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Power Rankings

Presented By

NFL Power Rankings, Week 4: Prolific Dolphins hit No. 1 spot, while Browns and Packers crack top 10

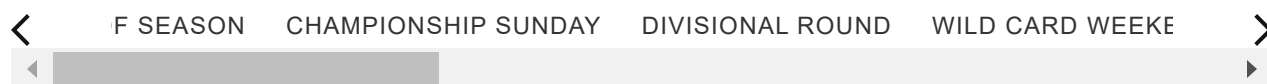
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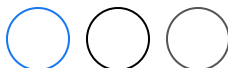
If you hated my rankings over [the past](#) two [weeks](#), I fear what your reaction might be after a truly bizarre set of results [in Week 3](#).

Who had the Colts [taking down the Ravens](#) without [Anthony Richardson](#)? The Texans [whipping the Jaguars](#)? Or the Cardinals solidly [beating the Cowboys](#)?

We also saw an unusually high number of blowouts, none bigger than [what Miami did](#). In one week, the Dolphins went from +9 in scoring differential to +59 -- No. 1 in the NFL.

Time to restack the deck, but there are a lot of wild cards.

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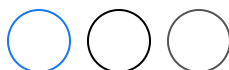
NOTE: Up/down arrows reflect movement from the [Week 3 Power Rankings](#).

Rank	Miami Dolphins
1	3-0
4 ▲	

We should have guessed that a team averaging 30 points and 462.5 yards of offense per game on the road would *really* be able to cook at home. But [70 points](#)? And 726 yards?! Imagine what the Dolphins would have done with [Jaylen Waddle on the field](#). New England holding Miami to 389 yards and 24 points [in Week 2](#) looks downright heroic now. Of course, the Pats barely saw [De'Von Achane](#) in that one. The rookie back hopped into a featured role Sunday and [blasted off](#). Just what this offense needs: more speed. According to Next Gen Stats, Dolphins players are now responsible for the five fastest individual speeds recorded on a given play this season, with three by [Tyreek Hill](#) and one apiece from Achane and [Raheem Mostert](#).

Rank	San Francisco 49ers
2	3-0
1 ▼	

The Giants apparently came into [Thursday's matchup](#) intending to blitz the holy heck out of [Brock Purdy](#), and they [certainly succeeded](#) in doing that. Purdy was shaky early, but really adjusted to how quickly the defense was bearing down, making several big-time throws outside the numbers. Any team looking to mimic that defensive approach against the Niners is at risk of being carved up. All of it came [without the injured Brandon Aiyuk](#), too, and in a short week. This team appears to be on the same plane right now as it has been in three of the four previous seasons (save for 2020). The upcoming part of the schedule (featuring [the suddenly snunky Cardinals](#) and [resurgent](#)



[Browns](#)) is more interesting than it looked previously, but three of the next five are at home before the Week 9 bye. Things are good.

Rank	Kansas City Chiefs
3	2-1
1 ▼	

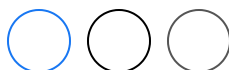
The Chiefs needed a game like they had Sunday, in which they [rolled over](#) the vulnerable Bears, following [the Week 1 loss](#) and a meat-grinder win [in Week 2](#). [Patrick Mahomes](#) dished the ball around like candy, while the run game was the best it has looked since the Super Bowl. And the defense! The Chiefs have allowed four TDs this season: one was [a pick-six](#) in Week 1, and one was [a garbage-time score](#) Sunday. You'd like to see the receivers keep stepping up, and [Jawaan Taylor](#)'s struggles are concerning, even if [Andy Reid thinks](#) the refs need to chill a bit on his new right tackle. But this is still a pretty complete football team that can clean your clock almost any given week.

Rank	Philadelphia Eagles
4	3-0
1 ▼	

I really like how Joe Buck phrased it late in Philadelphia's [victory](#) on *Monday Night Football*: "The Eagles have shown a lot of what they can do, not all of it." That really summed up Philly's past two games to me: The offensive advances were clear, but even with two beefy, productive outings, better is entirely possible. The pass protection was improved against the Bucs, and [A.J. Brown clearly thrived](#) in a featured role, if there was ever a worry there. But the lack of red-zone efficiency added a new wrinkle; you'd love to see Nick Sirianni be a little more creative down there instead of having the Eagles just try to will their way into the end zone. But all in all, they're rounding into form.

