

THE 4-1-2-1-2 GUIDE

The 4-1-2-1-2 guide is back for the 3rd straight Ultimate Team. I've been a dedicated FIFA player since FIFA 09, and a dedicated UT player since UT12. In UT12, the formation I started off with was the 4-4-1-1. I enjoyed using it and had success with it. One game, I came up against a player using the 4-1-2-1-2 and I remember how tough it was for me to defend against him and I was drawn to the formation. I sold my 4-4-1-1 team and built a 4-1-2-1-2 team. From there on, the rest is history. I would have never done the 4-1-2-1-2 guide in UT13 if not for persuasion from 2 forum members. I was amazed at how popular the guide was even though it was rushed and wasn't organized well. When I released the guide last year, I wanted to make sure I covered everything in a detailed and organized manner. The guide was popular again and even surpassed the UT13 guide in views and comments. I'll do my best and try to make the UT15 4-1-2-1-2 guide the best one yet.

I played FIFA 15 at an event in New York back in July. I mostly used the 4-1-2-1-2 then, but I couldn't really draw any conclusions for how the formation will perform in FIFA 15. Even on the demo and early access,(where I actually mostly used 41212-2) I couldn't tell how the formation will function. I wasn't sure if it'd still be my main formation. I actually initially planned on doing a 41212-2 guide first and leaving the 41212 guide for later. Once I started playing UT more, the formation I went with was 41212. As I made my way to Division 1, I realized that the 41212 will be my main formation for the 4th straight Ultimate Team. Remember that patience with the formation is always needed and it may not click right away. It's a new FIFA, so there's always an adjustment period.

Overview of the 4-1-2-1-2

The 4-1-2-1-2 is the most balanced formation in the game for me. It has 2 strikers for attacking effectiveness. A CAM that links everything. The LM/RM for width and outlet for counter attacks. A CDM that protects the back 4 and gets attacks rolling. And of course a back 4. It has every position, so every type of player can be used. Different work-rates make the formation function in different ways. I'll share later what work-rates I think are best for each position and how they differ. Using the formation more and more will help you play better and know the ins and outs of the formation.

HOW THE FORMATION FUNCTIONS IN ATTACK



HOW THE FORMATION FUNCTIONS IN DEFENSE



BENEFITS OF THE FORMATION

Versatility: It remains the greatest strength of the 4-1-2-1-2. The formation is extremely versatile and is adaptable against any formation, team and style. Multiple play-styles can be achieved with the 4-1-2-1-2 and all can be successful. The versatility of the formation allows you to be unpredictable which is always a positive. The versatility of the formation is for attacking and defending. Since there's every possible position, you're not limited with how you attack and the same applies for defending. By being unpredictable with the formation, you'll give yourself a better chance of success. You'll also enjoy using the formation because of the variety of options available. I've used the 4-1-2-1-2 for the 4th straight Ultimate Team now and I've never gotten bored of using it.

Passing/1-2 passing/Possession: In UT14, ground passing was nerfed and it became harder to monopolize possession and 1-2 passing had to be done with a more measured approach. In UT15, the ground passing has been buffed up and resembles UT13 in that aspect. Possession play is now more rewarding because of the buff to short passing. Possession play with the 4-1-2-1-2 is great, because you have 2 routes to choose from. What I mean by that is you can go through the middle or out wide. Out wide you can use the LB/LM or RB/RM to maneuver your way up the field. You can also go through the middle with your CDM and CAM, which is a bit more risky. If you lose the ball in the middle, your chances of getting countered are higher of course. You can also go through the middle with the CDM, LM/RM and CAM as well. How is that possible? The LM/RM can drift in and take the role of a LCM or RCM. While they do at times play a bit wider this UT than last year, they still tuck inside (especially with a custom tactic with free form positioning). Possession play with the 4-1-2-1-2 isn't limited. Since there's every position on the field, every space on the field is basically covered and you have tons of option to pass to. As always, I recommend keeping more possession in the final 3rd than in your own final 3rd. There will almost always be an option for a pass. Remember that the CAM is the link-up to everything. He plays the strikers through on goal and the LM/RM. He has a unique relationship with the CDM since they can be in close proximity to each other. The CDM as always shields the back 4 with his passing. Your CAM should still attempt the most passes, but if the LM/RM attempt the most passes, that's fine too. Your CDM should have the best passing accuracy. Your CDM will usually get the passing game going, but your CAM will have the key passes for chance creation in the final 3rd.

The 4-1-2-1-2 also remains a very good formation for 1-2 passing. Since ground passing was nerfed last year, you couldn't create the gaps from 1-2 passing in FUT14 like you could in FUT13. Since ground passing has received a buff, 1-2 passing can again be used to create gaps in your opponent's defense in a similar manner to FUT13. CAM to striker, back to CAM is still a great 1-2 combo. You can lull your opponent into rushing out and then your striker can make a run in behind the defense. LM/RM to CAM, back to CAM is another good combo. And of course 1-2 passes between striker work well again and are very good against aggressive opponents who bite on the 1-2 passes. The formation does a good job of spreading and breaking out which helps create gaps and lets you use the 1-2 passing to full effect. 1-2 passes are a good way of relieving pressure as well. Remember

that 1-2 passes can be used as diversion as well. You don't always have to return the pass right away. You can pass to another player which can then pass to the ball to the runner from the initial 1-2 pass. **Be unpredictable.** Remember to not over-do 1-2 passes and to not force them. The fluidity of the formation is great when you fully utilize the options.

