

= Premier League =

The Premier League is an English professional league for men 's association football clubs . At the top of the English football league system , it is the country 's primary football competition . Contested by 20 clubs , it operates on a system of promotion and relegation with the English Football League (EFL ; known as " The Football League " before 2016 ? 17) . Welsh clubs that compete in the English football league system can also qualify .

The Premier League is a corporation in which the 20 member clubs act as shareholders . Seasons run from August to May . Teams play 38 matches each (playing each team in the league twice , home and away) , totalling 380 matches in the season . Most games are played on Saturday and Sunday afternoons ; others during weekday evenings . It is colloquially known as the Premiership and outside the UK it is commonly referred to as the English Premier League (EPL) .

The competition formed as the FA Premier League on 20 February 1992 following the decision of clubs in the Football League First Division to break away from the Football League , which was originally founded in 1888 , and take advantage of a lucrative television rights deal . The deal was worth £ 1 billion a year domestically as of 2013 ? 14 , with BSkyB and BT Group securing the domestic rights to broadcast 116 and 38 games respectively . The league generates ? 2 @. @ 2 billion per year in domestic and international television rights . In 2014 / 15 , teams were apportioned revenues of £ 1 @. @ 6 billion .

The Premier League is the most @-@ watched football league in the world , broadcast in 212 territories to 643 million homes and a potential TV audience of 4 @. @ 7 billion people . In the 2014 ? 15 season , the average Premier League match attendance exceeded 36 @, @ 000 , second highest of any professional football league behind the Bundesliga 's 43 @, @ 500 . Most stadium occupancies are near capacity . The Premier League ranks third in the UEFA coefficients of leagues based on performances in European competitions over the past five seasons .

While 47 clubs have competed since the inception of the Premier League in 1992 , only six have won the title : Manchester United (13) , Chelsea (4) , Arsenal (3) , Manchester City (2) , Blackburn Rovers and Leicester City (1) . The current champions are Leicester City , who won the title in 2015 ? 16 .

= = History = =

= = = Origins = = =

Despite significant European success in the 1970s and early 1980s , the late ' 80s marked a low point for English football . Stadiums were crumbling , supporters endured poor facilities , hooliganism was rife , and English clubs were banned from European competition for five years following the Heysel Stadium disaster in 1985 . The Football League First Division , the top level of English football since 1888 , was behind leagues such as Italy 's Serie A and Spain 's La Liga in attendances and revenues , and several top English players had moved abroad .

By the turn of the 1990s the downward trend was starting to reverse : at the 1990 FIFA World Cup , England reached the semi @-@ finals ; UEFA , European football 's governing body , lifted the five @-@ year ban on English clubs playing in European competitions in 1990 , resulting in Manchester United lifting the UEFA Cup Winners ' Cup in 1991 , and the Taylor Report on stadium safety standards , which proposed expensive upgrades to create all @-@ seater stadiums in the aftermath of the Hillsborough disaster , was published in January of that year .

Revenue from television also became more important : the Football League received £ 6 @. @ 3 million for a two @-@ year agreement in 1986 , but when that deal was renewed in 1988 , the price rose to £ 44 million over four years . The 1988 negotiations were the first signs of a breakaway league : ten clubs threatened to leave and form a " super league " , but were eventually persuaded to stay . As stadiums improved and match attendance and revenues rose , the country 's top teams again considered leaving the Football League in order to capitalise on the influx of money into the

sport .

= = = Foundation = = =

At the close of the 1991 season , a proposal was tabled for the establishment of a new league that would bring more money into the game overall . The Founder Members Agreement , signed on 17 July 1991 by the game 's top @-@ flight clubs , established the basic principles for setting up the FA Premier League . The newly formed top division would have commercial independence from The Football Association and the Football League , giving the FA Premier League licence to negotiate its own broadcast and sponsorship agreements . The argument given at the time was that the extra income would allow English clubs to compete with teams across Europe .

The managing director of London Weekend Television (LWT) , Greg Dyke , met with the representatives of the " big five " football clubs in England in 1990 . The meeting was to pave the way for a break away from The Football League . Dyke believed that it would be more lucrative for LWT if only the larger clubs in the country were featured on national television and wanted to establish whether the clubs would be interested in a larger share of television rights money . The five clubs decided it was a good idea and decided to press ahead with it ; however , the league would have no credibility without the backing of The Football Association and so David Dein of Arsenal held talks to see whether the FA were receptive to the idea . The FA did not enjoy an amicable relationship with the Football League at the time and considered it as a way to weaken the Football League 's position .

