

## Position of strength: why striker is central to manager's plans



Sir Alex Ferguson believes he has often erred in playing Wayne Rooney wide instead of as a centre forward and these touch graphics support the Manchester United manager's case



Away to Barcelona, Champions League, April 23, 2008

Isolated on the right wing during the goalless first leg of United's semi-final, Rooney has a dreadful evening before he is taken off after 76 minutes



Away to Aston Villa, October 20, 2007

In the match that destroys the argument that Rooney and Carlos Tévez cannot gel as a striking partnership, the England player scores twice to inspire a 4-1 win



Home to Arsenal, FA Cup, February 16, 2008

Playing as a lone striker, Rooney gives Kolo Touré and William Gallas, the Arsenal centre backs, their hardest game of the season, according to Alan Shearer. Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, hails Rooney's "amazing" display and Fabio Capello, the England manager, breaks with protocol in his seat at Old Trafford to applaud the player when he is substituted in a 4-0 win

