

## Premier League fixtures schedule 2025-

26 in full

5d - ESPN

**Liverpool won the Premier League and now they're on a spending spree. Why?**

15h - Ryan O'Hanlon

**Sources: Vancouver close to sealing**

**Müller deal**

2h - Lizzy Becherano

**Sources: Vegas to host World Cup draw on Dec. 5**

6h - ESPN

**Silver lining: ASG ban gave Messi 'mandatory rest'**

6h - Lizzy Becherano

**Rodman 'still gonna be Trin' despite back injury**

5h - Jeff Kassouf

**City's new No. 1: Trafford re-signs for £27m**

8h - ESPN

**João Félix makes Al Nassr switch from Chelsea**

13h - Adriana Garcia

**Sources: Man Utd target strikers**

# Premier League fixtures schedule 2025-26 in full

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ESPN

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Check out the full fixture list for the 2025-26 [Premier League](#) season.

Kickoffs (shown in UK time) are only confirmed for August.

All other fixtures are subject to change for television coverage and European competition.

### **Friday, Aug. 15 2025**

[Liverpool](#) vs. [AFC Bournemouth](#) (20:00 UK)

### **Saturday, Aug. 16, 2025**

[Aston Villa](#) vs. [Newcastle United](#) (15:00 UK)

[Brighton & Hove Albion](#) vs. [Fulham](#) (15:00 UK)

[Sunderland](#) vs. [West Ham United](#) (15:00 UK)

[Tottenham Hotspur](#) vs. [Burnley](#) (15:00 UK)

[Wolves](#) vs. [Manchester City](#) (17:30 UK)

### **Sunday, Aug. 17, 2025**

[Chelsea](#) vs. [Crystal Palace](#) (14:00 UK)

[Nottingham Forest](#) vs. [Brentford](#) (14:00 UK)

[Manchester United](#) vs. [Arsenal](#) (16:30 UK)

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Arsenal	Liverpool
Aston Villa	Man City
Brentford	Man United
Brighton	Newcastle United
Burnley	Nottm Forest
Chelsea	Sunderland
Crystal Palace	Tottenham Hotspur
Everton	West Ham United
Fulham	Wolves

## **Friday, Aug. 22 2025**

West Ham United vs. Chelsea (20:00 UK)

## **Saturday, Aug. 23, 2025**

Manchester City vs. Tottenham Hotspur (12:30 UK)

AFC Bournemouth vs. Wolves (15:00 UK)

Brentford vs. Aston Villa (15:00 UK)

Burnley vs. Sunderland (15:00 UK)

Arsenal vs. Leeds United (17:30 UK)

## **Sunday, Aug. 24, 2025**

Crystal Palace vs. Nottingham Forest (14:00 UK)

Everton vs. Brighton (14:00 UK)

Fulham vs. Manchester United (16:30 UK)

## **Monday, Aug. 25, 2025**

Newcastle United vs. Liverpool (20:00 UK)

## **Friday, Aug. 29 2025**

Aston Villa vs. Crystal Palace (20:00 UK)\*

*\*Will move back if Crystal Palace's participation in the Conference League playoff round is fully confirmed*

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Leeds United vs. Newcastle United (17:30 UK)

### **Sunday, Aug. 31, 2025**

Brighton vs. Manchester City (14:00 UK)

Nottingham Forest vs. West Ham United (14:00 UK)

Liverpool vs. Arsenal (16:30 UK)

### **Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025**

Arsenal vs. Nottingham Forest (12:30 UK)

AFC Bournemouth vs. Brighton (15:00 UK)

Crystal Palace vs. Sunderland (15:00 UK)

Everton vs. Aston Villa (15:00 UK)

Fulham vs. Leeds United (15:00 UK)

Newcastle United vs. Wolves (15:00 UK)

West Ham United vs. Tottenham Hotspur (17:30 UK)

Brentford vs. Chelsea (20:00 UK)

### **Sunday, Sept. 14, 2025**

Burnley vs. Liverpool (14:00 UK)

Manchester City vs. Manchester United (16:30 UK)

### **Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025**

Liverpool vs. Everton (12:30 UK)

AFC Bournemouth vs. Newcastle United (15:00 UK)

Brighton vs. Tottenham Hotspur (15:00 UK)

Burnley vs. Nottingham Forest (15:00 UK)