Rank	Buffalo Bills
5	2-1
1 ▲	

Though it seemed to get a bit lost in the Sunday shuffle (perhaps because people hadn't repeated what the Commanders accomplished earlier this season), the Bills



unbeaten Washington for four quarters. Buffalo's defensive line overwhelmed the Commanders' offensive line, generating pressure on nearly two-thirds of pass plays that didn't feature a blitz. The Bills' offensive line was equally dominant, giving [Josh Allen](#) mostly clean pockets. But the biggest development might have been what Allen did as a scrambler: taking slides and protecting the ball better. If the Bills play like this in all three phases, they are really tough to beat. [Week 1](#) feels like a distant memory.

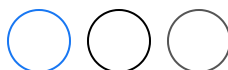
Rank	Dallas Cowboys
6	2-1
2 ▼	

Well, now we know what it looks like when Dallas has a bad day on both sides of the ball. Even with [Trevon Diggs lost for the year](#), the Cowboys should not be having games [like this](#) going forward. It's easier to excuse the offensive issues, given the absence of three starting linemen. The defensive breakdowns in the first half were proof that a quality, creative offense can put this team in some uncomfortable spots, especially without Diggs on the field. The secondary, save for maybe [Stephon Gilmore](#), had a tough game. There's no question this loss to Arizona dramatically changes my view of this team. Eventual Super Bowl winners have been known to put up a regular-season dud along the way, although seldom more than one.

Rank	Detroit Lions
7	2-1
1 ▲	

I have a feeling the defense we saw getting worked over by Seattle [in Week 2](#) is not going to be the unit we see for most of the season. The performance Aaron Glenn's unit put forth [in Week 3](#) against Atlanta is more like it. Though the Falcons don't yet have a dominant offense, they pose unique challenges for many defenses. Atlanta tried attacking DBs [Jerry Jacobs](#) and [Brian Branch](#) after their Week 2 coverage challenges, but both stepped up and [played well](#). In the Lions' first outing [without C.J. Gardner-Johnson](#), Branch had a whale of a game; he could be one of this defense's most important players soon.

Rank	Baltimore Ravens
0	



Not sure how to portray the [OT loss to the Colts](#) as anything but a concerning step backward. The Ravens looked confident for most of their first two offensive drives, drafting off a strong [Week 2 performance](#) -- but the tide turned three plays into Drive No. 2 with [Kenyan Drake's bad fumble](#). [Lamar Jackson's lack of ball security](#) and backup center [Sam Mustipher's bad snap](#) helped put the Colts in position to force overtime. It still feels a bit improbable that the Ravens actually lost. Jackson didn't record his first incompleting until the third quarter, and he ran for 101 yards and two scores. There were just so many missed opportunities, including a [failure to secure Gardner Minshew's](#) first-half fumble, fair-catching the free kick that followed Minshew's safety late in regulation and failing to convert points on two overtime possessions that started near midfield.

Rank

9

4 ▲

Cleveland Browns

2-1

After a pretty tepid start offensively, including a truly bizarre [backward pass](#) by [Deshaun Watson](#), the offense really turned in a solid day of work in the [win over the Titans](#), with Watson settling down and having what was arguably [his best game](#) as a Brown. Once again, though, the defense established the tone and really never let up. Tennessee crossed midfield on all three second-quarter possessions but ended up with only three points. The Titans couldn't escape their own end of the field in the second half, netting just 26 yards and two first downs on 19 plays. The Browns clamped down (without CB [Greg Newsome](#)). [Cleveland's stars shined](#), and this team is back in business.

Rank

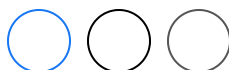
10

8 ▲

Green Bay Packers

2-1

The Packers trailed 17-0 in the fourth quarter, needing three scores and defensive stops to beat the Saints. They pulled it off despite having five significant players



fairytale ending that eluded him [in Week 2](#). Time after time, he made plays despite dealing with incomplete passes (including several drops) and offensive penalties throughout. Love received one game ball after the rousing victory; [the other went to Rashan Gary](#), who had his [best game](#) since returning from [a torn ACL](#) suffered last season. Love and Gary simply willed the Packers to victory when hope was fleeting. This is a plucky team that deserves your attention.