In 1992 , the First Division clubs resigned from the Football League en masse and on 27 May 1992 the FA Premier League was formed as a limited company working out of an office at the Football Association 's then headquarters in Lancaster Gate . This meant a break @-@ up of the 104 @-@ year @-@ old Football League that had operated until then with four divisions ; the Premier League would operate with a single division and the Football League with three . There was no change in competition format ; the same number of teams competed in the top flight , and promotion and relegation between the Premier League and the new First Division remained the same as the old First and Second Divisions with three teams relegated from the league and three promoted .

The league held its first season in 1992 ? 93 and was originally composed of 22 clubs . The first ever Premier League goal was scored by Brian Deane of Sheffield United in a 2 ? 1 win against Manchester United . The 22 inaugural members of the new Premier League were Arsenal , Aston Villa , Blackburn Rovers , Chelsea , Coventry City , Crystal Palace , Everton , Ipswich Town , Leeds United , Liverpool , Manchester City , Manchester United , Middlesbrough , Norwich City , Nottingham Forest , Oldham Athletic , Queens Park Rangers , Sheffield United , Sheffield Wednesday , Southampton , Tottenham Hotspur , and Wimbledon . Luton Town , Notts County and West Ham United were the three teams relegated from the old first division at the end of the 1991 ? 92 season , and did not take part in the inaugural Premier League season .

= = = " Big Four " dominance (2000s) = = =

One significant feature of the Premier League in the mid @-@ 2000s was the dominance of the so @-@ called " Big Four " clubs : Arsenal , Chelsea , Liverpool and Manchester United . During this decade , and particularly from 2002 to 2009 , they dominated the top four spots , which came with UEFA Champions League qualification , taking all top four places in 5 out of 6 seasons from 2003 ? 04 to 2008 ? 09 inclusive , with Arsenal going as far as winning the league without losing a single game in 2003 ? 04 , the only time it has ever happened in the Premier League . In May 2008 Kevin Keegan stated that " Big Four " dominance threatened the division , " This league is in danger of becoming one of the most boring but great leagues in the world . " Premier League chief executive Richard Scudamore said in defence : " There are a lot of different tussles that go on in the Premier League depending on whether you 're at the top , in the middle or at the bottom that make it interesting . "

The years following 2009 marked a shift in the structure of the " Big Four " with Tottenham Hotspur

and Manchester City both breaking into the top four . In the 2009 ? 10 season , Tottenham finished fourth and became the first team to break the top four since Everton in 2005 . Criticism of the gap between an elite group of " super clubs " and the majority of the Premier League has continued , nevertheless , due to their increasing ability to spend more than the other Premier League clubs . Manchester City won the title in the 2011 ? 12 season , becoming the first club outside the " Big Four " to win since 1994 ? 95 . That season also saw two of the Big Four (Chelsea and Liverpool) finish outside the top four places for the first time since 1994 ? 95 . In the following four seasons , Manchester United found themselves outside of the top four twice (in 2013 ? 14 and 2015 ? 16) while Chelsea finished 10th in the 2015 ? 16 season and Liverpool finished outside the top four in three of those four seasons . Arsenal , however , remained in the top four in all four seasons and have never finished outside the top four since Arsène Wenger took charge of the club in 1996 .

= = = Development = = =

Due to insistence by the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) , the international governing body of football , that domestic leagues reduce the number of games clubs played , the number of clubs was reduced to 20 in 1995 when four teams were relegated from the league and only two teams promoted . On 8 June 2006 , FIFA requested that all major European leagues , including Italy 's Serie A and Spain 's La Liga be reduced to 18 teams by the start of the 2007 ? 08 season . The Premier League responded by announcing their intention to resist such a reduction . Ultimately , the 2007 ? 08 season kicked off again with 20 teams .

The league changed its name from the FA Premier League to simply the Premier League in 2007 .

