

= 1997 ? 98 Manchester United F.C. season =

The 1997 ? 98 season was Manchester United 's sixth season in the Premier League , and their 23rd consecutive season in the top division of English football . The campaign ended in disastrous fashion , having been pipped to the Premier League title by Arsenal , who managed a ten @-@ match winning streak in the last two months of the season as well as being eliminated by league strugglers Barnsley and French outfit AS Monaco in the FA Cup and UEFA Champions League , respectively . To make matters worse , United entered March still in contention for a League and European double after opening up a 12 @-@ point gap , regardless of the fact that nearest challengers Arsenal had three games in hand . Thus , the season ended with only the Charity Shield in the cabinet .

Following the loss of captain and star striker , Eric Cantona at the end of the previous season , Ferguson acquired the services of England international Teddy Sheringham as a direct replacement on a three @-@ year deal from Tottenham Hotspur for £ 3 @. @ 5 million . Cantona 's departure meant that Roy Keane was promoted as captain and a reshuffle of squad numbers occurred ; David Beckham was awarded the coveted number 7 shirt and Sheringham was given Beckham 's former squad number 10 . Henning Berg was the only other new face to arrive at Old Trafford from Blackburn Rovers for a £ 5 million fee at the start of the season .

= = Pre @-@ season and friendlies = =