West Ham United vs. Crystal Palace (15:00 UK)

Wolves vs. Leeds United (15:00 UK)

Manchester United vs. Chelsea (17:30 UK)

Fulham vs. Brentford (20:00 UK)

### **Saturday, Sept. 21, 2025**

Sunderland vs. Aston Villa (14:00 UK)

Arsenal vs. Manchester City (16:30 UK)

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Manchester City vs. Burnley (15:00 UK)

Nottingham Forest vs. Sunderland (17:30 UK)\*

*\*May move back due to Europa League fixtures*

### **Sunday, Sept. 27, 2025**

Tottenham Hotspur vs. Wolves (14:00 UK)\*

Newcastle United vs. Arsenal (16:30 UK)

*\*May move forward due to Champions League fixture*

### **Monday, Sept. 28, 2025**

Everton vs. West Ham United (20:00 UK)

### **Saturday, Oct. 4, 2025**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Fulham

Arsenal vs. West Ham United

Aston Villa vs. Burnley\*

Brentford vs. Manchester City

Chelsea vs. Liverpool

Everton vs. Crystal Palace\*

Leeds United vs. Tottenham Hotspur

Manchester United vs. Sunderland

Newcastle United vs. Nottingham Forest\*

Wolves vs. Brighton

*\*May move back due to European fixtures*

### **START DATES 2025-26**

FA Community Shield	Aug. 9 or 10
UEFA Super Cup	Aug. 13
Premier League begins	Aug. 16
Ligue 1 begins	Aug. 16
LaLiga begins	Aug. 17
Bundesliga begins	Aug. 22

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### **Saturday, Oct. 18, 2025**

Brighton vs. Newcastle United  
Burnley vs. Leeds United  
Crystal Palace vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Fulham vs. Arsenal  
Liverpool vs. Manchester United  
Manchester City vs. Everton  
Nottingham Forest vs. Chelsea  
Sunderland vs. Wolves  
Tottenham Hotspur vs. Aston Villa  
West Ham United vs. Brentford

### **Saturday, Oct. 25, 2025**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Nottingham Forest\*  
Arsenal vs. Crystal Palace\*  
Aston Villa vs. Manchester City\*  
Brentford vs. Liverpool  
Chelsea vs. Sunderland  
Everton vs. Tottenham Hotspur  
Leeds United vs. West Ham United  
Manchester United vs. Brighton  
Newcastle United vs. Fulham  
Wolves vs. Burnley

*\*May move back due to European fixtures*

### **Saturday, Nov. 1, 2025**

Brighton vs. Leeds United  
Burnley vs. Arsenal  
Crystal Palace vs. Brentford  
Fulham vs. Wolves  
Liverpool vs. Aston Villa  
Manchester City vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Nottingham Forest vs. Manchester United  
Sunderland vs. Everton