= = Corporate structure = =

The Football Association Premier League Ltd (FAPL) is operated as a corporation and is owned by the 20 member clubs . Each club is a shareholder , with one vote each on issues such as rule changes and contracts . The clubs elect a chairman , chief executive , and board of directors to oversee the daily operations of the league . The current chairman is Sir Dave Richards , who was appointed in April 1999 , and the chief executive is Richard Scudamore , appointed in November 1999 . The former chairman and chief executive , John Quinton and Peter Leaver , were forced to resign in March 1999 after awarding consultancy contracts to former Sky executives Sam Chisholm and David Chance . The Football Association is not directly involved in the day @-@ to @-@ day operations of the Premier League , but has veto power as a special shareholder during the election of the chairman and chief executive and when new rules are adopted by the league .

The Premier League sends representatives to UEFA 's European Club Association , the number of clubs and the clubs themselves chosen according to UEFA coefficients . For the 2012 ? 13 season the Premier League has 10 representatives in the Association : Arsenal , Aston Villa , Chelsea , Everton , Fulham , Liverpool , Manchester City , Manchester United , Newcastle United and Tottenham Hotspur . The European Club Association is responsible for electing three members to UEFA 's Club Competitions Committee , which is involved in the operations of UEFA competitions such as the Champions League and UEFA Europa League .

= = Competition format = =

= = = Competition = = =

There are 20 clubs in the Premier League . During the course of a season (from August to May) each club plays the others twice (a double round @-@ robin system) , once at their home stadium and once at that of their opponents , for a total of 38 games . Teams receive three points for a win and one point for a draw . No points are awarded for a loss . Teams are ranked by total points , then goal difference , and then goals scored . If still equal , teams are deemed to occupy the same

position . If there is a tie for the championship , for relegation , or for qualification to other competitions , a play @-@ off match at a neutral venue decides rank . The three lowest placed teams are relegated into the Football League Championship , and the top two teams from the Championship , together with the winner of play @-@ offs involving the third to sixth placed Championship clubs , are promoted in their place .

= = = Qualification for European competitions = = =

As of the 2009 ? 10 season qualification for the UEFA Champions League changed , the top four teams in the Premier League qualify for the UEFA Champions League , with the top three teams directly entering the group stage . Previously only the top two teams qualified automatically . The fourth @-@ placed team enters the Champions League at the play @-@ off round for non @-@ champions and must win a two @-@ legged knockout tie in order to enter the group stage .

The team placed fifth in the Premier League automatically qualifies for the UEFA Europa League , and the sixth and seventh @-@ placed teams can also qualify , depending on the winners of the two domestic cup competitions i.e. the FA Cup and the Capital One Cup (League Cup) . Two Europa League places are reserved for the winners of each tournament ; if the winner of either the FA Cup or League Cup qualifies for the Champions League , then that place will go to the next @-@ best placed finisher in the Premier League . A further place in the UEFA Europa League is also available via the Fair Play initiative . If the Premier League has one of the three highest Fair Play rankings in Europe , the highest ranked team in the Premier League Fair Play standings which has not already qualified for Europe will automatically qualify for the UEFA Europa League first qualifying round .

An exception to the usual European qualification system happened in 2005 , after Liverpool won the Champions League the year before , but did not finish in a Champions League qualification place in the Premier League that season . UEFA gave special dispensation for Liverpool to enter the Champions League , giving England five qualifiers . UEFA subsequently ruled that the defending champions qualify for the competition the following year regardless of their domestic league placing . However , for those leagues with four entrants in the Champions League , this meant that if the Champions League winner finished outside the top four in its domestic league , it would qualify at the expense of the fourth @-@ placed team in the league . At that time , no association could have more than four entrants in the Champions League . This occurred in 2012 , when Chelsea ? who had won the Champions League the previous year , but finished sixth in the league ? qualified for the Champions League in place of Tottenham Hotspur , who went into the Europa League .

Starting with the 2015 ? 16 season , the Europa League champion automatically qualifies for the following season 's Champions League , and the maximum number of Champions League places for any single association has increased to five . An association with four Champions League places , such as The FA , will only earn a fifth place if a club from that association that does not qualify for the Champions League through its league wins either the Champions League or Europa League .

In 2007 , the Premier League became the highest ranking European League based on the performances of English teams in European competitions over a five @-@ year period . This broke the eight @-@ year dominance of the Spanish league , La Liga .

= = = Premier League clubs in international competition = = =

Between the 1992 ? 93 season and the 2015 ? 16 season , Premier League clubs had won the UEFA Champions League four times (as well as supplying five of the runners @-@ up) , behind Spain 's La Liga with nine wins , and Italy 's Serie A with five wins , and ahead of , among others , Germany 's Bundesliga with three wins (see table here) . The FIFA Club World Cup (or the FIFA Club World Championship , as it was originally called) has been won by Premier League clubs once (Manchester United in 2008) , and they have also been runners @-@ up twice , behind Brazil 's Brasileirão and Spain 's La Liga with four wins , and Italy 's Serie A with two wins (see table here) .