A side tip for 1-2 passes: I usually return 1-2 passes with X(A on Xbox). The only time I really do triangle(Y for Xbox) is when my players are making runs in behind.

Multiple scoring options: The 2 strikers give you that extra attacking potency that other formations may lack. I personally think it's easier to consistently score when you have 2 strikers. Another thing to remember is that the CAM will be very productive for you as well. Your LM/RM can be productive, especially if you use players like Ronaldo, Bale, Robben, Neymar etc there. So you have 5 positions that are always a threat to score goals. This is really helpful if you go up against opponents who are good defensive or if they go ultra defensive/park the bus. The 4-1-2-1-2 is strong through the middle, but its wing play is also strong. Obviously the better the LM/RM you use, the better your wing play will be. While you may think Ronaldo and Bale would be wasted at LM/RM, they would thrive in the formation and would give you another dimension in attack.

Good against high pressure: High pressure in FUT14 was very popular and widely used in Division 1. It was loathed by people and while you could counter high pressure, it was at times difficult. Now high pressure has been nerfed as well and the changes to passing/dribbling make it easier to combat it. The way high pressure works now is similar to FUT13, and the way you can combat it is similar to FUT13 as well. Some opponents will still try to press you high up the field, but it can be countered and negated. One thing to remember is that you don't need to necessarily always go forward when getting pressed. Going forward constantly may play into your opponent's hand and you may force reckless passes. Sometimes passing back opens up a gap and you can then attack the gap leaving your opponent's shape disjointed and unorganized. Reading how your opponent presses is definitely helpful with countering it. Remember that with the changes to dribbling, you can dribble your way out of pressure as well(this is risky to do though, but it can be done).

Switching play to the other flank is a useful way of relieving pressure. When dealing with high pressure, I would always recommend using the wings more. It's less dangerous if you lose the ball out wide and you can simply recover & get your defense organized quicker. If you go through the middle, remember the CDM is there as a way to relieve pressure. 1-2 passes are a good way to relieve pressure. They create gaps and your main goal when dealing with high pressure is to create gaps so you can attack them. And again, 1-2 passes are more preferable out wide than the middle when dealing with high pressure. If you use the CDM, I'd always be wary of when you'll do a 1-2 pass with him. While it can be done, it should be done at a measured approach and when you know it won't be harmful. You don't need to rush with your passes when you're being pressed. But you should always plan ahead with your passes and think which pass will help me best relieve pressure. Using the game radar when you're being pressure high up the field is very

useful as well.

Good for high pressure: With the changes made to stamina and the fact that passing/dribbling is easier, high pressure is harder to do than in UT14. It has to be more calculated and there is more of a risk when pressing high up the field now, because it's easier to combat it. The 2 strikers help occupy the center backs and your pressing will start from there(must be manually). The CAM and CDM are key for pressing once your strikers are bypassed. And you have the RM/LM to press on the wings. I usually press aggressively when my opponent's center backs have the ball, as my chances of scoring increase from that. The changes to stamina have made it that if you do over-press, your plays can get injured during a game. Fitness will drop more as well. When your opponent works around your high press, it's important to regain your defensive shape and to stay focused. It is harder to press than in UT14 and there is more of a risk. Always analyze when you can high press and if your opponent can easily bypass it and creating gaps to be exploited. Using the game radar is useful as always.

Note: I know people won't be happy seeing me advocate high pressure play, but it's merely a benefit of the formation and I'm pointing that out. It is harder to do than in 14 and it's easier to counter now than in 14.

TEAM SET-UP

Strikers

Your strikers will be your most productive players in the 4-1-2-1-2. They will be the players who get you out of the tight spots and score you the winning goals. In FIFA 15, it's easier to play your way through the middle, so your choice of strikers will be very important to your success. Timely skill moves with strikers are beneficial and a great way to create space to get a shot away.. A great move to do with strikers to throw off opponents is the fake shot as you're receiving the pass. This move is all about getting the timing right. Use the left analog stick to determine the direction you want to go after pulling the move. The fake shot is most effective when an opponent's defender is on your back. I believe this move is more effective than the dummy to get past defenders. As in FIFA 14, you can use the move even when you're not near your opponent's box or when you don't have an opponent right behind you. It can be used for simply turning as well, although turning manually now is quicker than in 14.