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Chelsea vs. Wolves

Crystal Palace vs. Brighton\*

Everton vs. Fulham

Manchester City vs. Liverpool

Nottingham Forest vs. Leeds United\*

Sunderland vs. Arsenal

Tottenham Hotspur vs. Manchester United

West Ham United vs. Burnley

*\*May move back due to European fixtures*

### **Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025**

AFC Bournemouth vs. West Ham United

Arsenal vs. Tottenham Hotspur

Brighton vs. Brentford

Burnley vs. Chelsea

Fulham vs. Sunderland

Leeds United vs. Aston Villa

Liverpool vs. Nottingham Forest

Manchester United vs. Everton

Newcastle United vs. Manchester City

Wolves vs. Crystal Palace

### **Saturday, Nov. 29, 2025**

Aston Villa vs. Wolves\*

Brentford vs. Burnley

Chelsea vs. Arsenal

Crystal Palace vs. Manchester United\*

Everton vs. Newcastle United

Manchester City vs. Leeds United

Nottingham Forest vs. Brighton\*

Sunderland vs. AFC Bournemouth

Tottenham Hotspur vs. Fulham

West Ham United vs. Liverpool

*\*May move back due to European fixtures*

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Leeds United vs. Chelsea

Liverpool vs. Sunderland

Manchester United vs. West Ham United

Newcastle United vs. Tottenham Hotspur

Wolves vs. Nottingham Forest

### **Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Chelsea

Aston Villa vs. Arsenal

Brighton vs. West Ham United

Everton vs. Nottingham Forest

Fulham vs. Crystal Palace

Leeds United vs. Liverpool

Manchester City vs. Sunderland

Newcastle United vs. Burnley

Tottenham Hotspur vs. Brentford

Wolves vs. Manchester United

### **Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025**

Arsenal vs. Wolves

Brentford vs. Leeds United

Burnley vs. Fulham

Chelsea vs. Everton

Crystal Palace vs. Manchester City\*

Liverpool vs. Brighton

Manchester United vs. AFC Bournemouth

Nottingham Forest vs. Tottenham Hotspur\*

Sunderland vs. Newcastle United

West Ham United vs. Aston Villa\*

*\*May move back due to European fixtures*

### **Saturday, Dec. 20, 2025**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Burnley

Aston Villa vs. Manchester United

Brighton vs. Sunderland

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## Wolves vs. Brentford

*\*May move back due to Conference League fixture*

### **Saturday, Dec. 27, 2025**

Arsenal vs. Brighton  
Brentford vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Burnley vs. Everton  
Chelsea vs. Aston Villa  
Crystal Palace vs. Tottenham Hotspur  
Liverpool vs. Wolves  
Manchester United vs. Newcastle United  
Nottingham Forest vs. Manchester City  
Sunderland vs. Leeds United  
West Ham United vs. Fulham

### **Tuesday, Dec. 30, 2025**

Arsenal vs. Aston Villa  
Brentford vs. Tottenham Hotspur  
Burnley vs. Newcastle United  
Chelsea vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Crystal Palace vs. Fulham  
Liverpool vs. Leeds United  
Manchester United vs. Wolves  
Nottingham Forest vs. Everton  
Sunderland vs. Manchester City  
West Ham United vs. Brighton

### **Saturday, Jan. 3, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Arsenal  
Aston Villa vs. Nottingham Forest  
Brighton vs. Burnley  
Everton vs. Brentford  
Fulham vs. Liverpool  
Leeds United vs. Manchester United  
Manchester City vs. Chelsea

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Arsenal vs. Liverpool  
Brentford vs. Sunderland  
Burnley vs. Manchester United  
Crystal Palace vs. Aston Villa  
Everton vs. Wolves  
Fulham vs. Chelsea  
Manchester City vs. Brighton  
Newcastle United vs. Leeds United  
West Ham United vs. Nottingham Forest

### **Saturday, Jan. 17, 2026**

Aston Villa vs. Everton  
Brighton vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Chelsea vs. Brentford  
Leeds United vs. Fulham  
Liverpool vs. Burnley  
Manchester United vs. Manchester City  
Nottingham Forest vs. Arsenal  
Sunderland vs. Crystal Palace  
Tottenham Hotspur vs. West Ham United  
Wolves vs. Newcastle United

### **Saturday, Jan. 24, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Liverpool  
Arsenal vs. Manchester United  
Brentford vs. Nottingham Forest\*  
Burnley vs. Tottenham Hotspur  
Crystal Palace vs. Chelsea  
Everton vs. Leeds United  
Fulham vs. Brighton  
Manchester City vs. Wolves  
Newcastle United vs. Aston Villa\*  
West Ham United vs. Sunderland

*\*May move back due to Europa League fixtures*

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Manchester United vs. Fulham  
Nottingham Forest vs. Crystal Palace\*  
Sunderland vs. Burnley  
Tottenham Hotspur vs. Manchester City  
Wolves vs. AFC Bournemouth

*\*May move back due to Europa League fixtures*

### **Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Aston Villa  
Arsenal vs. Sunderland  
Brighton vs. Crystal Palace  
Burnley vs. West Ham United  
Fulham vs. Everton  
Leeds United vs. Nottingham Forest  
Liverpool vs. Manchester City  
Manchester United vs. Tottenham Hotspur  
Newcastle United vs. Brentford  
Wolves vs. Chelsea

### **Wednesday, Feb. 11, 2026**

Aston Villa vs. Brighton  
Brentford vs. Arsenal  
Chelsea vs. Leeds United  
Crystal Palace vs. Burnley  
Everton vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Manchester City vs. Fulham  
Nottingham Forest vs. Wolves  
Sunderland vs. Liverpool  
Tottenham Hotspur vs. Newcastle United  
West Ham United vs. Manchester United

