

= James Milner =

James Philip Milner ( born 4 January 1986 ) is an English professional footballer who plays as a winger for Premier League club Liverpool and the England national team . He has previously played for Leeds United , Swindon Town , Newcastle United , Aston Villa and Manchester City . Playing as a central midfielder with Aston Villa , Milner was named PFA Young Player of the Year and in the PFA Team of the Year for the 2009 ? 10 Premier League season ; however , after his move to Manchester City , Milner was more often utilised as a winger .

Milner 's talent in football , cricket , and long @-@ distance running was recognised at a very young age . He represented his school in these sports and played football for amateur teams from Rawdon and Horsforth . He supported Leeds United from a young age and was a season ticket holder at the club . In 1996 , he joined the Leeds United youth academy . He made his debut for the first team in 2002 aged only 16 and gained prominence as the youngest player to score in the Premier League .

While at Leeds United , he spent time on loan at Swindon Town to gain experience as a first @-@ team player . Following his move to Newcastle United , he was loaned to Aston Villa for a season . He went on to establish himself as a regular starter in the Newcastle , and later Aston Villa and Manchester City first teams . He made more than 100 appearances for Newcastle , as well as making a record number of appearances for the England under @-@ 21 team . He made his debut for the full team against the Netherlands in August 2009 and also played at the 2010 FIFA World Cup and UEFA Euro 2012 .

= = Early life = =

Born in Wortley , Leeds , Milner played most of his childhood football for Westbrook Lane Primary School in Horsforth . He was later educated at Horsforth School . Graeme Coulson , a coach from Rawdon , recognised Milner 's talent and persuaded him to play for Rawdon in several tournaments , including a tournament at Rawdon Meadows , where Milner scored four goals in their victory in the final .

Milner was described as a " first class " student at his school ; he left with 11 GCSEs and an award for his performance in physical education . Milner also showed talent in cricket , sprinting and long @-@ distance running . He played for the Yorkshire Schools cricket team , was the cross @-@ country champion at his school for three consecutive years and was the district champion over 100 metres for two years in a row . He then completed his studies at Boston Spa School ; at which the sports college was a partner to the football club .

Milner supported his hometown club Leeds United from a young age . His earliest memory of the team was watching them win the FA Youth Cup in 1993 . He and his parents , Peter and Lesley , were season ticket holders and Milner later became a ball boy for the club .

When Milner was 10 years old , he joined the Leeds United Academy after being spotted by a scout while playing for Westbrook Juniors in Horsforth . At the academy , Milner played against contemporaries from other clubs in the north , including future Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney . His role model was Leeds @-@ born Alan Smith , who was then a Leeds United striker . Milner believed playing with Smith put him through a learning curve , as Smith had done what Milner aspired to do ; that is , to come through the academy and play for the first team . Having made good progress at the Academy , Milner was taken on as a trainee after leaving school . However , his father insisted that he attend college once a week to continue his education . Milner remarked later that he did not want to get excited and think that he " had already made it " . He also said he could hardly believe he was playing alongside first @-@ team Leeds players such as David Batty and Olivier Dacourt . He continued to excel in the youth team , and played for England at under @-@ 15 and ? 17 levels . He helped the England under @-@ 17 team win the 2002 Nationwide summer tournament against Italy , Czech Republic and Brazil , scoring a goal against the latter . Milner claims to have never consumed alcohol throughout his life , despite pressures from those around him when he was growing up .

= = Club career = =

= = = Leeds United = = =

Milner 's first @-@ team debut for Leeds came on 10 November 2002 , in a game against West Ham United , when he came on as a substitute for Jason Wilcox for the last six minutes . The appearance made him the second youngest player ever to play in the Premier League , at the age of 16 years and 309 days . On 26 December 2002 , he became at 16 years and 356 days the youngest player to score in the Premier League , with a goal in a 2 ? 1 win against Sunderland . His record was broken by James Vaughan of Everton .

