

Tactical Solution 1 to Change Formations with Inverted Full Back

1a. Switch 4-1-4-1 to 3-2-4-1 with Left Back Moving into Midfield



In the first tactical solution, **Manchester City switch from a 4+1 to a 3+2 structure at the back** with only the full backs changing their positioning.

The left back (**LB**) moves forward into midfield next to the defensive midfielder (**DM**) to create a double pivot. The right back (**RB**) shifts inside to tighten up the back line.

The centre backs (**LCB** and **RCB**) hold their positions and the defensive midfielder (**DM**) adjusts his position slightly, as shown.

This situation continues on the next page which shows you how Manchester City switch from their 3-2-4-1 shape into a 3-2-5 when the ball progresses into the attacking half of the pitch.

Key Point: The same can be replicated on the other side of the pitch with the right back (**RB**) moving forward instead, and the left back (**LB**) shifting inside.

2. Positional Adjustments from 4-3-3 to 3-2-4-1 (Create Overloads)



Passing to a wide player positioned deeper than the opposition's second line of pressure often invites pressing and should generally be avoided, unless done to shift the opposition to one side and exploit space on the opposite side.

Manchester City shift from 4-3-3 to 3-2-4-1 by inverting the left back (LB) into midfield and pushing the attacking midfielders (LAM and RAM) in between the lines. This creates a 5v3 advantage in the central zone and 5v4 in the high zone, **preventing the opposition's midfield and defensive lines from pushing up to apply pressure.**

This structure provides **numerical superiority** and helps **maintain control,**

enabling **smooth ball circulation** and **progress into open areas.**

The opposing winger (RW) stays high to cover **LB**, opening up space for the Manchester City winger (**LW**) to receive.

LAM and **RAM's** advanced positions cause problems for the opposition's defensive line. If the red full back moves to cover **LW**, **LAM** can exploit the space in behind, while the red centre back has to be aware of both **LAM** and the forward (**F**).

Key Point: Adjusting from 4-3-3 to 3-2-4-1 creates central and high zone overloads that prevent opposition pressure and open spaces for attacking progress.

PROGRESSION

5. Build Up Play + Finish while Changing Shape with Inverted Full Back Positional Possession Game



Practice Description

- This 6v6 (+3) game is played in the middle third of a full pitch. The 3 Jokers support the team in possession.
- The game starts with the coach's pass to a blue centre back (RCB in diagram example). With the Jokers, the blues start in a 4-1-4 formation.
- **Possession Team Objective:** Complete a minimum of 8 passes while **changing the defence and midfield line structure from 4+1 to 3+2 (4-1-4 to 3-2-4)**, and then score in one of the 3 goals.

- **Defending Team Objective:** Win the ball, complete 5 passes (9v6 with 3 Jokers), and pass to a coach. The teams then switch roles and positions, and the game continues. Most goals wins.

Coaching Points

1. Focus on precise technical execution and correct body shape.
2. Accurate timing during team shape changes.
3. Optimal spacing between players and lines.

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