= = Clubs = =

A total of 47 clubs have played in the Premier League from its inception in 1992 , up to and including the 2016 ? 17 season .

== = Champions == =

Wins by club

== = Clubs by spell == =

Due to promotion and relegation , only six of the founder members of the Premier League have never been relegated from it , while another six founders have never returned after being relegated once . Out of the 25 clubs who have gained promotion to the league since it was created , only three have remained without a subsequent relegation , while seven have been relegated after just one spell . The remaining fifteen clubs have spent multiple spells in the league , up to five in the case of founder member Crystal Palace .

== = 2016 ? 17 season == =

The following 20 clubs will compete in the Premier League during the 2016 ? 17 season .

Newcastle United , Norwich City and Aston Villa were relegated to the Championship for the 2016 ? 17 season , while Burnley , Middlesbrough and Hull City , as winners , runners @-@ up and play @-@ off final winners respectively , were promoted from the 2015 ? 16 Championship season .

AFC Bournemouth , Stoke and Swansea are the only clubs to have remained in the Premier League since their first promotion , having played 2 , 8 and 5 seasons (out of 25) respectively .

a : Founding member of the Premier Leagueb : Never been relegated from Premier Leaguec : One of the original 12 Football League teamsd : Club based in Wales

== = Non @-@ English clubs == =

Wales

In 2011 , a Welsh club participated in the Premier League for the first time after Swansea City gained promotion . The first Premier League match to be played outside England was Swansea City 's home match at the Liberty Stadium against Wigan Athletic on 20 August 2011 . In 2012 ? 13 , Swansea qualified for the Europa League by winning the League Cup . The number of Welsh clubs in the Premier League increased to two for the first time in 2013 ? 14 , as Cardiff City gained promotion , but Cardiff City was relegated after its maiden season .

Because they are members of the Football Association of Wales (FAW) , the question of whether clubs like Swansea should represent England or Wales in European competitions has caused long @-@ running discussions in UEFA . Swansea took one of England 's three available places in the Europa League in 2013 ? 14 by winning the League Cup in 2012 ? 13 . The right of Welsh clubs to take up such English places was in doubt until UEFA clarified the matter in March 2012 .

Scotland and Ireland

Participation in the Premier League by some Scottish or Irish clubs has sometimes been discussed , but without result . The idea came closest to reality in 1998 , when Wimbledon received Premier League approval to relocate to Dublin , Ireland , but the move was blocked by the Football Association of Ireland . Additionally , the media occasionally discusses the idea that Scotland 's two biggest teams , Celtic and Rangers , should or will take part in the Premier League , but nothing has come of these discussions .

== = Sponsorship == =

From 1993 to 2016 , the Premier League had title sponsorship rights sold to two companies ;

Barclays was the most recent title sponsor , having sponsored the Premier League from 2001 through 2016 (until 2004 , the title sponsorship was held through its Barclaycard brand before shifting to its main banking brand in 2004) .

Barclays ' deal with the Premier League will expire at the end of the 2015 ? 16 season . The FA announced on 4 June 2015 that it would not pursue any further title sponsorship deals for the Premier League , arguing that they wanted to build a " clean " brand for the competition more in line with those of major U.S. sports leagues .

As well as sponsorship for the league itself , the Premier League has a number of official partners and suppliers . The official ball supplier for the league is Nike who have had the contract since the 2000 ? 01 season when they took over from Mitre .

= = Finances = =

The Premier League has the highest revenue of any football league in the world , with total club revenues of ? 2 @.@ 48 billion in 2009 ? 10 . In 2013 ? 14 , due to improved television revenues and cost controls , the Premier League had net profits in excess of £ 78 million , exceeding all other football leagues . In 2010 the Premier League was awarded the Queen 's Award for Enterprise in the International Trade category for its outstanding contribution to international trade and the value it brings to English football and the United Kingdom 's broadcasting industry .

The Premier League includes some of the richest football clubs in the world . Deloitte 's " Football Money League " listed seven Premier League clubs in the top 20 for the 2009 ? 10 season , and all 20 clubs were in the top 40 globally by the end of the 2013 ? 14 season , largely as a result of increased broadcasting revenue . From 2013 , the league generates ? 2 @.@ 2 billion per year in domestic and international television rights .