Your strikers give you the best chance of scoring goals, so they should attempt the most shots usually. If you're playing an opponent who is defending very aggressively, 1-2 passes with your strikers are a great way to get in behind and through on goal. If you're just constantly doing 1-2 passes with your strikers, then it's just too predictable and won't provide you success consistently. You always need to keep your opponent guessing what your next move will be. If you get into good positions with strikers, shoot when you can. The key when you have a scoring opportunity with strikers is **to always maximize your chances of scoring goals**. So be wary of the angle and the strikers' weak foot if on the opposite side. If you're going 1 on 1 with the strikers, always try and shoot it with the player's preferred foot(this doesn't matter if the player has 5 star weak foot). Another important thing is to not rush your shots. This was always important in FIFA, but it's **even more important now** because of the changes to shooting and goalkeepers.

Strikers do get involved in build up play and it's important to not ignore them. They will provide plenty of assists and can have plenty of key passes in a game. Different work-rates for strikers change how they perform in the formation and it also changes how the formation performs. I recommend trying out every work-rate and see which work-rate pairing works best for you. I'll share what work-rate pairings I personally think are best and the best work-rates for strikers. I also think it's really helpful if your strikers have a minimum of 4* skills as it's easier to create space with them and definitely useful against opponents who are good defensively.

Most important attributes: Finishing, positioning, curve, reactions, shot power, volleys, penalties

Important attributes: Ball control, dribbling, acceleration/sprint speed, long shots, agility, balance, vision, heading accuracy, stamina

Best chemistry styles: Hunter, deadeye, finisher, sniper

Best Work-rates for Strikers

High/low: High/low strikers in the 4-1-2-1-2 are usually the most productive in terms of goals+assists. They tend to make the best runs (especially if they have the “tries to beat offsides trap” trait). They provide the best outlet for counter attacks as they’re higher up the field. It’s important to not force the pass and wait for the right moment to send them through on goal. Since they’re higher up the field, they help with pressing your opponent’s center backs as well. They also tend to occupy your opponent’s center backs’ space more, so the fake shot before pass works really well to get in through on goal or to simply create space. They do a good job of creating space nicely for your other striker and your CAM. I recommend using 1 high/low striker if you’re having trouble scoring goals. While high/low strikers are higher up the field, they do get involved in build-up play. They’re not just poachers in the formation, so don’t ignore them as you’re building up attacks.

*The **best** high/low striker:* Aguero

Good high/low strikers with 4 skills:* Dos Santos & Zarate

Good high/low strikers with 3 skills:* Emenike & Movsisyan

High/med: High/med strikers provide the best balance of productivity (scoring goals+assisting) and build-up play. They are more in unison with your CAM and combinations with the CAM are a bit easier compared to a high/low striker. While they aren’t usually as high up the field as a high/low striker, they are still a good outlet for counter attacks. It’s also feasible to pressure with a high/med striker just as you could with a high/low striker. High/med strikers help you dominate possession and control the game more than a high/low striker would. The spaces they operate in really help with playing your LM/RM (especially if they’re high/low) through on goal as they make runs forward. There are plenty of viable high/med strikers compared to high/low as well.

*The **best** high/med strikers:* Suarez, Falcao, Lewandowski, Chikhaoui

Good high/med strikers with 4 skills:* Doumbia, Martinez, Jovetic, Rodrigo, Rondon, Lacazette, Vargas, Villa

Good high/med strikers with 3 skills:* Costa, Higuain, Rossi, Palacio, Immobile, Lukaku

Med/low: They are like a hybrid between a center forward and striker. They drop a bit

deeper which can allow your LM/RM to thrive(especially if they're high/low). They can also help your other striker perform greater if he's not med/low. They are nicely involved in build-up play and help you monopolize possession even further. Med/low strikers will score you goals(especially if you use Messi or Ibra), so they will still be productive for you. Their main asset is that they help you dictate play easier and it's easier to combine with the CAM as well. I recommend using a med/low striker if you're struggling to pass well and make incisive passes. Also if you feel like your possession game is a bit off, try out a med/low striker.

*The **best** med/low strikers:* Messi & Ibra

Good med/low strikers: RVP, Benzema, Sturridge, Cerci

High/high: Similar to med/low, a hybrid between a center forward and striker. They help with keeping the shape of the formation compact. They can help with providing space for your other striker to shine(a high/low striker would be the greatest beneficiary from this). High/high strikers are involved in build up play as well and they definitely help with dictating play just like a med/low striker would. The main difference is that a high/high roams around more than a med/low striker and thus simply covers space on the field. This can be a positive and a negative. It's a positive for the fact that it'll help you defensively and allow you to be unpredictable(since they'll roam around). A negative is that sometimes they won't be in the best positions for chance creation and their runs may be a bit delayed. A high/high striker will be productive, but perhaps less so than the other options. I'd recommend a high/high striker only next to a high/low striker.

