

BREAKDOWN

When it comes to streaming defenses in the playoffs, it's essential to find the best matchups that you'll feel confident starting each week. Many of these defenses are rostered in more than 50% of leagues, but two teams have byes next week, and one is on bye now. Some of them also have great matchups this week, so maybe you already roster them! If not, be diligent on the waivers, and you may get lucky.

GENERAL DEF STATS

Where does this team rank in pts allowed?

Do they have a bad rush defense? Can they stop the run?

How many sacks does this team have?

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

Anyone on injured reserve?

Who's having a breakout season?

Are there any injured key players returning soon?

RECENT TRENDS

They have been a top 10 run defense since their bye week.

Ever since the injuries, they haven't been the same team.

They are a below average defense against teams that can run the ball.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

I anticipate a handful of points with their pass rush getting sacks.

They have double-digit scoring upside since they create fumbles.

This is a boom-or-bust option that can win or lose your matchup.

GENERAL TIERS - LEGEND



Gold: Consistent starter. Can finish in top 10 in nearly every week.



Good: Can finish top 10 but more likely top 12 against most matchups.



Solid starting option. Top 12 against good matchups, risky against others.



SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS



A top 12 defense that has been coming off two strong performances against LAR and JAX. With decent matchups from Weeks 15-17, they are one of the only defenses you could stream the entire playoffs without much worry.



GENERAL DEF STATS

Top five in total passing yds allowed and top 10 in passing TDs allowed.

Above average in total yds per play allowed in the league and total sacks.

Above average in 3rd and 4th down conversion %
Below average in turnovers.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

With DT Javon Kinlaw injured, the return of edge rusher Dee Ford will help the pass rush.

LB Dre Greenlaw will help the defense when he returns from a core injury in Week 1.

TE George Kittle has scored a TD in every game since returning from injury.

RECENT TRENDS

They generated at least two sacks in five consecutive games.

They held three out of their last four opponents to under 24 points.

They have at least two turnovers in three consecutive games.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

They should have opportunities to rush the passer and get sacks consistently.

Their lack of turnovers limits the upside from a top-five option.

I anticipate a somewhat high floor of six to seven points.

MATCHUP THOUGHTS

Week 15 - vs ATL - With the struggling offense, this is a good matchup against a bad team..

Week 16 - @ TEN - The loss of Derrick Henry and possibly A.J. Brown make this a good start.

Week 17 - vs HOU - Need I say anything more? Solid matchup.



NEW ORLEANS SAINTS



A Top 10 defense. Unfortunately, the offense is decimated with injuries which have put the defense in some challenging situations, significantly limiting their upside. If they can get healthy, this could be an underrated option, **A**

GENERAL DEF STATS

- They are a top 10 defense in total turnovers and above average in sacks.
- They're a top 3 defense in rush yds per attempt allowed and red-zone scoring %. However, below average in 3rd down %.
- Below average in total pass yds allowed and average in passing TDs.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

- The injured offense is missing players in each position. C.J. Gardner-Johnson & Marcus Davenport were also injured.
- The offensive line has multiple injuries and a lack of consistent offensive weapons.
- The return of Kamara and Ingram will help the offense have some consistency.

RECENT TRENDS

- They generated at least two sacks in seven consecutive games.
- They have allowed more than 21 pts in five consecutive games.
- Out of two of the past four games, they created zero turnovers.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

- They generate consistent pressure and will have a floor of a few points.
- Unfortunately, the defense will give up points until the offense is healthier.
- Because they don't get plenty of turnovers, the limited upside makes them a boom or bust option.

MATCHUP THOUGHTS

- Week 15 - @ TB - A tough matchup, boom or bust option. Would avoid.
- Week 16 - vs MIA - Decent matchup, would start if the offense gets healthier.
- Week 17 - vs CAR - With CMC injured, this is a decent matchup for the defense ..



PHILADELPHIA EAGLES



A

They're a top 12 defense that has been a boom or bust option throughout the year. However, with the offense playing well, the defense has scored a TD in three of the past four weeks and looks to continue it with a slew of NFC East matchups.

A

GENERAL DEF STATS

Bottom 10 in sacks and average in turnovers despite three games with a DEF TD.

Below average in pass and rush TD allowed and red-zone scoring %.

Bottom 10 in total rush yds and rush TDs allowed. Below average in pass yds and pass TDs allowed.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

The only significant defensive injury is DE Brandon Graham.

Safeties Anthony Harris and Rodney Mcleoud have missed some time, but both are healthy.

The return of OT Lane Johnson helped the offense, also helping the defense.

RECENT TRENDS

They have scored a defensive TD in three consecutive games.

