

# Gaelic Football - The Basics

The following are the positions of Gaelic Football.. Like rugby and baseball (and unlike soccer), these have set positions which haven't changed in decades. In most cases, each player sticks firmly to his position, although players sometimes switch positions at the order of their coach, manager or captain.

Each team consists of one goalkeeper (who wears a different colour jersey), six backs, two mid fielders, and six forwards: fifteen players in all.

The positions are listed below, with the jersey number usually worn by players in that position given.

## Positions for Gaelic Football (for 15 aside)

No.	Position	Alternate Name	Os Gaeilge
1	Goalkeeper	Goalie, Keeper	<i>Cúl báire</i>
2	Right corner back	Right full back	<i>Lánchúlaí deas</i>
3	Full back		<i>Lánchúlaí láir</i>
4	Left corner back	Left full back	<i>Lánchúlaí clé</i>
5	Right half back	Right wing back	<i>Leathchúlaí deas</i>
6	Centre half back	Centre back	<i>Leathchúlaí láir</i>
7	Left half back	Left wing back	<i>Leathchúlaí clé</i>
8	Midfielders	Centre-field	<i>Lár na páirce</i>
9	Midfielders	Centre-field	<i>Lár na páirce</i>
10	Right half forward	Right wing forward	<i>Leatosáí deas</i>
11	Centre half forward	Centre forward	<i>Leatosáí láir</i>
12	Left half forward	Left wing forward	<i>Leatosáí clé</i>
13	Right corner forward	Right full forward	<i>Lántosaí deas</i>
14	Full forward		<i>Lántosaí láir</i>
15	Left corner forward	Left full forward	<i>Lántosaí clé</i>
16+	Substitutes	Subs	<i>Fir ionad</i> <i>Mná ionad</i>



## Goalkeeper

The role of goalkeeper who wears the number 1 jersey in Gaelic games is similar to other that of Goalkeeper in soccer, i.e. to prevent the ball from entering the goal. The goalkeeper in Gaelic football also has the role of kicking the ball out to the outfield players. A good goalkeeper most often has good agility and bravery as well as strength and height. In Gaelic football a keeper's shot stopping ability is of great importance. There is no limit to where on the field the goalkeeper can travel, although once they are outside of the 'penalty area,' they are subject to the same rules as all other players. A goalkeeper in men's football may touch the ball on the ground within the 'penalty area', and is the only player permitted to do so. It is not permitted to physically challenge a goalkeeper while inside their own small parallelogram, but players may harass them into playing a bad pass, or block an attempted pass.

## Positions for Gaelic Football (for 13 aside)

No.	Position	Alternate Name	Os Gaeilge
1	Goalkeeper	Goalie, Keeper	<i>Cúl báire</i>
2	Right corner back	Right full back	<i>Lánchúlaí deas</i>
3	Left corner back	Left full back	<i>Lánchúlaí clé</i>
4	Right half back	Right wing back	<i>Leathchúlaí deas</i>
5	Centre half back	Centre back	<i>Leathchúlaí láir</i>
6	Left half back	Left wing back	<i>Leathchúlaí clé</i>
7	Midfielders	Centre-field	<i>Lár na páirce</i>
8	Midfielders	Centre-field	<i>Lár na páirce</i>
9	Right half forward	Right wing forward	<i>Leatosáí deas</i>
10	Centre half forward	Centre forward	<i>Leatosáí láir</i>
11	Left half forward	Left wing forward	<i>Leatosáí clé</i>
12	Right corner forward	Right full forward	<i>Lántosaí deas</i>
13	Left corner forward	Left full forward	<i>Lántosaí clé</i>
14+	Substitutes	Subs	<i>Fir ionad</i> <i>Mná ionad</i>



Some under-age games are played 13-a-side. In this formation the full back and full forward positions are removed.

Depending on the manager, the duties of the "Full Back" may be assigned to either the Right Corner Back or the Left Corner Back.

## Full Backs

### Right Corner Back

The role of the right Corner Back who wears the number 2 jersey is to defend against opposing attackers, in particular the left corner forward. The right corner back will play mostly around the 20 metre line. The position of the right corner back requires that the player have decent speed over short bursts and good hand eye co-ordination. Endurance and strength are unnecessary, although agility of the player is required.

### Full Back

The role of full back who wears the number 3 jersey is one of the most important in Gaelic football. As well as defending against attackers, the Full Back is responsible for organizing the defense and is the key defender in front of goals, and is usually one of the physically strongest players on the team. The full back plays most often around the 20 metre line. The position of the full back requires that the player have decent speed over short bursts and good hand eye co-ordination. Unlike the corner backs, the full back is needed to make short burst sprints both away from and into the goal area.

### Left Corner Back

The role of the left Corner Back who wears the number 4 jersey is to defend against opposing attackers, in particular the right corner forward. The left corner back will play mostly around the 20 metre line. The position of the left corner back requires that the player be have decent speed over short bursts and good hand eye co-ordination and agility.