*The **best** high/high strikers:* Rooney & Tevez

Good high/high strikers: Mandzukic, Negredo, Olic, Welbeck

Note: *I do not recommend med/med strikers. That is the worst work-rate for a striker in my opinion in this formation. If you have success using med/med strikers in the 4-1-2-1-2, then definitely use them.*

Recommended striker work-rate pairings: High/med-High/med, high/low-high/med, high/low-med/low, high/med/-med/low, high/low-high/high

CENTRAL ATTACKING MID (CAM)

The CAM is the key for making the formation flow better. In UT13, I said the CAM was the key to a successful 4-1-2-1-2. In UT14, I said he was important, but not as important. In UT15, I think the CAM is more important than UT14. Since it is easier to play through the middle and narrow play is popular, your choice of CAM will greatly impact your chances of success. The CAM is the link-up player in the formation. He plays your strikers through on goal. He plays your LM/RM through on goal when they make runs. He works together with the CDM to control the midfield. Your CAM should have the most key passes in a game and should always be up there with the most passes attempted and completed. The CAM is the creator in the team. Your CAM will score goals and assist goals. If you're in space and there's a good chance of a goal, take the shot.

I think a minimum of 4* skills is really useful for a CAM. It helps you get out of crowded spaces easier and it's easier to create space with 4* skills. Good dribbling and passing help as well. While dribbling is easier this UT, it's important to not over-dribble with the CAM as it can stagnate attacks. The CAM makes the formation flow and if you over-dribble, your opponent will get his defense organized and you've to reset play all over again. The CAM is the main player to do with 1-2 passes with as always. CAM to striker, back to CAM is a great way of building momentum and creating gaps. Unpredictability with the 4-1-2-1-2 is important and it starts with the CAM.

Most important attributes: Vision, positioning, short passing, agility, balance, reactions, ball control, dribbling

Important attributes: Finishing, shot power, long shots, acceleration/sprint speed, curve, stamina

Best Chemistry styles: Deadeye, maestro, sniper, hunter

Best Work-rates for CAM

High/low: A high/low CAM acts as a 3rd striker in the formation. He is right up there with the strikers. A triangle of the 3 forms for quick intricate interplay. A high/low CAM will also tend to man mark your opponent's CDM at times, so you can try and nick the ball away and you've got a goal scoring opportunity on your hands. If your opponent is using a formation with 2 center backs, your high/low and 2 strikers can get into positions where you outnumber your opponent in the final third through the middle. A high/low

CAM will be the most productive, and since he rarely tracks back, pressing is easier. While a high/low CAM is higher up the field, they are involved in build-up play if you don't ignore them. A potential negative is that if you use a med/high CDM or low/med CDM with a high/low CAM, there can be a bit of a gap in the midfield. This makes it tougher to transition from midfield to attack at times, but not always. It's important to bypass this gap either out wide or through the middle by carrying the ball with the CDM (be wary when you do this though). You can of course do a 1-2 from the CDM to CAM and then back to CDM, just to lessen the gap a bit as well. I would recommend a high/low CAM if your chance creation in the final 3rd is lacking. The big negative though is that there's a really lack of good high/low CAM options this UT. Hopefully as we progress through FUT15, more options become available.

The best high/low CAM options: IF Silva & Isco

High/med: The perfect balance for making the formation tick. A high/med CAM gets into the best positions better than any other option and lessens gaps throughout the team. He is the perfect link-up option, and allows your strikers & LM/RM to thrive to the maximum effect. A high/med CAM will be productive for you as well. While he won't be as high up the field as a high/low CAM would be, a triangle between the strikers and a high/med CAM still happens and neat intricate interplay can be achieved (especially if you go with 2 high/med strikers). He also makes it easier to transition from midfield to attack, as he's closer to the CDM than a high/low CAM is. A high/high CDM and high/med work extremely well as a combination. The midfield will be more compact and you can dominate the midfield defensively and offensively. If you're using the formation for the 1st time in UT15, I recommend a high/med CAM. If you're just struggling overall with the formation, I recommend a high/med CAM. A big plus also is that there's an abundance of good high/med CAM options in UT15.

The best high/med CAM options: Iniesta, Modric, Pogba, De Bruyne

Good high/med CAM options with 4 skills: Gundogan, Mertens, Kagawa, Diego, Valbuena, Coutinho, Bernard, Boateng, Guarin, Cabella, Lallana*

Good high/med CAM options with 3 skills: Fabregas, Hamsik, Paulinho*

Med/med-med/low: They perform similarly just like last year, so I've put them together again. They are greatly involved in build-up as they drop deeper and they take up positions close to the CDM, so you can control possession easier. Their productivity will be less than a high/med or high/low CAM perhaps, but they will still score you goals. As they drop a bit deeper, this can help with combating pressure. They are a good outlet for counter attacks as well. Your ability to press will be lessened, as they can be quite lazy defensively in terms of the positions and space they take up. In general, I consider med/med or med/low the "lazy" work-rate in UT and I always recommend not having too many medium attacking players in a 4-1-2-1-2. That being said, if you have success with a medium attacking CAM, then definitely use them. They are really useful in dictating

play and they can free up space nicely for the rest of the team.