### **Saturday, Feb. 21, 2026**

Aston Villa vs. Leeds United  
Brentford vs. Brighton  
Chelsea vs. Burnley

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West Ham United vs. AFC Bournemouth

**Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Sunderland

Arsenal vs. Chelsea

Brighton vs. Nottingham Forest

Burnley vs. Brentford

Fulham vs. Tottenham Hotspur

Leeds United vs. Manchester City

Liverpool vs. West Ham United

Manchester United vs. Crystal Palace

Newcastle United vs. Everton

Wolves vs. Aston Villa

**Wednesday, March 4, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Brentford

Aston Villa vs. Chelsea

Brighton vs. Arsenal

Everton vs. Burnley

Fulham vs. West Ham United

Leeds United vs. Sunderland

Manchester City vs. Nottingham Forest

Newcastle United vs. Manchester United

Tottenham Hotspur vs. Crystal Palace

Wolves vs. Liverpool

**Saturday, March 14, 2026**

Arsenal vs. Everton

Brentford vs. Wolves

Burnley vs. AFC Bournemouth

Chelsea vs. Newcastle United

Crystal Palace vs. Leeds United

Liverpool vs. Tottenham Hotspur

Manchester United vs. Aston Villa

Nottingham Forest vs. Fulham

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Brighton vs. Liverpool  
Everton vs. Chelsea  
Fulham vs. Burnley  
Leeds United vs. Brentford  
Manchester City vs. Crystal Palace  
Newcastle United vs. Sunderland  
Tottenham Hotspur vs. Nottingham Forest  
Wolves vs. Arsenal

### **Saturday, April 11, 2026**

Arsenal vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Brentford vs. Everton  
Burnley vs. Brighton  
Chelsea vs. Manchester City  
Crystal Palace vs. Newcastle United  
Liverpool vs. Fulham  
Manchester United vs. Leeds United  
Nottingham Forest vs. Aston Villa  
Sunderland vs. Tottenham Hotspur  
West Ham United vs. Wolves

### **Saturday, April 18, 2026**

Aston Villa vs. Sunderland  
Brentford vs. Fulham  
Chelsea vs. Manchester United  
Crystal Palace vs. West Ham United  
Everton vs. Liverpool  
Leeds United vs. Wolves  
Manchester City vs. Arsenal  
Newcastle United vs. AFC Bournemouth  
Nottingham Forest vs. Burnley  
Tottenham Hotspur vs. Brighton

### **Saturday, April 25, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Leeds United  
Arsenal vs. Newcastle United

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West Ham United vs. Everton

Wolves vs. Tottenham Hotspur

### **Saturday, May 2, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Crystal Palace

Arsenal vs. Fulham

Aston Villa vs. Tottenham Hotspur

Brentford vs. West Ham United

Chelsea vs. Nottingham Forest

Everton vs. Manchester City

Leeds United vs. Burnley

Manchester United vs. Liverpool

Newcastle United vs. Brighton

Wolves vs. Sunderland

### **Saturday, May 9, 2026**

Brighton vs. Wolves

Burnley vs. Aston Villa

Crystal Palace vs. Everton

Fulham vs. AFC Bournemouth

Liverpool vs. Chelsea

Manchester City vs. Brentford

Nottingham Forest vs. Newcastle United

Sunderland vs. Manchester United

Tottenham Hotspur vs. Leeds United

West Ham United vs. Arsenal

### **Sunday, May 17, 2026**

AFC Bournemouth vs. Manchester City

Arsenal vs. Burnley

Aston Villa vs. Liverpool

Brentford vs. Crystal Palace

Chelsea vs. Tottenham Hotspur

Everton vs. Sunderland

Leeds United vs. Brighton

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Burnley vs. Wolves

Crystal Palace vs. Arsenal

Fulham vs. Newcastle United

Liverpool vs. Brentford

Manchester City vs. Aston Villa

Nottingham Forest vs. AFC Bournemouth

Sunderland vs. Chelsea

Tottenham Hotspur vs. Everton

West Ham United vs. Leeds United

## Why Liverpool are on a spending spree in this transfer window



Steve Nicol walks back his comments that Liverpool would be better off signing a defender than completing a blockbuster transfer for Alexander Isak. (0:52)

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The club just lost its beloved and iconic manager, Jürgen Klopp. The Reds were coming off a bounce-back season where they were top of the table in April, but a slew of injuries pulled them back into third place, behind [Manchester City](#) and [Arsenal](#), by the time the campaign was over. And yet, somehow, the response to this near-victory and a new coach from ownership was: "Let's just run it back."

