LB also plays a role in supporting in attack down the left channel by getting forward to supply crosses.

The GK needs to be brave and possess many attributes such as agility, quick feet, sharp reflexes, and good hands. GK’s have to be able to retain concentration during long periods without action. GK’s sometimes need to act as a sweeper with more emphasis on the control and kicking skills. GK distribution is just as important than stopping goals.
The 3-5-2 system provides numbers in midfield with the left and right wing backs playing the most crucial roles in the team.

The defense can be played with three central defenders or with a right and left full back and a central defender (or sweeper).

There are a few ways of playing the defense; man to man marking with the spare defender acting as a sweeper or as covering support behind the ball. Zonal defending which each defender is responsible for their area.

The right and left wing backs provide the width on the team. They need to be very fit as their job is to work the full length of the pitch, supporting both the defense when not in possession and the attack, creating chances supplying crosses for the forwards.

The three central midfielders can be played with two players playing a holding role to provide additional protection to the defense and the other one getting forward as often as possible to support the forwards.

A more defensive approach can be played in midfield with one of the central midfielders playing behind the other two to provide extra defensive cover.

The central midfielders are also expected to compete with their opposite numbers, win the ball back and feed the wing backs and forwards.

The forwards responsibility is to score goals, they must accomplish this by working together constantly searching and creating space for shooting opportunities from a pass or cross mostly supplied by the midfielders.

The two forwards should constantly be communicating and develop an understanding where the others next move will be.

The forwards should also act as the first line of defense working hard to block or win the ball back in the attacking third.
3-5-2 Formation

The ideal CF would have pace, skill, strength, power and a good soccer brain, however what it comes down to is being able to put the ball in the back of the net. The CF should always look to get on the end of crosses and though balls, by creating space with the use of quick movement and cross over runs. CF’s also have defensive duties that starts from the front.

The CM plays up and down the middle of the pitch. The CM requires combined abilities of being a strong tackler, strong in the air, the skill and vision to create opportunities for the forwards and the initiative to make forward runs to join the attackers. A crucial position, it’s in the center of midfield that matches are often won or lost.

Playing as Wing Back is the most demanding position in a 3-5-2 system. It's like playing 2 roles; RB and RM. Essentially when the team have possession the RWB plays the role of a RM; providing width right out on the touchline and supplying crosses/creating chances for the forwards. When the team don't have possession, the RWB must get back to support the center backs in defense.

Playing as Wing Back is the most demanding position in a 3-5-2 system. It's like playing 2 roles; LB and LM. Essentially when the team have possession the LWB plays the role of a LM; providing width right out on the touchline and supplying crosses/creating chances for the forwards. When the team don't have possession, the LWB must get back to support the center backs in defense.

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The GK needs to be brave and possess many attributes such as agility, quick feet, sharp reflexes, and good hands. GK's have to be able to retain concentration during long periods without action. GK's sometimes need to act as a sweeper with more emphasis on the control and kicking skills. GK distribution is just as important than stopping goals.
4-5-1 Formation

The 4-5-1 system is very similar to the 4-4-2, the difference being with the extra player in midfield making it a more of a defensive style of play.

A variation can be the 4-4-1-1 system with one player playing just behind the striker but dropping back into midfield when without the ball.

The defense is best played as a conventional flat back four that requires compactness, balance and the capacity to play as a unit, up, down and across the pitch.

The system provides numbers in midfield but some of them need to be ready to push forward at the slightest opportunity.

The three central midfielders can be played with two players playing a holding role to provide additional protection to the defense and the other one getting forward as often as possible to support the forward.

A more defensive approach can be played in midfield with one of the central midfielders playing behind the other two to provide extra defensive cover.

The central midfielders are also expected to compete with their opposite numbers, win the ball back and feed the wing backs and forward.

The two wide midfield players need to provide width supplying crosses in attack and offering defensive cover for the full backs.

The only forward has a demanding role that has to work hard to search and creating space when out numbered to receive the ball. The forward must be able to hold the ball up while waiting for support from midfield.

The forward should also act as the first line of defense working hard to block or win the ball back in the attacking third.
The ideal CF would have pace, skill, strength, power and a good soccer brain, however what it comes down to is being able to put the ball in the back of the net. The CF should always look to get on the end of crosses and though balls, by creating space with the use of quick movement and cross over runs. CF’s also have defensive duties that starts from the front.

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The LM plays up and down the left channel. The LM plays right out on the touchline when the team are in possession; supplying crosses/creating chances for the forwards. When the team lose possession, the LM tucks inside playing as a unit across the middle and provides defensive cover for the LB.

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The LB plays on the left side of the four defenders. The LB main role is to prevent the opposition attack down the left side and importantly to play as a unit supporting the centre backs. The LB also plays a role in supporting in attack down the left channel by getting forward to supply crosses.

The GK needs to be brave and possess many attributes such as agility, quick feet, sharp reflexes, and good hands. GK's have to be able to retain concentration during long periods without action. GK's sometimes need to act as a sweeper with more emphasis on the control and kicking skills. GK distribution is just as important than stopping goals.