

Are top footballers paid too much money?

Many of the world's best players are paid millions of pounds a year.

What you need to know

- The Premier League is the top league in English football. Its transfer window – which is when football clubs are able to buy and sell players – is now open. There are expected to be some players changing clubs for huge sums of money before the window closes on 9 August.
- The world's most expensive footballer is Brazilian forward Neymar. He earns about £537,000 a week playing for Paris Saint-Germain, in France.
- Top footballers pay lots of tax. Tax is a percentage of people's earnings which is given to the government to pay for things such as the NHS and schools. Many football clubs support charities.

Neymar is one of the world's top paid footballers.



DID YOU KNOW?

Until 1961, the maximum amount a footballer could earn was £20 a week, which is the equivalent of £420 today.

After scoring four goals and captaining his team at this year's Fifa World Cup in Russia, Portuguese player Cristiano Ronaldo was sold from Real Madrid to Juventus for £105 million on 10 July. He will reportedly earn around £26.5 million a year, which is about £510,000 a week. As a comparison, a newly qualified teacher in England gets around £23,000 a year. That means a new teacher might have to work for more than 20 years to earn what Ronaldo receives in one week. In England, deals are currently being struck between football clubs as they buy and sell players for millions of pounds. Ronaldo, and other footballers like him, are very famous elite athletes at the top of their game. But are they paid too much money?

YES – footballers earn silly amounts

No one needs to earn millions of pounds a year – it's just silly money. While football is fun to watch, it doesn't contribute as much to society as teachers, doctors and nurses do. These professionals benefit all of us by helping people, yet many are on low wages. What's more, the amount of money footballers are being paid is ruining the sport. If a football club pays a player lots of money, the ticket prices can go up and it makes going to a match too expensive for most fans. It's not fair to poorer football clubs either. If a club doesn't pay its footballers lots of money, the good players will not sign for them – they'll go elsewhere. This means poorer clubs cannot compete for the top trophies and the rich teams keep winning.

NO – footballers deserve to earn a lot

Football is watched by millions of people – it is a big business. The rights to show English Premier League football matches on television for the two seasons after next are valued at almost £4.5 billion, which means that broadcasters such as Sky Sports pay a lot of money to show the game on TV, and sponsors (companies) pay to be associated with it. Footballers deserve their share of that money – after all, they're the ones on the pitch. Besides, footballers usually retire from playing around the age of 35, which is a lot earlier than people in other professions. They have to earn as much money as they can before they're too old to play. Top players are highly skilled entertainers – some musicians and authors get paid millions, so why shouldn't footballers?

YES

Three reasons why top footballers are paid too much

- 1 Ticket prices, which help pay the footballers' wages, are too high for many ordinary fans.
- 2 Footballers don't contribute to society in the same way that teachers and nurses do.
- 3 Clubs can't compete unless they pay lots of money to be able to afford the best players, so only a few rich clubs win trophies.

NO

Three reasons why top footballers deserve what they are paid

- 1 The best footballers are watched by millions of people around the world. They bring in lots of money from broadcasters and sponsors.
- 2 Footballers usually retire from playing in their mid-30s – earlier than most other professions.
- 3 Actors, musicians and authors earn similar money and their careers can last much longer.

THE WEEKLY POLL

To find out what everyone is voting on this week visit:
theweekjunior.co.uk/polls

YES

NO



What do you think?

Each week we ask our readers to vote in our The Big debate poll. You can find out what we're voting on at the moment by visiting theweekjunior.co.uk/polls.

The aim of the Big debate page is to present two sides of an issue fairly and objectively, in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on the page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties. The page is created in association with the English-Speaking Union, an educational charity helping young people discover their voice and realise their full potential. For more information, please see esu.org



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
discovering voices