After being turned down by [Real Sociedad](#) midfielder [Martín Zubimendi](#) right before the contracts were due to be signed, Liverpool ended the 2024 summer transfer window by signing [Giorgi Mamardashvili](#), a goalkeeper who wouldn't even be joining until this summer, and [Federico Chiesa](#), an affordable former uber-prospect who would, at best, play backup minutes behind [Mohamed Salah](#).

Beyond the Liverpool fan base, no one else took Liverpool's summer seriously. This was the clear third-best team in the league in 2023-24, and they'd done nothing to significantly change that. In fact, more pundits picked Liverpool to miss the [Champions League](#) than to win the [Premier League](#).

Well, fast-forward to today: Liverpool moonwalked to their 20th Premier League title, and they've followed it up by spending more than €300 million on player transfers -- so far. By the end of this summer's transfer window, that number could surpass €500 million.

So, uh, how are they able to spend that much money? And perhaps more interestingly, for a club that's built multiple title-winning teams by acquiring mostly undervalued and underappreciated players, why are Liverpool suddenly investing so much into such an irrational and inefficient market?

## How Liverpool can spend more than anyone else

So far, per Transfermarkt, Liverpool have acquired four players for significant fees. These numbers are not exact, but they at least provide a uniform source from which to work:

- [Florian Wirtz](#), attacking midfielder, from [Bayer Leverkusen](#) for €125 million
- [Hugo Ekitike](#), striker, from [Eintracht Frankfurt](#) for €95 million
- [Milos Kerkez](#), fullback, from [Bournemouth](#) for €46.9 million
- [Jeremie Frimpong](#), fullback, from Bayer Leverkusen for €40 million

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In terms of more incoming players, there appears to be legitimate smoke behind what would likely need to be a Premier League-record deal to acquire [Alexander Isak](#) from [Newcastle United](#). With the team quite thin (and injury prone and/or old) at center back, there could be an addition there, and depending on more outgoings, there could be another left winger brought in.

#### EDITOR'S PICKS



[Why Liverpool still want Alexander Isak amid massive summer spending](#)

1d • Mark Ogden



[Will Ekitike be a Liverpool hit or flop? Why he's so hard to scout](#)

8d • Ryan O'Hanlon



[Ranking the 25 best soccer teams of the past 25 years: A non-English, non-Spanish team is No. 1](#)

4d • Ryan O'Hanlon

As for those outgoing, [Luis Díaz](#) looks like he'll be heading to [Bayern Munich](#) for somewhere in the €75 million range. Liverpool seem to be holding out for something similar for [Darwin Núñez](#). If [Harvey Elliott](#) leaves, he'd likely go for somewhere in the €40 million range. And then a couple of academy products like [Ben Doak](#) and [Stefan Bajcetic](#) would likely go for double-digit fees were they to leave.

But let's just say that the spending and shifting stays where it is -- or at least remains at the current proportional rate. And just to make things simpler, let's just say that all of the incoming players are signed on five-year contracts.

If so, those transfer fees would get amortized at about €61 million a year, across the five years. Meanwhile, the three outgoing from-the-academy players would bring in about €60 million of revenue. This is accounted for as an immediate profit, as opposed to transfer fees paid, and so for the next accounting year, the current level of transfer spending would basically net out at zero. (It's not quite as simple as that, but the general point still stands.) Throw in a huge fee for Díaz and potentially Núñez and at least when it comes to accounting purposes, Liverpool have room to spend *a lot* more money this summer.

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minus departures) over that same stretch, then Chelsea, Man United, [Tottenham Hotspur](#), Arsenal, Bournemouth, Forest, Newcastle, West Ham and Man City are all ahead of Liverpool.

So, the club itself has literal money to spend and then they've also built up a massive buffer against the Premier League's profit and sustainability regulations (PSR), which essentially allow clubs to lose €120 million over a rolling three-year period.

Amazingly, in an era when most soccer clubs don't make money, Liverpool are expected to end the financial year during which they won the Premier League with a profit. They earned money on the transfer market, and 2024-25 was the club's first full season with the newly expanded Anfield, which produced an average attendance of 60,000-plus for the first time ever. There are also millions in bonus money for winning the league and millions more from a return to the Champions League.