Premier League clubs agreed in principle in December 2012 , to radical new cost controls . The two proposals consist of a break @-@ even rule and a cap on the amount clubs can increase their wage bill by each season . With the new television deals on the horizon , momentum has been growing to find ways of preventing the majority of the cash going straight to players and agents .

= = Media coverage = =

= = = United Kingdom and Ireland = = =

Television has played a major role in the history of the Premier League . The League 's decision to assign broadcasting rights to BSkyB in 1992 was at the time a radical decision , but one that has paid off . At the time pay television was an almost untested proposition in the UK market , as was charging fans to watch live televised football . However , a combination of Sky 's strategy , the quality of Premier League football and the public 's appetite for the game has seen the value of the Premier League 's TV rights soar .

The Premier League sells its television rights on a collective basis . This is in contrast to some other European Leagues , including La Liga , in which each club sells its rights individually , leading to a much higher share of the total income going to the top few clubs . The money is divided into three parts : half is divided equally between the clubs ; one quarter is awarded on a merit basis based on final league position , the top club getting twenty times as much as the bottom club , and equal steps all the way down the table ; the final quarter is paid out as facilities fees for games that are shown on television , with the top clubs generally receiving the largest shares of this . The income from overseas rights is divided equally between the twenty clubs .

The first Sky television rights agreement was worth £ 304 million over five seasons . The next contract , negotiated to start from the 1997 ? 98 season , rose to £ 670 million over four seasons . The third contract was a £ 1 @.@ 024 billion deal with BSkyB for the three seasons from 2001 ? 02 to 2003 ? 04 . The league brought in £ 320 million from the sale of its international rights for the three @-@ year period from 2004 ? 05 to 2006 ? 07 . It sold the rights itself on a territory @-@ by

@-@ territory basis . Sky 's monopoly was broken from August 2006 when Setanta Sports was awarded rights to show two out of the six packages of matches available . This occurred following an insistence by the European Commission that exclusive rights should not be sold to one television company . Sky and Setanta paid a total of £ 1 @.@ 7 billion , a two @-@ thirds increase which took many commentators by surprise as it had been widely assumed that the value of the rights had levelled off following many years of rapid growth . Setanta also hold rights to a live 3 pm match solely for Irish viewers . The BBC has retained the rights to show highlights for the same three seasons (on Match of the Day) for £ 171 @.@ 6 million , a 63 per cent increase on the £ 105 million it paid for the previous three @-@ year period . Sky and BT have agreed to jointly pay £ 84 @.@ 3 million for delayed television rights to 242 games (that is the right to broadcast them in full on television and over the internet) in most cases for a period of 50 hours after 10 pm on matchday . Overseas television rights fetched £ 625 million , nearly double the previous contract . The total raised from these deals is more than £ 2 @.@ 7 billion , giving Premier League clubs an average media income from league games of around £ 40 million @-@ a @-@ year from 2007 to 2010 .

The TV rights agreement between the Premier League and Sky has faced accusations of being a cartel , and a number of court cases have arisen as a result . An investigation by the Office of Fair Trading in 2002 found BSkyB to be dominant within the pay TV sports market , but concluded that there were insufficient grounds for the claim that BSkyB had abused its dominant position . In July 1999 the Premier League 's method of selling rights collectively for all member clubs was investigated by the UK Restrictive Practices Court , who concluded that the agreement was not contrary to the public interest .

The BBC 's highlights package on Saturday and Sunday nights , as well as other evenings when fixtures justify , will run until 2016 . Television rights alone for the period 2010 to 2013 have been purchased for £ 1 @.@ 782 billion . On 22 June 2009 , due to troubles encountered by Setanta Sports after it failed to meet a final deadline over a £ 30 million payment to the Premier League , ESPN was awarded two packages of UK rights containing a total of 46 matches that were available for the 2009 ? 10 season as well as a package of 23 matches per season from 2010 ? 11 to 2012 ? 13 . On 13 June 2012 , the Premier League announced that BT had been awarded 38 games a season for the 2013 ? 14 through 2015 ? 16 seasons at £ 246 million @-@ a @-@ year . The remaining 116 games were retained by Sky who paid £ 760 million @-@ a @-@ year . The total domestic rights have raised £ 3 @.@ 018 billion , an increase of 70 @.@ 2 % over the 2010 ? 11 to 2012 ? 13 rights . The value of the licensing deal rose by another 70 @.@ 2 % in 2015 , when Sky and BT paid a total of £ 5 @.@ 136 billion to renew their contracts with the Premier League for another three years up to the 2018 ? 19 season .