*The **best** med/med-med/low CAM options:* James, Ozil, Mata, Gotze, Hernanes

Good med/med-med/low CAM options with 4 skills:* Thiago, Firmino, Witsel, Dembele, Tadic, Dzagoev

Good med/med-med/low CAM options with 3 skills:* Yaya, Xavi, Kroos, Sneijder, Rakitic, Pjanic, Moutinho

High/high: A high/high CAM roams around and covers space more than any other option. This helps a lot defensively, especially if you use a high/low LM/RM(it protects them, since they rarely track back). Since they roam around a lot, this can help you be unpredictable. They get involved in build-up similarly to how a med/med-med/low CAM does and they'll be productive for you as well. The main difference from the 2 for me is that a high/high CAM is simply less lazy and it's visible. He's just everywhere on the field offensively and defensively. If your CDM ventures forward too much, a high/high CAM can help cover the gaps he leaves behind. I recommend using a high/high CAM if you're getting countered too much with the 4-1-2-1-2.

*The **best** high/high CAM options:* Di Maria & Henrikh Mkhitaryan

Good high/high CAM options: Vidal, Marchisio, Nainggolan, Ramsey

LEFT MID / RIGHT MID (LM/RM)

The LM/RM completely transform the formation if you use a game changer(players like Ronaldo, Robben, Bale, Hazard, Neymar, etc). A winger that excels in formations like the 433 variants, also excels here. Using 1 game changer elevates the formation and improves your chances of success, fluid play, and goal scoring opportunities. Pace isn't a necessity, but it does help. If you use good dribblers, it helps with dodging tackles and creating space. The LM/RM are very useful for negating pressing as well. They do combine nicely with the LB/RB(more-so if you use attacking LB/RB). While the LM/RM maybe play a bit wider in 15 than in 14, they do drift inside and take up pockets of space near your CAM and CDM occasionally. This helps you control the midfield and makes transitioning from midfield to attack much easier. You should dribble the most with your LM/RM probably, but as always don't over-dribble to stifle the flow of the formation. The LM/RM will score goals (especially if you use Ronaldo, Robben, etc here), but that's just 1 of their roles in the formation.

Lots of people think that wingers are useless in FUT15 and that they barely get involved. I don't think that's the case. Their involvement has to come directly from you and how you use them. So don't ignore them in the formation and use them as a goal-scoring threat and play-making threat. Positioning does seem to matter more this FUT, so LM/RM with higher positioning will perform better and the custom tactic helps them get more involved as well. The right LM/RM simply make the formation perform to its peak. "The game-changers." The ones that truly make the formation special are recommended and they will not be wasted if you use them correctly. A minimum of 4* skills is recommended.

Most important attributes: Dribbling, ball control, acceleration/sprint speed, reactions, positioning, finishing, long shots, shot power,

Important attributes: agility, balance, vision, curve, stamina

Best chemistry styles: hunter, deadeye, sniper

Best Work-rates for LM/RM

High/low: The best work-rate for a LM/RM. I've covered work-rates for the CAM and striker, and I think all can be equally effective. As for a high/low LM/RM, its effectiveness cannot be matched. It gives the formation an extra dimension. They play a

triple role in the formation that makes it thrive. They're the best outlet for counter attacks (since they're higher up the field and usually in good positions to start up a counter attack). They're useful in pressing your opponent's LB/RB out wide. And finally, they act like a winger because of the work-rate. They often make surging runs in behind from on counter attacks or from quick transitions of build-up to attack. A high/low LM/RM will be more productive than any other work-rate in the 4-1-2-1-2. Their involvement isn't limited to those runs in behind. As I mentioned, LM/RM do tuck inside which makes it easier to control the midfield. You can create plenty of chances for your strikers to score. Ronaldo isn't wasted if you use him here. While his productivity won't match what it would be in a 4-3-3 variant, players like him bring out the best out of the 4-1-2-1-2. I recommend a high/low work-rate for a LM/RM over any other work-rate, but only if the player is truly amazing. If there is 1 negative, it's that the best players here are expensive and there seems to be less and less high/low LM-RM every year.

*The **best** high/low LM-RM options: Ronaldo & Robben*

Good high/low LM-RM options: Silva, Vela, Nani

High/med: The 2nd best work-rate for a LM/RM and depending on the player, it can be close to being as effective as a high/low LM-RM. They can still make those runs in behind, but less than a high/low does. A high/med LM/RM can drift inside a bit more occasionally which helps the midfield stay compact and gives you a good defensive shape. They're also helpful for negating high pressure, since they're not as high up the field. They will score goals, but less than a high/low LM-RM would. A positive is that there's plenty more usable high/med LM-RM options than high/low LM-RM.

*The **best** high/med LM-RM options: Hazard, Ribery, Neymar, Reus, Bale*

Good high/med LM-RM options: Sanchez, Cuadrado, Hulk, Candreva, Mirallas, Sterling, Shaqiri, McGeady, Nasri, Pedro, Eriksen, Lavezzi, Griezmann

Note: I don't recommend med/med or med/low. I think they act too lazily for the formation. If you have success with a med/med or med/low LM-RM, then definitely use it.