On top of that, the team just signed a new sponsorship deal with Adidas starting this season, so that should add even more revenue and wiggle room for spending. As the club's CEO Billy Hogan recently put it, this summer has "been years in the making."

## Why Liverpool are spending more money than everyone else

Liverpool needed to rebuild before the last [World Cup](#). In the 2021-22 season, they nearly won all four major trophies. They ended up only with the [Carabao Cup](#) and [FA Cup](#), but the simple metrics I used to rank the best club teams of the past 25 years landed them at number 18. To be that good, you almost always need a team of mostly pearl-age stars. And that is what Liverpool were. Per the site FBref, the team's average age weighted by minutes played in the Premier League was 27.7 -- the fourth-oldest mark in the league.

Players typically peak between the years of 24 and 28, so this meant that Liverpool had a team of players who were all playing at their best at the same time. But this also meant that they had a team of players who were all about to get worse at the same time. When you were as good as Liverpool were in 2021-22, it can be really hard to accept that you might need to significantly revamp your roster. But this is why teams have front offices; these people can monitor the long-term health of the roster while the manager focuses on maximizing whoever is on the roster.

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term health of the roster.

1:39

**Van Dijk: Liverpool's new signings have settled in well** Liverpool captain Virgil van Dijk believes their new signings have "settled in well" after a busy start to the transfer window by the club.

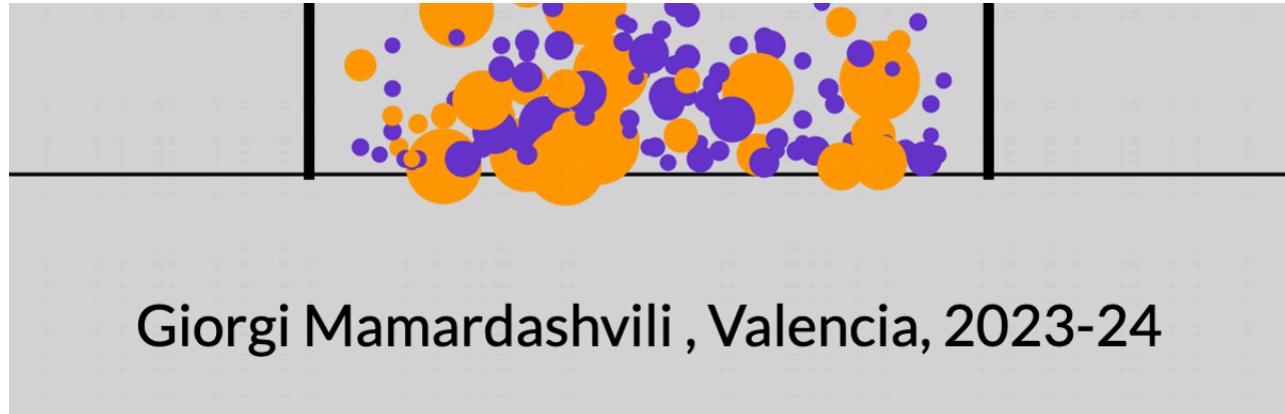
Now, they did completely overhaul the midfield in the summer of 2023, adding [Alexis Mac Allister](#), [Dominik Szoboszlai](#), [Ryan Gravenberch](#) and [Wataru Endo](#), while letting both [Fabinho](#) and [Jordan Henderson](#) leave for Saudi Arabia and [Naby Keïta](#) run down his contract. Midfield was the team's obvious weak point during the disappointing 2022-23 season, but no such overhauls were ever made to the rest of the roster. Their average age this past season was 27.0 -- the fifth oldest in the league and not too different from where it was three years ago.

Rather than trying to flip the roster in their first year back in charge, Edward's group seemingly focused on the bigger issue of the team's three best players all entering the last seasons of their contracts: Salah, [Virgil van Dijk](#), and Alexander-Arnold. It's hard to make any major investments in the roster when you don't know which of your stars will even be on your team in a year.

However, the signing of Mamardashvili was a recognition that things needed to start to turn over. [Alisson Becker](#) had struggled with injuries in his age-30 season, and the 22-year-old [Valencia](#) goalkeeper was coming off one of the best shot-stopping seasons we've ever seen from a player his age. It wouldn't help Liverpool immediately, but they now had their goalkeeper succession plan in place.