In a match against Chelsea a month later , Milner scored again , with a deft first touch of the ball and manoeuvre , in order to avoid a tackle from Chelsea defender Marcel Desailly , that won widespread praise from commentators . The manoeuvre created a yard of space for him to deliver a curling shot from 18 yards ( 16 m ) . Reporters were impressed by his overall performance in the game , especially by his desire , confidence , and ability with both feet . Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri remarked after the game that Milner had performed like a much more experienced player . The performance prompted comparisons to England internationals Michael Owen and Wayne Rooney , who had also come to footballing prominence as teenagers .

After more appearances for Leeds , Milner signed a five @-@ year contract with them on 10 February 2003 . At the start of the 2003 ? 04 season , Milner was sent on a one @-@ month loan to Second Division side Swindon Town to gain experience as a first @-@ team player . Before the stint , he saw it as a valuable experience as a player . He spent a month with Swindon , playing in six games and scoring two goals against Peterborough United and Luton Town .

However , Leeds ' fortunes were on the decline ; the team became the subject of numerous negative stories in the media , and several first @-@ team players were sold . Milner said he believed that this experience made him emotionally stronger and taught him how to deal with team problems . Leeds 's eventual relegation to the Championship led to speculation over Milner 's future at the club . Tottenham Hotspur , Aston Villa and Everton all expressed an interest in signing him . Ultimately , Villa and Everton did not make offers and Milner rejected an offer from Tottenham as they were based too far from his family home , where he still lived . Leeds insisted that he would not be sold and the chairman of the club at the time even referred to him as " the future of Leeds " . Nonetheless , financial problems eventually forced Leeds to sell Milner to Newcastle United for an initial price of £ 3 @.@ 6 million . Although Milner was not happy to be leaving the club he had supported as a child , he wished to do what was " in the club 's best interest " and in July 2004 , he agreed a five @-@ year contract with Newcastle .

= = = Newcastle United = = =

Milner made his first appearance for Newcastle United during their pre @-@ season tour of Asia , scoring his first goal for the club in a 1 ? 1 draw against Kitchee , in Hong Kong . During this tour , he took the opportunity to observe how Newcastle striker Alan Shearer dealt with attention from fans and the media . He said that his association with people like Shearer gave him a better idea of how to deal with the media .

Milner 's first Premier League game for Newcastle came against Middlesbrough on 18 August 2004 , in which he played on the extreme right of the field as a winger , despite having featured regularly on the left for Leeds . When asked about this after the match , Milner said he had no preference where on the pitch he played . A month later he made his debut in European competition , when Newcastle played in the UEFA Cup against Bnei Sakhnin from Israel , after coming on as a substitute for Shola Ameobi . In the same month , he scored his first competitive goal for the club , also as a substitute , in a 3 ? 1 win against West Bromwich Albion . It looked probable he would soon start a game .

However , the situation changed for Milner after Newcastle manager Bobby Robson , whom Milner

considered his mentor , was sacked and replaced by Graeme Souness . Under Souness , he started 13 league games , but did not play his first full Premier League game for Newcastle until April 2005 . By the end of the season , he had made 41 appearances in all competitions and scored once . Souness did not make Milner a regular in the Newcastle side and controversially remarked that the club would not win " with a team of James Milners " . Milner 's response to this statement was reported as " mature " . He did however confirm that he was frustrated at not being used as a starter for most of the season .

At the start of the 2005 ? 06 season , Milner scored in Newcastle 's 3 ? 1 away win against FK ZTS Dubnica in the UEFA Intertoto Cup , and also set up Alan Shearer for the team 's third goal . His good run of form in this competition continued when he scored in the next round against Deportivo La Coruña . Despite these goals , a clause in Newcastle 's purchase of Nolberto Solano from Aston Villa resulted in Milner being loaned to Villa for the rest of the season . Villa manager David O 'Leary , who had managed Milner at Leeds , was happy to acquire Milner in this deal , saying that he believed Villa got the better of the deal and that he hoped to improve him as a player .