CENTRAL DEFENSIVE MID (CDM)

The CDM will be the player who protects the back 4. He can shield them with his distribution, but also last gasp tackles to stop counter attacks. He'll be the player with the most tackles in the team probably. An aggressive CDM is helpful dealing with opponents who play through the middle a lot. He'll make the key interceptions and be the most integral player for controlling the midfield battle. I think your CDM should have the best passing accuracy each. Be careful when you do 1-2 passes with the CDM and avoid playing risky passes in your own half. This year, the CDM tends to venture forward a bit more. It can give you increased attacking potency, but can leave gaps behind. So be wary when the CDM ventures forward. He is a good option to relieve pressure through the middle. As always, the CDM remains the x-factor. Your CDM frees up the front 5 to perform to their best.

Most important attributes: short passing, long passing, vision, positioning, aggression, interceptions, marking, slide/short tackle, strength, reactions, jumping, stamina

Important attributes: acceleration/sprint speed, long shots, shot power, dribbling, ball control

Best chemistry styles: shadow, catalyst, powerhouse

Best Work-rates for CDM

Med/high: A med/high CDM gives you the best defensive cover. He's not overly aggressive, but not too passive either. While he can venture forward at times, he is important for your defensive shape. If you manually use your CDM to intercept passes, a med/high CDM will be the best option for that. A med/high CDM allows the front 5 to have the most freedom. I recommend a med/high CDM if you're using the formation for the 1st time.

Good med/high CDM options: Alonso, Khedira, Oscar (he would work, but his strength is probably a weakness), De Rossi, Matic, Fernandinho, Gustavo, Felipe Melo, Fernando, Javi Garcia

High/high: He roams around and covers space more than any other option. He ventures forward to give you an extra dimension in attack. This can be a bit risky, so you've got to be careful to not lose the ball as he goes forward. A high/high CDM can leave you exposed at times defensively, but he does make it easier to press. 1-2 passes with a CDM

are risky, but even more so with a high/high CDM, so be careful when you decide to do them. My final team in UT14 had a high/high CDM and it was the 2nd best team I've ever had in UT. Schweinsteiger was the CDM and he was key. A high/high CDM is just as successful as a med/high CDM.

*The **best** high/high CDM options:* Schweinsteiger, Vidal, Marchisio

Good high/high CDM options: Lahm, Matuidi, Ramsey, Ramires, Lars/Sven Bender, Strootman

***Note:** I don't think med/med works well. I've not used Yaya, but he is probably an exception and would be great at CDM.*

CENTER BACKS (CB)

In UT14, center backs with good heading were essential. In UT13, center backs with pace weren't "essential", but they definitely helped. In UT15, I think center backs with pace help just like in UT13. Since narrow play is more popular than wing play now, opponents tend to use fast strikers. At least 1 CB that's fairly quick helps dealing with them. High aggression center backs are also useful as they tend to close down quicker and fend off the threat a bit easier. One thing that's easier this year, is building up from the back. While strength is less effective this year, center backs with good strength are useful in cancelling out the initial acceleration from your opponent's players. So more technical center backs definitely stand out. Just be careful to not make too many risky passes. In terms of work-rates, almost all can work and be successful. Test out different CB pairings and see which work-rates work best for you. I personally think med/med, med/high, high/high and high/med are the best.

Important attributes: marking, slide/standing tackle, reactions, strength, aggression, reactions, acceleration/sprint speed, heading

Best chemistry styles: shadow, sentinel, anchor

Best center back options: Ramos, Thiago Silva, Hummels, Kompany, Boateng, Chiellini, Pique, Godin, Benatia, Miranda, Pepe, Barazgli, David Luiz, Sokratis, Koscielny, Mangala

Good center back options: Javi Martinez, Mascherano, Dante, Subotic, Howedes, Vertonghen, Castran, Varane, Cahill, Mathieu

LEFT BACK / RIGHT BACK (LB/RB)

They combine with the LM/RM out wide and can often help out-number your opponent's full backs. They can overlap at times, but rarely. Just like in UT14, they don't push up that high up the field, so using an high/med full back is preferable. A high/med full back can be useful against opponents who sit back and try to absorb your attacks and then hit you on the counter. Your full backs are also a good way to relieve high pressure in your half. They will usually be open on opposite flanks. So when you are getting high pressed, switch play to the other wing to your full back and transition to attack from there. I recommend high/med for a full-back, as it helps you going forward, but you do get adequate defensive cover. Med/med or high/high can work as well.

Important attributes: acceleration/sprint speed, marking, slide/standing tackle, reactions, jumping, short passing, dribbling, heading, interceptions, aggression

The best LB/RB options: Alves, Piszcek, Marcelo, Alaba, Baines, Luis, Alba, Clichy, Juanfran, Carvajal, Coentrao, Konko, De Marcos, Moreno, Coleman, Aurier

SAMPLE TEAMS





PLAYER INSTRUCTIONS

Player instructions are a great way to further customize the formation to your play-style. I've fiddled around with them a lot and I've found the best instructions for my style that gives me more chances of success. Player instructions change a player's behavior on the field, so you can kind of alter their work-rates, but not entirely. The ability to implement player instructions gives every formation more depth in the game and allows you to be even more adaptable. The instructions also maximize the formation's versatility.