## Positions for Gaelic Football (for 11 aside)

No.	Position	Alternate Name	Os Gaeilge
1	Goalkeeper	Goalie, Keeper	<i>Cúl báire</i>
2	Right corner back	Right full back	<i>Lánchúlaí deas</i>
3	Left corner back	Left full back	<i>Lánchúlaí clé</i>
4	Right half back	Right wing back	<i>Leathchúlaí deas</i>
5	Left half back	Left wing back	<i>Leathchúlaí clé</i>
6	Midfielders	Centre-field	<i>Lár na páirce</i>
7	Midfielders	Centre-field	<i>Lár na páirce</i>
8	Right half forward	Right wing forward	<i>Leatosáí deas</i>
9	Left half forward	Left wing forward	<i>Leatosáí clé</i>
10	Right corner forward	Right full forward	<i>Lántosaí deas</i>
11	Left corner forward	Left full forward	<i>Lántosaí clé</i>
12+	Substitutes	Subs	<i>Fir ionad Mná ionad</i>



Some under-age games are played 11-a-side. In this formation the full back, centre back, centre forward and full forward positions are removed.

Again depending on the manager, the duties of the "Full Back" may be assigned to either the Right Corner Back or the Left Corner Back.

## Half Backs

### Right Half Back

The role of the right half back who wears the number 5 jersey is less defensive than that of the corner backs. The right half backs operate most often in between the 45 metre line and the midfield. The right half backs are expected to defend against the opposition's half forward line but also has a responsibility to make runs from the 45 metre line in order to advance the play to the half forward and full forward lines.

### Centre Half Back

The role of the centre half back who wears the number 6 jersey, is less defensive than that of the full back. The centre backs operates from the 45 metre line and forward to the midfield. The centre back will help win the breaking ball in the midfield and can be used as a 3rd midfielder. The centre half back generally marks the centre half forward.

### Left Half Back

The role of the left half back who wears the number 7 jersey is less defensive than that of the corner backs. The left half backs operate most often in between the 45 metre line and the midfield. The left half backs are expected to defend against the opposition's half forward line but also has a responsibility to make runs from the 45 meter line in order to advance the play to the half forward and full forward lines.

## Midfield

The role of the midfielder who wears the number 8 or 9 jersey is to catch kick outs (fielding) from either team's goalkeeper, and to act as the main link between the defending and attacking sections of the team. Midfield is often described as the most important role on the pitch. If the opposing goalkeeper is kicking the ball to the middle of the field, the midfielder has the responsibility to retrieve the ball and therefore prevent the opposing team from taking advantage and bringing the ball forward. This then gives a new responsibility to the midfielder to get the ball moving forward to the half forward and full forward lines. It is important for the midfielder to have a good understanding of their goalkeeper. They must anticipate where their goalkeeper will place the ball and therefore take advantage and bring the ball forward. Note that there is rarely a "left midfielder" and "right midfielder" - both play 'off' each other as a combined unit.

## Half Forwards

### Right Half Forward

The role of the right half forward who wears the number 10 jersey is to build up attacks and to feed the ball to the full forward line and also taking shots on goal or above the bar when opportunities present themselves. The half forwards will cover a lot of ground and utilizing speedy half forwards to run at defences is a common tactic. The right half forward operates from the midfield to the opposition's 45 meter line. The right half forward's main opposing player is the left half back.

### Centre Half Forward

The role of the centre forward (often called "centre half forward") who wears the number 11 jersey, is to build up attacks and feed the ball to the full forward line. The centre half forward is responsible for taking shots on goal and points when opportunities present themselves. The centre forwards will cover a lot of ground and utilizing speedy half forwards to run at defences is a common tactic. The centre forward also helps win breaking ball in the midfield, helping to win the possession in order to bring the ball forward. The centre half forward operates from the midfield to the opposition's 45 metre line.

### Left Half Forward

The role of the left half forward who wears the number 12 jersey is to build up attacks and to feed the ball to the full forward line and also taking shots on goal or above the bar when opportunities present themselves. The half forwards will cover a lot of ground and utilizing speedy half forwards to run at defences is a common tactic. The left half forward operates from the midfield to the opposition's 45 metre line. The left half forwards main opposing player is the right half back.

## Full Forwards

### Right Corner Forward

The role of the right corner forward who wears the number 13 jersey is to score points and goals. The full forward line operates around the opposition's 21 metre line. The right corner forward is generally marked by the left corner back.

### Full Forward

The role of the full forward who wears the number 14 jersey is to score goals in particular although points are usually the outcome of their attempts on goal. The full forward line operates around the opposition's 21 metre line. The full forward is generally marked by the full back.

### Left Corner Forward

The role of the left corner forward who wears the number 15 jersey is to watch the full forward's breaks and to score as many points and goals as possible. The full forward line operates around the opposition's 21 metre line. The left corner forward is generally marked by the right corner back.

## Substitutes

Substitutes wear jersey numbers 16 upwards (usually up to 30). 16 is usually worn by the substitute goalkeeper.