Four games this year with three or more sacks. Five games with zero sacks.

They have given up 28+ pts in five games. However, they're allowing less than 14 pts in two out of four past games.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

They have dominated bad/injured offenses with double-digit scoring. (DET, CAR, DEN, and NO).

They are a boom or bust option, with five games this season scoring one point or less.

I'm willing to take a chance when they have a good matchup, but I know they can bust.

MATCHUPS I'D START THEM

Week 15 - vs WAS - Some risk being a divisional matchup. Some upside against a bad team, decent matchup.

Week 16 - vs NYG - IF the NYG offense is still missing WRs, this is a decent matchup.

Week 17 - @ WAS - Depending on how Week 15 goes, this could be another spot start.



GREEN BAY PACKERS



B They're a top 12 defense with a consistent source of turnovers and a couple of sacks. They have played well against bad match-ups and are missing a couple of players who will boost the defense when they return. **B**

GENERAL DEF STATS

Above average in sacks and total turnovers. Top ten in yds per play allowed.

Below average in rush yds per attempt and total pass TDs allowed. Top ten in pass yds allowed.

Bottom ten in 3rd down & red-zone %. Top ten in total pts allowed.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

The offensive line is missing a couple of crucial pieces (David Bahktiari) but somehow played well.

Missing their top-tier cornerback and a key pass rusher, they have been exceeding expectations.

There's potential for more upside once a couple of players return.

RECENT TRENDS

Four out of their past six games, they had more than one sack and one turnover.

They have allowed 21 pts or less in five out of their past seven games.

Only three games this season without a turnover. Only one DEF TD this season.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

Their consistency has been impressive, and they provide one of the highest floors.

Once Jaire Alexander & Zadarious Smith returns, they can be a top ten defense.

They have played well against tough matchups despite their injuries.

MATCHUPS I'D START THEM

Week 15 - @ BAL - Tough matchup, would avoid unless defense is healthy.

Week 16 - vs CLE - Another run-heavy opponent. Although I think this is a solid start with Baker hurt

Week 17 - vs MIN - Tough matchup with a divisional rival. A boom or bust option unless defense is healthy..



DENVER BRONCOS



B A top 12 defense that has been holding their opponents to under 20 pts recently. With a lack of turnovers and sacks, this is a matchup dependant option with capable offenses. One of the riskier options but have played well so far.



GENERAL DEF STATS

Below average in total turnovers and average in sacks, and interceptions.

Top ten in total points and total yds allowed. Top ten in total pass and rush TDs allowed.

Bottom 10 in 3rd down %, but top 10 in red-zone scoring %. Top three in total red-zone attempts.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

Several injured players are along the offensive line and linebackers.

The return of Bradley Chubb will help the pass rush since the trade of Von Miller.

If Teddy Bridgewater misses time, this could place more pressure on the defense.

RECENT TRENDS

In three of the past four games, they have more than one sack and one turnover.

They allowed less than 20 points in four of the past five games. In one game, they allowed more than 28 pts.

They have an interception in four consecutive games.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

With their ability to hold defenses to under 20 pts, they have the upside of double-digit scoring.

Because they don't create sacks or turnovers often, they are riskier depending on matchups.

If they can consistently get pressure, they will have a higher floor along with that upside.

MATCHUPS I'D START THEM

Week 15 - vs CIN - Tough matchup, but the defense is good enough to keep it close. Won't start.

Week 16 - @ LV - Divisional rival makes this a boom or bust matchup, but will start if defense is healthier..

Week 17 - @ LAC - Okay matchup, but played well against them earlier in the season.



MIAMI DOLPHINS



B Despite the poor record, they are a top 12 defense with their recent performances. With their defense relatively healthy, they are a sneaky dark horse candidate to be one of the better streaming options likely on waivers. **B**

GENERAL DEF STATS

Above average in turnovers. Bottom 10 in pass yds and pass TDs allowed.

Below average in total yds per play allowed, total pts allowed, and interceptions.

Bottom ten in 3rd down % and total red-zone attempts. However, top ten in red-zone %.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

The defense is relatively healthy, and no key pieces are missing multiple games.

Below average offensive line has limited the offense, relying on the defense to win games.

They lead the league in blitz % and have recently found success against BAL & CAR.

RECENT TRENDS

Generated at least four sacks and more than one turnover in three out of the past four games.

They allowed 17 pts or less in the past four games. They only did it once earlier this season.

They have scored a DEF TD in two out of the past four games.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

They have shown the upside for double-digit scoring with their pass rush, creating turnovers.

Depending on the matchup, they may allow a high-scoring performance which limits their floor.

Only two games where they didn't score double-digits or more than four points. Boom-or-bust option.