Rank

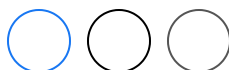
11

1 ▲

Cincinnati Bengals

1-2

[Joe Burrow](#) gutted out Monday's (must?-)win [over the Rams](#), working through a slow start to lead a massive touchdown drive on the Bengals' first possession of the third quarter. [Ja'Marr Chase](#) provided [his first transcendent performance](#) of the season (12 catches for 141 yards), but this Cincinnati victory was spearheaded by a defense that, frankly, got a little undressed [by the Ravens](#) in Week 2. The Rams made some noise on big pass plays, but the story of the game was the pressure applied by [Trey Hendrickson](#) and a really good Cincy front. If that group can take over games while the Bengals round into form offensively (and let Burrow heal), they might just be OK in the



Rank

12

3 ▲

Seattle Seahawks

2-1

Love that [Kenneth Walker III headlined the offensive attack](#) in the [win over Carolina](#). Glad to see [Jason Myers snap out](#) of his mini-funk. And it's always nice when the 12s [throatically help the home team](#) by inducing a slew of false starts. But are these injuries going to stop for Seattle? [Rig Woolen](#), [Jamal Adams](#) and [Coby Bryant](#) were already inactive on Sunday. Then [Dre'Mont Jones](#), [Darrell Taylor](#) and Week 2 hero [Tre Brown](#) were injured in the game, thinning the defense even more. If Woolen and Adams can return this week, I'll feel better about the secondary depth, but the Week 5 bye actually seems to land at a pretty good time.

Rank

13

4 ▼

Jacksonville Jaguars

1-2

Things went off the rails a bit in Sunday's [20-point home loss](#) to the Texans. It would be foolish to overlook the biggest issues that have plagued the team to this point: third-down offense and pass defense. Third downs have been miserable for Jacksonville, which is converting just 29.7 percent of its attempts through three games. The Jaguars were only five-for-13 against Houston, with three of those conversions coming when they were down three scores, but that mark actually *raised* their third-down average. With all the weapons they have, that sort of performance is inexcusable. And on defense, Jacksonville can't seem to stop people unless the pass rush is heated up. That's understandable, given the fact that the unit is built around [Josh Allen](#) and [Travon Walker](#), but the Jags' ability to apply pressure has cooled dramatically the past two games.

Rank

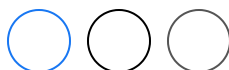
14

4 ▼

New Orleans Saints

2-1

I was struggling to overlook the Saints' O-line issues *prior* to [Derek Carr](#) suffering a [shoulder injury](#) that forced him to leave the [Week 3 loss](#) to Green Bay. There's no



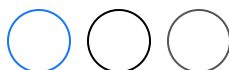
their offensive troubles start with that group. On Sunday, left tackle [Trevor Penning](#) was flagged twice and left guard [James Hurst](#) was flagged once. Center [Erik McCoy](#) and Hurst also had tough reps in pass protection. The entire unit struggled to generate any movement in the run game. And on top of all that, RG [Cesar Ruiz](#) left with a concussion. With Carr [week to week](#), who knows how they'll block should [Jameis Winston](#) start at QB? The Saints suddenly are entering a gut-check phase after their 2-0 start.

Rank	Los Angeles Chargers
15	1-2
1 ▲	

Even in a [much-needed win](#), the Chargers left the door open for criticism with porous pass defense (again) and a [questionable decision](#) by Brandon Staley. [Going for it on fourth-and-1](#) near his own end zone while leading by four late in the game was a wild risk, for sure; though his defense [bailed him out](#), I wonder what the message would have been had it failed. Between that and [Mike Williams' season-ending ACL injury](#), it feels like the Chargers barely got to enjoy a road victory. All of this really overshadowed a special performance from [Justin Herbert](#) and [Keenan Allen](#), doing it late without Williams or [Austin Ekeler](#) available. The Bolts [host the Raiders](#) this week, followed by the bye, which might not come at the worst time.