= = = = Aston Villa ( loan ) = = = =

Milner made his Villa debut on 12 September 2005 in a Premier League match against West Ham United . Five days later , he scored his first goal for the club in a 1 ? 1 draw against Tottenham Hotspur . In a League Cup game less than a week later , he helped his side recover from being 3 ? 1 down at half @-@ time to win 8 ? 3 against Wycombe Wanderers , scoring two goals in the second half comeback . Throughout the season Milner was positive about his team . He remained confident that Villa would recover from a poor start to the season and praised the quality of the squad .

Milner was generally seen as a positive signing in a season that was disappointing for Villa . Milner himself also received the loan move positively , saying that he would like to join Villa permanently because of the probability of becoming a regular starter , but admitted that the possibility of this happening was beyond his control . Manager David O 'Leary confirmed during the season that he would like Milner to join the club permanently , but doubted he would be given the opportunity to sign him . He even pulled out of signing Robert Huth so that he would have the funds to sign Milner permanently if the opportunity arose . Shortly before the end of his loan period , negotiations between Villa and Newcastle began .

The newly appointed Newcastle manager Glenn Roeder appeared to appreciate Milner 's ability more than Souness and expressed a desire that he remain a Newcastle player . This , as well as the departure of O 'Leary and the shortage of transfer funds at Villa , meant that a deal to sign Milner permanently seemed unlikely . In June , it became even less likely when Villa rejected an offer of Milner as part of a trade for Gareth Barry . However , the deal was resurrected when Villa were taken over by American billionaire Randy Lerner , and Martin O 'Neill was appointed as new Villa manager . Villa made an improved offer on 30 August , which was accepted by Newcastle chairman Freddy Shepherd . Media sources quoted the transfer fee as being £ 4 million . A move to Villa appeared to have been agreed , but at the last moment Newcastle recalled Milner and the talks broke down .

= = = = Return to Newcastle United = = = =

Newcastle 's players and manager Glenn Roeder reacted positively to Milner 's return at the start of the 2006 ? 07 season . Roeder praised Milner for the way he had handled the failed Villa transfer , although Roeder 's own handling of the negotiations was criticised . Roeder confirmed that he would play Milner in " plenty of games " during the season . This proved to be the case , as Milner was a starter in the Newcastle side for the entire season .

Newcastle made a poor start in the Premier League , but in European competition , Milner played a key role in helping Newcastle advance through the group stage of the UEFA Cup . Shortly after , rumours began to spread that he would be sold during the transfer window in January , although

both Milner and Roeder dismissed these rumours .

On 1 January 2007 , Milner scored his first goal of the season in a 2 ? 2 draw with Manchester United . The goal came from a " stunning " shot from 25 yards ( 23 m ) away . He scored two more goals during the next three weeks , against Birmingham City and then against West Ham United . Both of these were scored from at least 20 yards ( 20 m ) away . Later in the season , Roeder praised the progress Milner had made and said that he believed him to be the hardest @-@ training player at the club . Also during the season , Milner displayed his ability to play comfortably in a range of different positions by scoring and setting up goals with both feet from both sides . As a result , Milner signed a new contract at Newcastle in January , which secured his future at the club until 2011 . He signed another four @-@ year contract in May 2007 , when Sam Allardyce took over as manager of Newcastle . Milner said later in the year that he was happy about his future at the club and its new manager saying that the training sessions were " the best since I have been here " . Allardyce said during the season that Milner was so keen to play , that he was concerned he would " burn out mentally [ and ] physically " . As a result , Milner played mainly as a substitute in the early part of the season .

In late October , he scored Newcastle 's 500th home Premier League goal in a 3 ? 1 win over Tottenham Hotspur . A second Premier League goal of the season came fortuitously in the Tyne ? Wear derby from a shot intended as a cross . Allardyce praised Milner highly during the season , saying he was " a hugely experienced Premier League player " .