UK highlights

Between the 1998 ? 99 season and the 2012 ? 13 season , RTE broadcast highlights on Premier Soccer Saturday and occasionally Premier Soccer Sunday . During then between the 2004 ? 05 season and the 2006 ? 07 season , RTE broadcast 15 live matches on a Saturday afternoon with each match being called Premiership Live .

= = = Worldwide = = =

The Premier League is the most @-@ watched football league in the world , broadcast in 212 territories to 643 million homes and a potential TV audience of 4 @.@ 7 billion people , often on networks owned and / or controlled by 21st Century Fox (which owns about 39 % of BSkyB in the UK) . The Premier League 's production arm , Premier League Productions , is operated by IMG Productions and produces all content for its international television partners .

The Premier League is particularly popular in Asia , where it is the most widely distributed sports programme . In Australia , Fox Sports broadcasts almost all of the season 's 380 matches live , and Foxtel gives subscribers the option of selecting which Saturday 3pm match to watch . In India , the matches are broadcast live on STAR Sports . In China , the broadcast rights were awarded to Super Sports in a six @-@ year agreement that began in the 2013 ? 14 season . As of the 2013 ? 14 season , Canadian broadcast rights to the Premier League are jointly owned by Sportsnet and TSN ,

with both rival networks holding rights to 190 matches per season .

The Premier League is broadcast in the United States through NBC Sports . Premier League viewership has increased rapidly , with NBC and NBCSN averaging a record 479 @, @ 000 viewers in the 2014 ? 15 season , up 118 % from 2012 ? 13 when coverage still aired on Fox Soccer and ESPN / ESPN2 (220 @, @ 000 viewers) , and NBC Sports has been widely praised for its coverage . NBC Sports reached a six @-@ year extension with the Premier League in 2015 to broadcast the league through the 2021 ? 22 season in a deal valued at \$ 1 billion (£ 640 million) .

= = Widening gap with lower leagues = =

There has been an increasing gulf between the Premier League and the Football League . Since its split with the Football League , many established clubs in the Premier League have managed to distance themselves from their counterparts in lower leagues . Owing in large part to the disparity in revenue from television rights between the leagues , many newly promoted teams have found it difficult to avoid relegation in their first season in the Premier League . In every season except 2001 ? 02 and 2011 ? 12 , at least one Premier League newcomer has been relegated back to the Football League . In 1997 ? 98 all three promoted clubs were relegated at the end of the season .

The Premier League distributes a portion of its television revenue to clubs that are relegated from the league in the form of " parachute payments " . Starting with the 2013 ? 14 season , these payments are in excess of £ 60 million over four seasons . Though designed to help teams adjust to the loss of television revenues (the average Premier League team receives £ 55 million while the average Football League Championship club receives £ 2 million) , critics maintain that the payments actually widen the gap between teams that have reached the Premier League and those that have not , leading to the common occurrence of teams " bouncing back " soon after their relegation . For some clubs who have failed to win immediate promotion back to the Premier League , financial problems , including in some cases administration or even liquidation have followed . Further relegations down the footballing ladder have ensued for several clubs unable to cope with the gap .

= = Stadiums = =

As of the 2015 ? 16 season , Premier League football has been played in 53 stadiums since the formation of the Premier League in 1992 . The Hillsborough disaster in 1989 and the subsequent Taylor Report saw a recommendation that standing terraces should be abolished ; as a result all stadiums in the Premier League are all @-@ seater . Since the formation of the Premier League , football grounds in England have seen constant improvements to capacity and facilities , with some clubs moving to new @-@ build stadiums . Nine stadiums that have seen Premier League football have now been demolished . The stadiums for the 2010 ? 11 season show a large disparity in capacity : Old Trafford , the home of Manchester United has a capacity of 75 @, @ 957 with Bloomfield Road , the home of Blackpool , having a capacity of 16 @, @ 220 . The combined total capacity of the Premier League in the 2010 ? 11 season is 770 @, @ 477 with an average capacity of 38 @, @ 523 .