Rank	Pittsburgh Steelers
16	2-1
1 ▲	

Both the offense and defense showed signs of improvement in the [win over the Raiders](#). The defense let [Davante Adams carve it up](#), with some of his catches wholly unimpeded. That's concerning. But the Steelers took [Josh Jacobs](#) out of the game, holding him to 62 rushing yards on 17 touches, and they forced [Jimmy Garoppolo](#) into enough mistakes that Las Vegas was limited to 18 points. And while coordinator Matt Canada surely still faces ire from some fans, the offensive design Sunday looked far better (even with that early [fullback stuff](#)) than it had previously. [Kenny Pickett](#) threw more in-rhythm and found lesser-used targets -- [Calvin Austin III](#) and [Pat Freiermuth](#) --



for big plays while [George Pickens](#) received the star-wideout treatment from the Steelers. And now Pittsburgh is 2-1 after [a terrible Week 1](#).

17

2-1

3 ▼

Atlanta Falcons

A team that drafted three skill-position players with top-10 picks over the past three years and fields the league's second-highest-paid offensive line is not supposed to put up just 119 yards of offense on its first nine possessions, even in a tough environment like what the Falcons faced Sunday in Detroit. Arthur Smith got away from the run too early in a tight game. Beyond that, though, Atlanta has displayed some passing-game shortcomings through three weeks. The fault is not all with [Desmond Ridder](#), as the Falcons have been pretty conservative on first-half passes, and the pass protection has been surprisingly leaky at times. This was not [a devastating loss](#), but Atlanta must address the offensive-identity element before long.

Rank

18

New England Patriots

1-2

7 ▲

Sunday's win had to be so familiar to Patriots fans by now: ugly and [against the Jets](#). Ugly got the job done, though. Even during the worst doldrums last season, the Pats knew what they were getting from [Jakobi Meyers](#) and [Rhamondre Stevenson](#). So far, the Meyers-for-[JuJu Smith-Schuster](#) swap-out has been a net negative, and Stevenson hasn't been as decisive this season. The Patriots really need [Mac Jones](#) and Smith-Schuster to develop chemistry on the fly after the receiver missed a lot of on-field time this offseason. But they also need the offensive line to play better. This team is behind the sticks way too often.

Rank

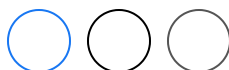
19

New York Jets

1-2

8 ▼

[Two](#) humbling [outings](#) have washed away any thoughts that [Zach Wilson](#) could pick up where he left off [in Week 1](#), when he put forth a semi-encouraging performance following [Aaron Rodgers'](#) Achilles tear. There were a lot of plays from [Sunday's loss](#) to



game thinking the Jets almost outsmarted themselves by being too cautious until it was too late. Yes, it's tough to trust Wilson and that offensive line to a significant degree going forward. But what do the Jets have to lose, except games? They're already down their starting quarterback, and they're 1-2. Fortune favors the bold, and New York can't keep trying *not* to get beaten.

Rank

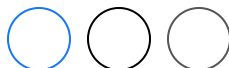
20

1 ▲

Tampa Bay Buccaneers

2-1

With so many teams above them [last week](#) losing in Week 3, the Buccaneers actually rise despite [a humbling game](#) vs. Philadelphia. [Mike Evans](#) destroyed the Bears [in Week 2](#), then let a would-be touchdown bounce off his hands on Monday night. [Baker Mayfield](#)'s INT-less streak [is over](#). [Rachaad White](#) lost [a fumble](#) and was taken down [for a safety](#). Tampa Bay's offensive line was under siege all night. It was just one of those games. Mayfield battled, and the defense came up with some big stops in key spots, but the Bucs were actually a little fortunate the Eagles didn't hang 35-plus on them. Tampa might need to reevaluate the ground game a bit. White had no chance on a few runs, including the safety, and the offensive line has to shoulder some of this blame, but the Bucs are just not that efficient pounding the ball.