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And now, this summer. If midfield was the team's weakness two summers ago, fullback was the area to upgrade this offseason. [Andy Robertson](#) and Alexander-Arnold are the two best attacking fullbacks in Premier League history, but one of them is 31 and frequently struggled last season, while the other one decided he wanted to get paid more by a different team in another country. Kerkez is 21 and Frimpong is 24. Along with 22-year-old [Conor Bradley](#), this is who the club is betting on to be the starting fullbacks for Liverpool's next great team.

With the record outlay for Wirtz, I think the right way to look at him is basically as the team's short-term TAA replacement (creativity) and the long-term Salah replacement: a do-everything superstar whom you can build your attack around.

This chart combines the expected goals (combined quantity and quality of your shots) with the expected possession value (how much everything else you do increases your team's chances of scoring) for all 22-and-under players across Europe's Big Five top leagues since the start of the 2023-24 season.

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He's so good already -- and potentially so great in the future -- that if you can sign him, you do it. And this is apparently what happened. Liverpool didn't sign Wirtz because he played the right position for their roster; they signed him because Liverpool rarely get to sign 22-year-olds who are already superstars. These players, [Jude Bellingham](#), [Kylian Mbappé](#), [Erling Haaland](#), usually go to Real Madrid, [Paris Saint-Germain](#) or Manchester City.

Liverpool had never spent this much money on a player before, but that's not because they didn't want to. Rather, it's because the handful of players they deemed worthy of those fees ultimately weren't interested in joining the club. But because of dysfunction at Bayern Munich and the individual circumstances at those richer clubs this summer, Liverpool had the opportunity to acquire the best young player on the market, and they jumped on it immediately.

While Wirtz can play at the top of a midfield or as part of a front three, the club remains somewhat thin up top. Díaz, [Cody Gakpo](#), and Núñez were all signed as part of a process of rebuilding the attacking line, but they're all acquisitions from an era when the coaching staff was heavily influencing recruiting.

Signed at 25, Díaz was older than most Liverpool signings. He has been an effective and important player, but he's almost through his prime years already. Gakpo has been an effective sometimes-starter but has never played a heavy minutes load. And while Núñez's attacking production has been fantastic on a per-minute basis, he's played fewer than half

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helps explain the acquisition of the low-floor-high-ceiling Ekitike, who played primarily as a center forward in Germany.

And maybe -- *maybe* -- it helps explain Liverpool's continued pursuit of Isak. But this is where I start to get a little confused. Ekitike and Isak are strikingly similar players. They both can play on the wing -- and they both love to peel off into the left channel -- but I don't think either one maintains the value their transfer fees suggest if they're primarily playing on the wing. Although the fee was expensive, Ekitike still felt like a classic Liverpool signing: a young player with a world-class data profile who at least has some characteristics that suggest *positive regression* is in his future.

Turning 26 this fall, Isak is right on the edge of the age range of players Liverpool usually sign. His value will never be higher, and there's still a good deal of risk associated with the move. He has played only 2,500 domestic minutes in a season one time -- and that was this past season.

At the very least, it's interesting and confusing that Liverpool just won the Premier League with an elite attack that frequently didn't feature a traditional center forward -- and now they're potentially spending more than €200 million on two traditional center forwards. At best, it feels somewhat redundant; even if they're both great, then can they really be great *together*? Why not a left winger and a striker? At worst, it feels misguided.

With the departure of Quansah, the only non-makeshift center back depth behind Van Dijk and [Ibrahima Konaté](#) is [Joe Gomez](#), who is (A) always injured and (B) currently injured. Van Dijk will be 34 at the start of the season, and Konaté has his own long injury history. This is playing with fire.

In the midfield, Gravenberch was last season's breakout star. He went from being a bit-part No. 8 under Klopp to a play-every-minute-of-every-game defensive midfielder under new coach Arne Slot. But that was his first season playing such a heavy minutes load, and yet there's no real depth behind him in this role. Endo is a great come-on-and-kick-people option at the end of matches, but he can't play significant minutes if Gravenberch goes down with an injury.

Given the presence of Salah and the arrivals of Wirtz and Ekitike, it really doesn't feel like "another center forward, just like the other center forward" was the button to press to

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why Liverpool are spending so much? Because they can *and* because they have to.