Stadium attendances are a significant source of regular income for Premier League clubs . For the 2009 ? 10 season , average attendances across the league clubs were 34 @, @ 215 for Premier League matches with a total aggregate attendance figure of 13 @, @ 001 @, @ 616 . This represents an increase of 13 @, @ 089 from the average attendance of 21 @, @ 126 recorded in the league 's first season (1992 ? 93) . However , during the 1992 ? 93 season the capacities of most stadiums were reduced as clubs replaced terraces with seats in order to meet the Taylor Report 's 1994 ? 95 deadline for all @-@ seater stadiums . The Premier League 's record average attendance of 36 @, @ 144 was set during the 2007 ? 08 season . This record was then beaten in the 2013 ? 14 season recording an average attendance of 36 @, @ 695 with a total attendance of just under 14 million , the highest average in England 's top flight since 1950 .

= = Managers = =

Managers in the Premier League are involved in the day @-@ to @-@ day running of the team , including the training , team selection , and player acquisition . Their influence varies from club @-@ to @-@ club and is related to the ownership of the club and the relationship of the manager with fans . Managers are required to have a UEFA Pro Licence which is the final coaching qualification available , and follows the completion of the UEFA ' B ' and ' A ' Licences . The UEFA Pro Licence is required by every person who wishes to manage a club in the Premier League on a permanent basis (i.e. more than 12 weeks ? the amount of time an unqualified caretaker manager is allowed to take control) . Caretaker appointments are managers that fill the gap between a managerial departure and a new appointment . Several caretaker managers have gone on to secure a permanent managerial post after performing well as a caretaker ; examples include Paul Hart at Portsmouth and David Pleat at Tottenham Hotspur .

The league 's longest @-@ serving manager was Alex Ferguson , who was in charge of Manchester United from November 1986 until his retirement at the end of the 2012 ? 13 season , meaning that he was manager for all of the first 21 seasons of the Premier League . Arsène Wenger is now the league 's longest @-@ serving current manager , having been in charge of Arsenal in the Premier League since 1996 .

No English manager has won the Premier League ; the eight managers to have won the title comprise two Scots : Alex Ferguson (Manchester United , 13 wins) and Kenny Dalglish (Blackburn Rovers , one win) , a Frenchman (Arsène Wenger , Arsenal , three wins) , a Portuguese (José Mourinho , Chelsea , three wins) , a Chilean (Manuel Pellegrini , Manchester City , one win) and three Italians (Carlo Ancelotti , Chelsea , Roberto Mancini , Manchester City , and Claudio Ranieri , Leicester City , one win each) .

The current managers in the Premier League are :

= = Players = =

= = = Appearances = = =

Ryan Giggs holds the record number of Premier League appearances and he also has 13 Premier League champion 's medals , more than any other player .

= = = Foreign players and transfer regulations = = =

At the inception of the Premier League in 1992 ? 93 , just eleven players named in the starting line @-@ ups for the first round of matches hailed from outside of the United Kingdom or Ireland . By 2000 ? 01 , the number of foreign players participating in the Premier League was 36 per cent of the total . In the 2004 ? 05 season the figure had increased to 45 per cent . On 26 December 1999 , Chelsea became the first Premier League side to field an entirely foreign starting line @-@ up , and on 14 February 2005 Arsenal were the first to name a completely foreign 16 @-@ man squad for a match . By 2009 , under 40 % of the players in the Premier League were English .

In response to concerns that clubs were increasingly passing over young English players in favour of foreign players , in 1999 , the Home Office tightened its rules for granting work permits to players from countries outside of the European Union . A non @-@ EU player applying for the permit must have played for his country in at least 75 per cent of its competitive ' A ' team matches for which he was available for selection during the previous two years , and his country must have averaged at least 70th place in the official FIFA world rankings over the previous two years . If a player does not meet those criteria , the club wishing to sign him may appeal .

Players may only be transferred during transfer windows that are set by the Football Association . The two transfer windows run from the last day of the season to 31 August and from 31 December to 31 January . Player registrations cannot be exchanged outside these windows except under

specific licence from the FA , usually on an emergency basis . As of the 2010 ? 11 season , the Premier League introduced new rules mandating that each club must register a maximum 25 @-@ man squad of players aged over 21 , with the squad list only allowed to be changed in transfer windows or in exceptional circumstances . This was to enable the ' home grown ' rule to be enacted , whereby the League would also from 2010 require at least 8 of the named 25 man squad to be made up of ' home @-@ grown players ' .