Rank

21

1 ▼

Tennessee Titans

1-2

Even while adding the context of how many good pass rushers the Titans have faced through three games, [Andre Dillard](#) had a rough day against the Browns' [Myles Garrett](#), being overwhelmed in pass protection a few times and also being flagged on back-to-back third-down plays in the second quarter. He wasn't the only Tennessee offensive lineman to struggle [at Cleveland](#), but it's concerning that left tackle remains an issue -- and that coordinator Tim Kelly hasn't done more to help Dillard. Perhaps the Titans could try rookie [Peter Skoronski](#) there once he's healthy, but Mike Vrabel stuck with 15-game starter [Dennis Daley](#) last season amid similar struggles. Tennessee might have to figure out how to make it work with Dillard.

Rank

22

3 ▼

Washington Commanders

2-1

It was surprising to see [Sam Howell](#) force as many bad passes and take as many sacks as he did [against Buffalo](#), even taking into account his lack of experience (and knowing the biggest knock on him coming out of North Carolina was that he needed to feel pressure better). He straight up held onto the ball for ages on a few of his nine sacks Sunday, and while two of the four picks came with Washington facing a big deficit, this was as poorly as we've seen Howell play. It also should be concerning that both lines of scrimmage were owned by the Bills. Buffalo dominating Washington's O-line wasn't a shock. As for the Commanders' defensive line, though, [Montez Sweat](#), [Jonathan Allen](#) and [Chase Young](#) generated some pressure, but it certainly wasn't enough to turn the game in Washington's favor.

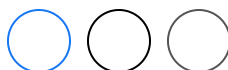
Rank

23

8 ▲

Houston Texans

1-2



[Stroud](#) and the passing game, a defense that forced two timely turnovers (both corralled by [Blake Cashman](#)) and special teams that [blocked a field goal](#) and ran back [a kickoff for a touchdown](#). Stroud and fellow rookie [Tank Dell](#) forming such a strong early connection gives hope for something special in time. DeMeco Ryans' defense might still be shorthanded, but the group battled all game. The young seeds of the roster really sprouted on Sunday, and it's easy to see how Houston could be a very competitive team in time.

Rank

24**Los Angeles Rams**

1-2

—

The Rams had to deal with a lot of offensive chaos up front against the Bengals, as both [Alaric Jackson](#) and [Joe Noteboom](#) were injured, and the patchwork line just couldn't handle Cincinnati's pass rush. Sean McVay dialed up some quality plays, and [Matthew Stafford](#) made some big throws, but the pressure was just too much. Not capitalizing on those early drives with touchdowns really came back to bite them. But even with Los Angeles' blocking issues, I couldn't knock this team down from last week. The Rams were competitive in a game the Bengals *had* to have, and the reality is that there's not much separating teams in the NFL's middle class so far this season.

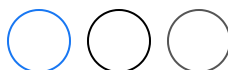
Rank

25**Arizona Cardinals**

1-2

7 ▲

The time is nigh for Drew Petzing to get some shine. A first-year offensive coordinator, Petzing has shown creativity and purpose in his game plans, especially early in contests during the scripted portions. That was clear against the [Commanders](#) and [Giants](#), but it really became obvious against [a Cowboys defense](#) that had dominated its first two opponents. [Joshua Dobbs](#) and the read-option game neutralized Dallas' pass rush early on and put the 'Boys on their heels. Dobbs has held up well and made the most of his chance as the starter, while players such as [James Conner](#) and [Rondale Moore](#) look reborn. This team has been a lot better than I imagined it would be early, so credit where it's due: Jonathan Gannon is off to a solid start.



4 ▼

0-3

Is the season over? No, but it's getting late early. Brian Flores' defense had acquitted itself fairly respectably in the first two games, even if the limitations were obvious. [On Sunday](#), the unit was diced up by [Justin Herbert](#) and Co., unable to pressure him enough or cover on the back end. The Chargers threw 48 passes -- 41 were completed, and Vikings DBs batted away only three throws. Actually, [Akayleb Evans](#) could have made it four, but his deflected pass went right to [Joshua Palmer for a TD](#). That was bad luck, but the reality of the situation is that the defense has little chance to hang with elite offenses.