After missing the final nine games of the season due to a foot injury , it was rumoured in May 2008 that he would be part of a transfer between Newcastle and Liverpool . Despite starting the season for Newcastle and scoring in a League Cup win over Coventry City , it was revealed after the game that Milner had handed in a written transfer request the week before .

= = = Aston Villa = = =

Milner signed for Aston Villa on 29 August 2008 for a fee of £ 12 million , and signed a four @-@ year contract with the club . Milner made his debut for Villa on 31 August 2008 as a second @-@ half substitute against Liverpool . His first goals in his second spell at Villa came in a third round FA Cup tie against Gillingham at Priestfield Stadium on 4 January 2009 on his 23rd birthday , where he scored both goals in a 2 ? 1 win for Villa .

On 9 January 2009 , Milner scored both goals as Villa beat Gillingham 2 ? 1 in the third round of the FA Cup . Milner 's first Premier League goal in his second spell at Villa came on 17 January 2009 in a 2 ? 1 win against Sunderland at the Stadium of Light . On 7 February 2009 , Milner was named to the England senior team squad for the first time , after a run at club level that had impressed England manager Fabio Capello . Milner continued to impress and scored his second league goal of the season against Blackburn Rovers on 7 February and scored a free @-@ kick from outside the penalty area at home against Everton as Villa came back from a 3 ? 1 deficit to draw 3 ? 3 on 12 April . He stated that his time at Villa is the " most settled " period of his career so far , having played under thirteen managers and caretakers despite being only 23 .

At the start of the 2009 ? 10 season , Milner moved into the centre of midfield after the sale of captain Gareth Barry to Manchester City . On 28 February 2010 , he scored the opening goal in the 2010 League Cup Final with a penalty . However , Villa were eventually beaten 2 ? 1 by Manchester United . Milner ended the season with 12 goals and was named Aston Villa 's Fan 's Player of the Year and PFA Young Player of the Year .

On 19 May 2010 , Manchester City made a £ 20 million offer for Milner which was rejected . On 22 July 2010 , Villa manager Martin O 'Neill said that Milner had shown a desire to leave Villa for City , but would only be sold at Villa 's valuation . On 14 August despite being on the verge of a move to Manchester City , Milner played in Villa 's first game of the season against West Ham United , scoring Villa 's third goal . Milner was given a standing ovation when he was substituted near the end of the game .

= = = Manchester City = = =

On 17 August 2010 , it was reported that Aston Villa had agreed a deal with Manchester City to sell Milner subject to a medical . The deal was reported to be worth around £ 26 million , including a player exchange of Stephen Ireland . Milner made his debut for City on 23 August 2010 in a 3 ? 0 home win against Liverpool , where he set up the first goal for former Villa teammate Gareth Barry . Milner scored his first competitive goal for Manchester City in an FA Cup third @-@ round match at Leicester City which ended in a 2 ? 2 draw . The Leicester match was the start of a cup run that saw Manchester City reach the 2011 FA Cup Final . Milner was an unused substitute as Manchester City beat Stoke City 1 ? 0 to win the cup .

Milner scored his first Premier League goal for Manchester City against Everton on 24 September 2011 . Two matches later , he scored his second , against former club Aston Villa in a 4 ? 1 win . The following week , Milner had a hand in two goals as Manchester City won the Manchester derby at Old Trafford 6 ? 1 , inflicting Manchester United 's heaviest home league defeat since 1930 . On 3 January 2012 , Milner scored his third goal of the season , a penalty , against Liverpool . Manchester City won the match 3 ? 0 . Over the course of the 2011 ? 12 season , Milner made 26 Premier League appearances as Manchester City won the league title for the first time in 44 years .

On 6 October 2012 , Milner scored his first goal of the 2012 ? 13 season from a free @-@ kick to seal a 3 ? 0 win against Sunderland . On 20 October , he received his first Premier League red card in a 2 ? 1 win at West Bromwich Albion . On 28 November , he scored away at Wigan Athletic in a 2 ? 0 win for City . On 13 January 2013 , he scored City 's opening goal in a 2 ? 0 away win at Arsenal , it was the first time a City player had scored away at Arsenal in the League since 2007 and City 's first win in the league at Arsenal since 1975 . On 8 April , he scored in the Manchester derby as City beat Manchester United 2 ? 1 at Old Trafford .

