

## THE BEAUTIFUL PAIN: FOOTBALL'S MOST TATTOOED PLAYERS WOULD FACE £158,000 BILL TO REMOVE INK

- Football's 10 most tattooed players would have to spend more than £158,000, over a period of 70 years collectively, to remove all of their body art
- Former Chelsea and Liverpool midfielder Raul Meireles would have to spend nearly £26,000, and 50 hours over a decade, to remove all of his tattoos
- Danish footballer Daniel Agger would need to fork out £19,000 for 56 sittings in the tattooist's chair over a nine-year period to return to his former ink-free image
- David Beckham last week commemorated the year 1999 with another tattoo - but to remove his entire collection would cost him £18,300 over eight years
- Over the past year enquiries for tattoo removal from UK patients have nearly doubled (up 94%) – and over a third of searches (36%) came from those aged 25-34

**Thursday 30 July 2015** – They are known for having some of the highest salaries in the world, which is just as well considering how much it would cost for some of football's most inked players to remove their tattoos, according to new research by private healthcare search engine, [WhatClinic.com](http://WhatClinic.com).

WhatClinic.com analysed the body art of the 10 international footballers most notable for their tattoos and found that – should they ever regret going under the needle – it would cost them almost £158,000 collectively to turn back the clock. Combined, the removal procedures would require 455 individual sittings, taking 342 hours over a period of 70 years.

Portugal's Raul Meireles, and former Chelsea and Liverpool midfielder, was seen flashing his impressive full-length leg tattoo earlier this year, but removing his entire tattoo collection would set him back nearly £26,000. Because it's necessary to wait at least eight weeks between removal sessions, which normally last around 45 minutes, Meireles wouldn't have completed the treatment for 10 years.

Danish defender Daniel Agger boasts an impressive array of artwork across his body. Also a former Liverpool player, Agger's tattoos include the initials of the club's iconic song, 'You'll Never Walk Alone'

across the knuckle of his right hand. But should he regret this homage to his previous club, along with his other tattoos, he would have to part with £19,000, and spend 42 hours across a period of nine years in the tattooist's chair.

David Beckham is known for covering his body with tributes to his loved ones, with new tattoos just this year including the words 'pretty lady' on his neck in tribute to his daughter, and the number '1999' on his hand to commemorate both the year of his marriage and Manchester United's historic Treble. To turn back the clock on his famous tattoos, Beckham would have to fork out £18,300, and spend 41 hours under the laser. And it would take him a total of eight years to achieve a blank canvas.

Swedish striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic hit headlines earlier this year by tattooing the names of 50 hungry people helped by the United Nations World Food Programme onto his body. The names were applied as temporary tattoos around his existing pieces of body art - but to remove his permanent tattoos would still cost more than £17,000. With the Paris St-Germain player being one of the most highly-paid players in international football, reported to have taken home £50 million last year, he might not feel the pinch.

Although a tattooed torso might still be very much in vogue for these football stars, enquiries through Whatclinic.com for tattoo removal from UK patients have nearly doubled (up 94%) in the past year, with the cost of removing a small, black and white tattoo starting at around £400 per session.

Those looking into tattoo removal are similar in age to these heavily-inked footballers, with over a third of searches (36%) made by those aged 25-34 – the highest proportion of any age bracket. Over a third (35%) of all traffic to the WhatClinic.com site as a whole comes from men, but, in the case of tattoo removal, male searches make up 41% of traffic in the UK, revealing a striking number of men proactively looking into the procedure.

The following table, based on average costs provided by tattoo-removal specialists, estimates the number of laser sessions and the total cost for the following international footballers to have all their tattoos removed:

Footballer	Number of sittings required	Total number of hours	Duration of treatment (years)	Total cost
Raul Meireles	66	50	10	£25,800
Daniel Agger	56	42	9	£19,000
David Beckham	54	41	8	£18,300
Zlatan Ibrahimovic	51	38	8	£17,050
Dani Alves	48	36	7	£16,800
Sergio Ramos	56	42	9	£16,780
Ezequiel Lavezzi	52	39	8	£16,450
Nigel de Jong	41	31	6	£15,250
James McClean	31	23	5	£11,850

**Emily Ross, director of WhatClinic.com, says:** “There are lots of reasons why we change our minds about tattoos. A great piece can fade, our bodies can change over time, or like Johnny Depp or Melanie Griffiths, we no longer want someone’s name on our arm! Luckily there are ways to help, but removal methods are not perfect, not painless, and not cheap! It’s unlikely that you will wipe away all traces of the tattoo. In fact, removing the tattoo can hurt more and cost more than the original work. Our advice? Think before you ink. As with all elective treatments, make very sure your practitioner is qualified and experienced. Read reviews and seek out other patients for independent feedback when making up your mind.”

**Wayne Joyce, co-founder of London-based tattoo removal specialist, Reset Room, says:** “The time needed to remove a tattoo, as well as the chances of eradicating all traces of the design, varies from person to person. Skin type, the colour and location of the tattoo, scarring and the degree of density will all make a big difference.

“The introduction of advanced laser technology has meant that the treatments are now more expensive - but requires fewer sessions and produces faster results than those given by older machines.

“Although the average customer won't be wanting to remove footballer levels of ink, most people don't realise that removing tattoos properly can take months or even years, because laser sessions should be around eight weeks apart to get the best results and minimise the risk of scarring and other side effects.”

– ENDS –

#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. Each tattoo removal sitting lasts for 45 minutes
2. To calculate number of years taken to remove all tattoos: number of sittings, based eight weeks apart = number of years required to complete treatment

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#### **About WhatClinic.com**

[WhatClinic.com](http://WhatClinic.com) is a clinic comparison site that lists over 100,000 clinics globally and is headquartered in Dublin. Since its launch, over 60 million people have visited the site to find, compare and book treatments across a wide range of elective, self-pay medical treatments. WhatClinic.com's mission is to give the patient, as an empowered consumer, access to all the information they need to make an informed choice, including price, availability and reviews. WhatClinic.com was founded in 2007 by tech entrepreneur Caelen King, and is in operation in over 127 countries.