

Manchester United

Nicknamed the Red Devils for its distinctive red jerseys, Manchester United—often called “Man U”—is one of most popular football (association football) clubs not only in England but in the entire world. Based in the city of Manchester, the club has won the English top-division league championship 20 times and the Football Association (FA) Cup 12 times.

The club was formed as Newton Heath LYR in 1878 by workers from the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. Renamed Manchester United in 1902, the club won its first English league championship in 1907–08. In 1910 the club moved from its old Bank Street ground into Old Trafford stadium, which has served as the team’s home ever since.

Manchester United’s history since World War II has been dominated by two long-serving managers. Sir Matthew Busby was appointed manager in 1945 and over the next 24 years steered the club to five English league and two FA Cup victories. The club had to contend with tragedy in 1958 when an aircraft carrying the team crashed in Munich, Germany, killing 23 of the 44 onboard. In the 1960s the team, rebuilt by Busby, included the highly talented attacking trio of Bobby Charlton, George Best, and Denis Law. In 1968 this team became the first English club to win the European Cup (now known as the Champions League).

Alex Ferguson, the former coach of the Scottish team Aberdeen, managed Manchester United from 1986 to 2013. He presided over an unparalleled spell of dominance in the English league. The club has won 13 Premier League titles since that league’s first season in 1992–93. In the 1998–99 season the club secured the first “treble” in English football history by winning the Premier League, the FA Cup, and the Champions League. A second Champions League victory came in the 2007–08 season. Manchester United earned its 12th FA Cup in 2016.

Manchester United is renowned for its youth team program, which has generated many notable homegrown players who later performed for the club’s first team, including David Beckham. The club’s other prominent players have included Wayne Rooney, Rio Ferdinand, Andy Cole, Roy Keane, Eric Cantona, Patrice Evra, Dimitar Berbatov, and Cristiano Ronaldo.