On 10 December 2013 , Milner scored the winning goal in a 3 ? 2 win against the reigning European champions Bayern Munich at the Allianz Arena in the UEFA Champions League , becoming the first English player to score for Manchester City in the competition that season .

= = = Liverpool = = =

On 4 June 2015 , Milner agreed to join Liverpool on a free transfer from Manchester City . On 7 August 2015 , Milner was announced as the vice captain . Milner played his first competitive match for the club in 1 ? 0 win over Stoke City at the Britannia Stadium .

Milner captained Liverpool for the first time on his third appearance for the club , a 0 ? 0 draw at Arsenal . On 26 September 2015 , he scored his debut goal for Liverpool in a 3 ? 2 win against his former club Aston Villa at Anfield .

= = International career = =

= = = Youth = = =

After representing England at the under @-@ 15 and under @-@ 17 levels , Milner was promoted to the under @-@ 20 level and called up for the 2003 World Youth Championship . Soon after this , under @-@ 21 manager Peter Taylor called him up to the England under @-@ 21 team and Milner made his debut against Sweden on 30 March 2004 .

Milner scored his first goal for the England under @-@ 21 side during the 2004 ? 05 season in a qualification game for the 2007 UEFA European Under @-@ 21 Championship , against Wales . During the game , in which he played in the centre of midfield , he also set up a scoring chance for Darren Bent as the Young Lions won 2 ? 0 . Despite domestic club troubles , he continued to make progress at international level , scoring the winning goal for the England under @-@ 21 side in a 3 ? 2 win over Switzerland . The win secured England a place in the playoff stage of the 2007 UEFA European Under @-@ 21 Championship qualifiers .

In June , Milner competed for England at the 2007 UEFA European Under @-@ 21 Championship .

He played in all four of England 's matches and was booked in the semi @-@ final against the Netherlands , which meant he would have missed the final . The game was decided by a penalty shoot @-@ out , in which Milner scored twice and England lost 3 ? 12 . Milner was included in the under @-@ 21 squad for a friendly against Romania , which ended in a 1 ? 1 draw . A month later , Milner set an England under @-@ 21 record by making his 30th appearance for the side in a 3 ? 0 win against Montenegro . During this game , he set up the first goal from a corner . Historically , players with several England Under @-@ 21 appearances have not progressed to become regulars in the senior side , which has led some to doubt whether Milner would be able to successfully make the transition . In October , he scored his third goal for the under @-@ 21 side in a 3 ? 0 win over Republic of Ireland . He scored again in the return game four months later that England also won 3 ? 0 .

Milner continued to be a regular and was the only player , along with Joe Hart and captain Steven Taylor , to have played in all the qualifiers for the 2009 UEFA European Under @-@ 21 Championship. In the summer of 2009 , he was in the final 23 @-@ man U21 squad for the 2009 UEFA European Under @-@ 21 Championship in Sweden . He helped set up the winning goal for Micah Richards against Finland , and manager Stuart Pearce said after the match , " The modern @-@ day full @-@ back can get up and down the pitch and I knew [ Milner ] would be comfortable " . In England 's second match against Spain , Milner had a penalty well saved by Sergio Asenjo , and scored England 's second goal in a 2 ? 0 win . England faced the hosts Sweden in the semi @-@ finals . In the first minute of the match , Milner delivered a corner that was headed in by Martin Cranie to give England the lead . Another corner from Milner would set up England 's third goal , an own goal by Mattias Björnsmyr . After the match ended in a 3 ? 3 draw , it went to a penalty shoot @-@ out . Milner was the only England player to miss in the shoot @-@ out after he slipped just before kicking the ball , causing it to sail over the crossbar . England won the shoot @-@ out 5 ? 4 to advance to the final for the first time in 25 years . England lost the final to Germany 4 ? 0 and Milner said after the match that the team was " hurting " and that the way in which the team lost was " not good enough " . The final was his last game for the under @-@ 21 side . His 46 appearances at under @-@ 21 level are a national record .