Basic Player Instructions

Strikers - default

CAM - default

LM/RM - stay forward(*only for the one that is more likely to score*), cut inside, make runs in behind

CDM - stay back while attacking

LB/RB - default

CB - default

All-out Attack Player Instructions

Strikers - (set the pacier striker to make runs in behind)

CAM - stay on the edge of the box for crosses

LM/RM - stay forward, cut inside, make runs in behind

CDM - stay back while attacking

LB/RB - always overlap

CB - default

You can use these instructions when you're chasing the game and combine the instructions with the attacking or ultra attacking mentality. This can serve as a better alternative to the all out attack mentality option.

Possession Player Instructions

Strikers - (set the more creative one to stay central)

CAM - default

LM/RM - come short, free roam

CDM - stay back while attacking

LB/RB - default

CB - default

You can use these instructions if you're down a man and struggling to keep possession. It can also be combined with the defensive mentality option.

CUSTOM TACTICS

I've used a custom tactic since FIFA 10 as I wanted to further customize how I play. I've mostly used the same one with a few tweaks here and there.

To set up a custom tactic on UT15, you have to challenge the TOTW. Edit and select the tactic there. Back out from the TOTW challenge and go play FUT online. The default tactic will be the custom tactic until you quit FUT. Once you resume FUT, you have to re-do challenging the TOTW and choosing the tactic there. Custom tactics still work, but they're more of a hassle to create

The "JukeZ" Tactic

Build Up

Speed 70
Passing 25
Free Form

Chance Creation

Passing 70
Crossing 30
Shooting 70
Free Form

Defense

Pressure 70
Aggression 60
Team Width 50
Cover

If you feel the tactic makes you too susceptible to counter attacks, then drop the pressure+aggression to 30-30. If you're using the tactic for the 1st time, trying out organized for build-up and then slowly progressing to free form is helpful

STYLE OF PLAY

As I've said, any style can work. You can play possession, counter attacking, and direct. It's best to realize what style best suits you and make changes to the team and work-rates to match that style. This is what makes 4-1-2-1-2 unique. It can adapt on the go against team and formation. Remember to analyze your opponent's team and take note of the work-rates for his players before you start playing. Try and see how your opponent will play, and then make adjustments on the fly. There is always an option to pass to. Remember to stay composed. Once you get the timing of passing down, you'll start passing better. You can play direct and quick of course. Don't rush your attacks like a maniac though.

The 4-1-2-1-2 does a good job of creating gaps, but you have to make them happen. Remember to use neat 1-2 passes at times throughout the game. Use the shot fake with your strikers at times to get away from defenders. Use the LM/LB and RM/RB as a duo in attack at times. If you're getting stuck and trying to pass your way into goal, then start shooting more. If your opponent is backing off on the wings, then use smart crosses. Don't cross just senselessly. More gaps will open from your opponent trying to close down your shot. There is always an option to pass to, but you have to be quick and know where and when to pass. Try and notice if you can be more adventurous or if you need to be a little patient. This is of course dependant on the opponent and the game-flow. Remember: If you're only doing 1-2's between the striker and CAM, then you're not utilizing the formation. You don't always need to go forward and force it. Remain composed. Once you play more and more with the formation, you'll get better and better.

Note: I copied this from the FUT14 guide. I feel like it's worded perfectly, and it still applies to FUT15 as well.

SCORING GOALS

So scoring goals in FUT15 is difficult and there's definitely a learning curve to it. One way to improve on scoring goals is to play the advanced shooting skill challenge. The scenarios you get in the skill challenge often happen in games you play. Scenarios like 2 on 1, 3 on 3, 3 on 2, 2 on 2 situations. It helps massively and it also helps with improving your decision making in the final 3rd. I play that skill game usually once a day and it's really helpful. In general for FUT15 far post shots aren't reliable and near posts are the best way to consistently score.

The Best Ways to Score Goals with the 4-1-2-1-2

1-2 passes between the strikers: It's important to not over-do this, but against people who are playing aggressive defensive, this is a great way to get in behind your opponent's defense.

Fake-shot with the strikers: The best way to do this is when your strikers are on the edge of the box and your opponent's defender is RIGHT behind them. Execute the fake-shot correctly, and you should be through on goal.

1-2 passes between the LM/RM and the striker with a cut-back to the CAM: Just a simple 1-2 pass when your winger is out wide to the striker, and look for the CAM at the edge of the box.

CAM out wide to LM/RM: This is best used in transition from CDM to CAM and then look to the wings for a run in behind the defense. This can also be used while patiently passing around creating gaps and then shifting play quick out wide to the running LM or RM.

Triangle between Strikers and CAM: This is best used in a counter attack, but has to be done quick. Do a 1-2 pass between the strikers, but don't return it to the striker. Lay it off to the CAM and look for the striker running in behind the defense.

Step-over cut in with LM/RM: As you're sprinting down the wings from a pass, try a cheeky step-over inside and sprint towards goal for the shot. Most people **anticipate you** continuing your run out wide, so this does trick people.

Strikers out wide to LM/RM: Similar to 'CAM out wide to LM/RM', but this is best used while in possession as you're probing your opponent's defense.