= = = Player wages and transfer fees = = =

There is no team or individual salary cap in the Premier League . As a result of the increasingly lucrative television deals , player wages rose sharply following the formation of the Premier League when the average player wage was £ 75 @,@ 000 per year . The average salary stands at £ 1 @.@ 1 million as of the 2008 ? 09 season . As of 2015 , average salaries in the Premier League are higher than for any other football league in the world .

The record transfer fee for a Premier League player has risen steadily over the lifetime of the competition . Prior to the start of the first Premier League season Alan Shearer became the first British player to command a transfer fee of more than £ 3 million . The record rose steadily in the Premier League 's first few seasons , until Alan Shearer made a record breaking £ 15 million move to Newcastle United in 1996 . The three highest transfer in the sport 's history had a Premier League club on the selling end , with Tottenham Hotspur selling Gareth Bale to Real Madrid for £ 85 million in 2013 , Manchester United 's sale of Cristiano Ronaldo to Real Madrid for £ 80 million in 2009 , and Liverpool selling Luis Suárez to Barcelona for £ 75 million in 2014 .

= = = Top scorers = = =

As of 17 January 2016 .

Italics denotes players still playing professional football , **Bold** denotes players still playing in the Premier League .

The Golden Boot is awarded to the top Premier League scorer at the end of each season . Former Blackburn Rovers and Newcastle United striker Alan Shearer holds the record for most Premier League goals with 260 . Twenty @-@ four players have reached the 100 @-@ goal mark . Since the first Premier League season in 1992 ? 93 , 14 different players from 10 different clubs have won or shared the top scorers title . Thierry Henry won his fourth overall scoring title by scoring 27 goals in the 2005 ? 06 season . Andrew Cole and Alan Shearer hold the record for most goals in a season (34) ? for Newcastle and Blackburn respectively . Ryan Giggs of Manchester United holds the record for scoring goals in consecutive seasons , having scored in the first 21 seasons of the league .

= = Awards = =

= = = Trophy = = =

The Premier League maintains two trophies ? the genuine trophy (held by the reigning champions) and a spare replica . Two trophies are held in the event that two different clubs could win the League on the final day of the season . In the rare event that more than two clubs are vying for the title on the final day of the season ? then a replica won by a previous club is used .

The current Premier League trophy was created by Royal Jewellers Asprey of London . It consists of a trophy with a golden crown and a malachite plinth base . The plinth weighs 33 pounds (15 kg) and the trophy weighs 22 pounds (10 @.@ 0 kg) . The trophy and plinth are 76 cm (30 in) tall , 43 cm (17 in) wide and 25 cm (9 @.@ 8 in) deep .

Its main body is solid sterling silver and silver gilt , while its plinth is made of malachite , a semi @-@ precious stone . The plinth has a silver band around its circumference , upon which the names

of the title @-@ winning clubs are listed . Malachite 's green colour is also representative of the green field of play . The design of the trophy is based on the heraldry of Three Lions that is associated with English football . Two of the lions are found above the handles on either side of the trophy ? the third is symbolised by the captain of the title winning team as he raises the trophy , and its gold crown , above his head at the end of the season . The ribbons that drape the handles are presented in the team colours of the league champions that year .

In 2004 , a special gold version of the trophy was commissioned to commemorate Arsenal winning the title without a single defeat .

= = = Player and manager awards = = =

In addition to the winner 's trophy and the individual winner 's medals awarded to players , the Premier League also awards the monthly Manager of the Month and Player of the Month awards , as well as annual awards for Manager of the Season , Player of the Season , Golden Boot and the Golden Glove awards .

= = = 20 Seasons Awards = = =

In 2012 , the Premier League celebrated its second decade by holding the 20 Seasons Awards :

Fantasy Team of the 20 Seasons

Panel Choice : Peter Schmeichel , Gary Neville , Tony Adams , Rio Ferdinand , Ashley Cole , Cristiano Ronaldo , Roy Keane , Paul Scholes , Ryan Giggs , Thierry Henry , Alan Shearer

Public Vote : Peter Schmeichel , Gary Neville , Tony Adams , Nemanja Vidi? , Ashley Cole , Cristiano Ronaldo , Steven Gerrard , Paul Scholes , Ryan Giggs , Thierry Henry , Alan Shearer