= = = Senior = = =

In August 2009 , Milner made his debut for the England senior team , when he came on as a substitute in a friendly match against the Netherlands for the final 23 minutes . The match ended in a 2 ? 2 draw . He played twice more for England the following month against Slovenia in another friendly and made his competitive debut four days later in a 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifier against Croatia , where he played the final nine minutes . England won the latter match 5 ? 1 to secure qualification for the 2010 FIFA World Cup . He was named in the final 23 @-@ man squad for the World Cup finals in South Africa and was selected in the starting eleven for England 's first match of the tournament against the United States , however he was substituted after 30 minutes . In England 's third match against Slovenia , he set up the only goal of the match with a cross for Jermain Defoe . He captained England for the first time for the final 10 minutes of the match in a 2 ? 1 loss against France on 17 November 2010 , when both Rio Ferdinand and Steven Gerrard had been substituted .

Milner played in six matches during qualifying for UEFA Euro 2012 , and was named in Roy Hodgson 's 23 @-@ man squad for the tournament . Milner started Hodgson 's first match in charge , a 1 ? 0 friendly win against Norway .

On 7 September 2012 , Milner scored his first international goal in a 5 ? 0 win away to Moldova during 2014 FIFA World Cup qualifying .

= = Style of play = =

Milner is regarded as being a tenacious footballer . As a result , his main role on the team is as a wide midfielder who creates scoring opportunities , as well as taking the ball past defenders . He

could be deemed a traditional English winger . While Milner does not score many goals , he does have a good record at providing assists . Nolberto Solano , a former teammate , said that because of his ability , Milner would " become an important team player " . After his move to Newcastle , he began playing more as a winger . He has been described as " comfortable on either wing " . He has also been used occasionally as a central midfielder , a striker and as an emergency right @-@ back , generally during an injury crisis . Manuel Pellegrini , who managed Milner at Manchester City , described Milner as the most complete English player in the modern game praising his all round ability , commitment , performance level and versatility .

Milner has the ability to pass accurately and shoot from a great distance from goal . As a result , he usually goes forward for set pieces and is often a candidate to take corners and free kicks . Critical opinion is divided as to Milner 's crossing ability . While some commentators have been critical of his ability in this area , other journalists have said that Milner can produce accurate crosses .

Milner , in his time at the club , was described on the Newcastle United official website as " a good reader of the game " . One quality that is praised by commentators is Milner 's awareness of players around him . He is a very tactically aware player . This awareness allows him to pass the ball from a range of positions to teammates making forward runs , as well as giving him the confidence to take on defenders . His awareness and willingness to pass have been called mature for a player of his age .

Milner has expressed a willingness to play as much as possible and feels that Wayne Rooney 's move to Manchester United and success as a player has taken a lot of pressure off his own career , commenting , " I have been able to concentrate on football and ignore everything else " . During his career , Milner has been booked 15 times and been sent off once , against West Bromwich Albion on 20 October 2012 .

Despite being a winger by trade , Aston Villa manager Martin O 'Neill stated in November 2009 that he thought Milner 's versatility could lead to him becoming an accomplished central midfielder at some point in his career . Milner played in a number of different positions for Aston Villa , including both wings , in central midfield and even as a right back .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Club = = =

As of match played 18 May 2016 .

= = = International = = =

As of match played 11 June 2016 .

= = = International goals = = =

As of match played 11 June 2016 . England score listed first , score column indicates score after each Milner goal .

= = Honours = =

Manchester City

Premier League : 2011 ? 12 , 2013 ? 14

FA Cup : 2010 ? 11

Football League Cup : 2013 ? 14

FA Community Shield : 2012

Individual

PFA Young Player of the Year : 2009 ? 10

