



Premier League GW3 Preview: Liverpool's New Era, Arsenal's Title Test and a Packed Weekend

Description

The Premier League GW3 preview for 28th-31 August 2026 has everything: a new manager's first home test, a champion's away date, and Friday night football under the lights. This is the weekend when the 2026-27 season truly comes alive.

Liverpool vs Nottingham Forest - Andoni Iraola's Anfield Baptism

Saturday's early kick-off (12:30 SGT+8 / 05:30 SGT) at Anfield carries an emotional charge that goes beyond three points. Andoni Iraola takes charge of his first home league game as Liverpool manager, appointed after Arne Slot was sacked following a disappointing fifth-place finish last season. The Spaniard, who earned his reputation for high-pressing, aggressive football at Bournemouth, will be eager to show Anfield what the new era looks like.

Liverpool drew 2-2 at Newcastle in their last outing - twice coming from behind, with Dominik Szoboszlai's 99th-minute penalty earning a point. There's resolve in this squad, but also questions. Injuries to Conor Bradley, Hugo Ekitike, Joe Gomez, Jayden Danns and Giovanni Leoni add to the pressure, with Curtis Jones doubtful through a groin problem.

Nottingham Forest, under new boss Oliver Glasner, have had a rocky start - a 1-0 home defeat to Leeds on the opening day via Anton Stach's direct free-kick. Without Nicola Savona and Ryan Yates, it falls to Olufisayo Aina and Igor Jesus to carry Forest's attacking threat. For the neutral, this is appointment viewing. For Liverpool, it's about making Anfield a fortress again from day one. Read our preview of [Singapore Lions Enter New Era: Adidas Becomes Official Kit Sponsor in Landmark FAS Partnership](#) for more context.



Source: Arsenal FC official website (arsenal.com)

Crystal Palace vs Manchester City – Can City Find Their Feet?

Friday night at Selhurst Park opens the round, and it's a fixture with early-season significance. Manchester City's start to any campaign is watched as a barometer for the title race – slip up early and the pressure mounts fast. Crystal Palace, meanwhile, have been a thorn in the side of the big clubs in recent seasons and will look to use their home advantage to make a statement.

The Premier League title race over the past two seasons has been tight, with Arsenal finally breaking through. Whether City can sustain a proper title challenge this term remains one of the season's key plotlines.

Tottenham Hotspur vs Newcastle United

Saturday's late match at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium pits Roberto De Zerbi's Spurs against Newcastle United. De Zerbi's arrival at White Hart Lane was one of the summer's most talked-about appointments, and the Italian's attacking philosophy had fans buzzing during pre-season. Now the real thing begins. Newcastle, who drew 2-2 with Liverpool in GW2, are no pushover – Eddie Howe's side travel south buoyed by that result and with genuine European ambitions of their own.



Source: Arsenal FC official website (arsenal.com)

Aston Villa vs Arsenal – The Championship's Test

Monday night's fixture at Villa Park is the one that catches the eye most. Arsenal, Premier League champions for the first time in 22 years, face a Aston Villa side weakened by a raft of injuries – João Gomes (suspension), Tammy Abraham, Leon Bailey, Amadou Onana and Johan Manzambi are all unavailable. On paper, it favours the visitors. In practice, Villa Park is never a straightforward trip, and Unai Emery's men will be desperate to turn over the title holders in front of their own fans.

Arsenal arrived at GW3 with maximum points, having beaten newly promoted Coventry City 3-0 on their title-defence debut at Emirates Stadium. The Gunners's strength in depth, evident from their five players named in the PFA Team of the Year, suggests Arteta's side have the quality to grind out results even on the road.

Manchester United vs Ipswich Town and Chelsea vs Brighton

Sunday's double-header rounds out a packed schedule. R ben Amorim's Manchester United host Ipswich Town at Old Trafford, while Chelsea take on Brighton at Stamford Bridge. Both matches carry significance for the top-half picture, with United and Chelsea still finding their rhythm after active summers in the transfer market. If you want context on recent activity, see [FA Community Shield 2026 Preview: Arsenal vs Manchester City at Principality Stadium Cardiff](#).

This round of fixtures will begin to separate the genuine title and top-four contenders from those who are still working out their best XI. One thing is certain - the Premier League 2026-27 season is building momentum fast. Head to the [LBRD Sports section](#) for full coverage throughout the season.

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