DEFENDING WITH THE 4-1-2-1-2

Defending the kick-off: In UT14, the KSI kick-off exploit was a popular method people used. In UT15, the kickoff exploit is no longer a lobbed through ball. It's using a player from kick-off and sprinting right at the heart of the defense. This is down to the game mechanics favoring attacking instead of defending. Also the player positioning for certain formations on kick-off are positioned in a way where you can cut through the middle easily. Unfortunately the 4-1-2-1-2 is vulnerable to the kick-off sprint method.

There are 2 methods to counter this. The easier one is to manually take a striker and drag him back in the middle, and then prepare for the initial sprint so you can nick the ball away. The riskier one is to simply double team the player (with your CAM and CDM) who starts sprinting right at your defense. Jockey and wait for the right moment to nick the ball away (from a slide tackle or standing tackle). Again, it's all about anticipating the initial sprint and then reacting. You can't be too passive, as they'll sprint by you. You can't be too aggressive, as they can evade the tackle. You have to have the right balance.

Defending 1-2 passes: The best way to create gaps is from 1-2 passes, so you have to be wary when defending them. So I have 2 methods on how to deal with them. One is to cut off the supply. When you notice a player on a run after a pass, it's usually initiated from a 1-2 pass, so you can rush towards the recipient of the 1st pass and then either nick the ball away or block the incoming pass. The other way is to anticipate the 2nd pass and intercept it. You can do this manually. You can also back off and have the CPU cover the runner and then switch to intercept the pass.

Defending lob through balls: Similarly to 1-2 passes. You can either cut out the supply or anticipate the lob by manually switching in time. In general player switching is still a bit laggy, but the long lobbed through balls hang in the air more now compared to FUT14, so they're less of a nuisance. In general, the shorter lobs are more devastating now and they're tougher to defend. So you have to anticipate and be ready to react quick.

Defending quick corners: In FUT15, I'm not sure if it's a bug or not, but you can call a 2nd player to the corner during the corner cut scene and it usually catches opponents off guard. So be wary during corners and pay attention. Be ready to rush out towards the player (rush cautiously, so you don't get burned though), so he doesn't get a free run to goal. Most people do this in the higher corners as it's more of a goal-scoring chance than simply crossing it in.

Defending pace: Pace now is more effective than it was in UT14. Zig-zag dribbling is very effective and not easy to defend. Once players accelerate initially away from you, it's really tough to catch up. So it's important to anticipate the initial sprint, as that is your best chance of winning the ball back. Backing off and inviting the acceleration works well as some opponents blindly sprint towards you. Defending pace through the middle is tougher than out wide. In general, you'll have faster players out wide and it's less of a threat if your opponent gets past you. Your recovery time is quicker as well.

Defending pace through the middle can be achieved, but it's all about timing the tackle. Jockeying is superior to containing as it gives you more defensive flexibility. Slide tackling from the sides works well with the right timing. Be careful if you do a slide tackle from behind(they can result in red cards).

Summary: Be cautious when you're getting countered. Sometimes I try to anticipate what pass my opponent is trying to make and I bait him into making the pass I want him to make. Another tip I can give you is not to contain. Contain restricts your defensive freedom. Jockey instead. Manually use your players to make tackles as well. They will be more precise that way.

Try to see what your opponent is trying to do and bait him into doing it, so you can intercept the pass or make a crucial tackle. Analyze how your opponent is playing and try to shut off his strengths and expose his weaknesses. Try to limit dumb mistakes. I press when it's necessary, but drop off when needed as well. I don't want to be passive in defense. If I make a mistake, I'll usually position myself so that if I miss a tackle or miss the interception, I'll have a defender close by. I would press the most in your opponent's half. In your half, I would try and force your opponent into making a mistake.

KEYS TO SUCCESS WITH THE 4-1-2-1-2

Practice: The more you use the formation, the better you'll play with it. Using it in H2H and then transitioning to UT allows you to adjust to the formation even quicker. I've used it for numerous games now and each UT, I play better and better with it.

Unpredictability: It is the greatest strength of the formation and you've got to apply it in every game for increased chances of success.

Work-rates: I've covered what work-rates I think are best. You can of course fiddle around and find which work-rates work best for you. Once you find the best combos, stick with them for a good amount.

Patience: If the formation doesn't click right away, don't give it up. Give it at least 10 games. It's not that easy moving from formation to formation in FIFA. If you have tough games with the formation or end up on a losing streak, analyze the games. Realize what you did wrong and fix it. You learn more from losing than winning.

Fun: It's why we play FIFA. For fun. If you're not having fun with the formation, then use something else. Always have fun with the formation you use.

CONCLUSION

The 4-1-2-1-2 remains a great formation. It is successful in seasons/cups/single matches. Remember this is my opinion on the formation. I've tried to lay it out so that you can customize your own teams after reading the guide. Ask any questions. Feel free to let me know anything. Constructive criticism won't be ignored. I will update the guide throughout FUT15. Cheers for taking the time to read it.