MATCHUPS I'D START THEM

Week 15 - vs NYJ - Good matchup, definitely a spot start if Tua Tagovailoa is healthy.

Week 16 - @ NO - A tough matchup. If Kamara is healthy, I will consider another option.

Week 17 - @ TEN - Decent matchup. If both A.J. Brown & Julio Jones are healthy, a boom-or-bust option.



MINNESOTA VIKINGS

**B**

Within the range of the top 12 defenses, this team has tougher matchups than others. However, they have played well and could end up with a couple of favorable matchups, depending on how the season plays out.

B

GENERAL DEF STATS

Top five in sacks despite being average in turnovers. Bottom 10 in fumble recoveries.

Bottom five defense in rush yds per attempt and below average in total rush yds allowed.

Top 10 in 3rd down %, but bottom 10 in red-zone scoring %. Below average in pts allowed per game.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

The defensive line is missing a few key players (Danielle Hunter, Everson Griffen, Michael Pierce).

Key players Anthony Barr (LB) & Patrick Peterson (CB) have missed time recently.

Star RB Dalvin Cook will miss some games with a shoulder injury.

RECENT TRENDS

They allowed more than 28 pts in three out of five games. There's only one game with 14 pts or less all season.

They have at least two sacks in every game. They also generated a turnover in four of the past five games.

They have only scored a DEF TD in one game this season.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

They have a higher floor with their consistent ability to get sacks and create turnover opportunities.

Boom or bust option as they have given up more than 28 pts recently with the defensive line injuries.

If the defensive line can get healthier, they can provide more consistency.

MATCHUPS I'D START THEM

Week 15 - @ CHI - Good matchup, regardless of who starts at QB for CHI. Solid streaming option.

Week 16 - vs LAR - Risky matchup. I will try to find a safer option unless the defense is healthier.

Week 17 - @ GB - Bad matchup, but there's some upside. If GB sits their starters, it could be a solid start.



TENNESSEE TITANS



B Coming off some recent impressive performances, they will be relied upon as the offense has been decimated with injuries. However, against mediocre matchups, this top 12 defense is an intriguing streaming option. **B**

GENERAL DEF STATS

They are above average in generating sacks and turnovers.

Below average in pts allowed, but above average in 3rd down %.

Bottom three in red-zone attempts allowed and average in red-zone scoring %.

INDIVIDUAL PERSONNEL

They're a decimated offense with injuries (Derrick Henry, Julio Jones, A.J. Brown, and Nate Davis).

The secondary has been injured throughout the year and is low on depth. They're also missing Kevin Byard (S).

Hopefully, Janoris Jenkins (CB) and Bud Dupree (LB) can return from injury.

RECENT TRENDS

They generated three or more sacks and a turnover in four of the past five games.

They created more than one turnover in three of the past four games, scoring a TD in two games.

They are allowing less than 28 pts in four of the past five games. They have given up 30+ pts in four games.

WHAT'S THEIR FLOOR/CEILING?

With their ability to rush the passer, they will have opportunities for multi-turnover performances.

There's some risk as they have underperformed against good matchups (NYJ, HOU).

I'm anticipating a solid floor against good matchups if the offense gets healthier.

MATCHUPS I'D START THEM

Week 15 - @ PIT - The PIT offense has looked awful in some games. A boom or bust option depending on health.

Week 16 - vs SF - Not a great matchup. I would consider pivoting to a safer option.

Week 17 - @ MIA - This is a decent matchup in championship week with one of the worst offensive lines.



DEF COMBINATIONS



If you have enough bench spots and lack a top-tier defense it will likely benefit you to have a second defense if you intend to make a deep run in the playoffs. Being able to switch defenses based off matchups may give you that edge to win.

GRAB ONE OF: NO OR GB

They are one of the few teams with a favorable matchup in Week 16.

With either team, you can pair with several options that are likely available; PHI, MIA, MIN, TEN

Both teams are missing key players on the offensive line that are expected to return (favorable gamescript)..

SPEND BIG ON: SF AND PHI

Both teams don't have a poor matchup throughout the fantasy playoffs.

Both teams have two home games within the fantasy playoffs.

Both teams have shown the ability to score double digit points with turnovers

AVOID PAIRS LIKE: MIA & MIN

Don't grab teams when they both have a bad/great matchup on the same week.

Avoid pairs that have you question which defense to start each week.

MONITOR EACH WEEK

Be aware of any key players getting injured or to miss multiple games.

Follow your defense's opponents injury report to see if there's any drastic lineup change.

Have an idea of how a team is playing and where they are in the context of the season (playoff picture)..



Good luck!