Rank

27

Las Vegas Raiders

1-2

1 ▼

If there was one play that summed up the frustration with the Raiders -- other than Josh McDaniels' late decision [to kick a field goal](#) -- it would be [Jimmy Garoppolo's](#) second interception Sunday night [against the Steelers](#). Garoppolo waited and waited for either [Davante Adams](#) or [Jakobi Meyers](#) to shake loose from bracket coverage ... but it never happened. Garoppolo tried to ad lib and lobbed a pass over Meyers' head, [which was intercepted](#). Right now, the Raiders' offense has gone from too [Josh Jacobs](#)-reliant last season to being too bent on jamming the ball into one of Vegas' talented receivers. All while Garoppolo (NFL-high six INTs) and the offensive line turn in uneven performances. This is a formula that needs fixing.

Rank

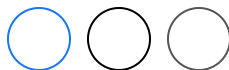
28

Indianapolis Colts

2-1

2 ▲

It would have been easy to look at the Colts to start the season, especially after the [Jonathan Taylor](#) drama crested, and wonder if last year's nightmare ever ended. But since the competitive loss [in Week 1](#), the Colts have won impressively [on the road in back-to-back games](#). The Utah duo of [Zack Moss](#) and [Matt Gay](#) was heroic in the [overtime win at Baltimore](#), but so was a defense that made big stops and cranked up the pressure. The big surprise Sunday was how much the Colts blitzed (40% blitz



a club that's had to repeatedly lick its wounds in recent years. The Colts are growing thicker skin now.

Rank

29

1 ▼

New York Giants

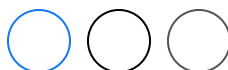
1-2

With [two](#) humbling [losses](#) sandwiching a miraculous [comeback win](#), the Giants require some soul-searching ahead of more tough games. The road back to the playoffs was always going to be rumby, but I can't imagine the G-Men went into the season thinking it would be quite this laborious. The Giants have been making it tougher on themselves with poor tackling and a -5 turnover differential. It looked like multiple Giants missed tackles [last Thursday](#), and they have yet to force a turnover this season. That won't play against lesser teams, much less against a dangerous 49ers squad. The offensive issues are pretty stark, but the defensive inefficiency is nearly as disturbing.

Rank

30

Carolina Panthers



It might have been a little alarming to see the Panthers' passing game humming the way it did [on Sunday](#) with [Andy Dalton](#) and without [Bryce Young](#), despite all the false-start penalties incurred and pressure Seattle applied. I expect the Panthers to go back to Young whenever he's healthy, which should serve as a reminder of what this season is for. Young was always going to have to grow through some of these travails before he realistically could find his groove and thrive. But the question is: Can his offensive line give him a chance? The penalties and run blocking were both poor on Sunday, and the group has struggled all season. On top of that, the defense is really banged up.

Rank

31**Denver Broncos**

0-3

8 ▼

It's hard to know where to start. Denver has lost games by [one](#), [two](#) and [50 points](#). The talk has now temporarily shifted from the Sean Payton-[Russell Wilson](#) relationship to whatever in the world is happening with the defense. In Week 1, that unit played well enough to win. In Week 2, [Sam Howell](#) carved Denver up. Week 3 was just an ambush, the likes of which we've not seen in many, *many* years. Would you believe that the Broncos have the sixth-most-expensive defense in the NFL, [per Over the Cap](#)? Wilson and the passing game have done some nice things, but not nice enough to overcome that. The defense needs to straighten out fast.

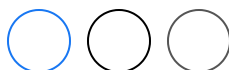
Rank

32**Chicago Bears**

0-3

3 ▼

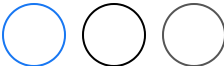
There have been better weeks in franchise history. [Justin Fields](#) seemed to throw the coaching staff [under the bus](#) before clarifying that he [wasn't blaming anything](#) on the coaches, and then he struggled to get loose again in Sunday's [31-point loss](#). The defense, now run by head coach Matt Eberflus after [Alan Williams resigned](#), was even worse. The good news is that in Week 4 the Bears face another 0-3 team, one that lost by a bigger margin [on Sunday](#). But if the Bears fall to the Broncos [this Sunday](#), it will be hard to blame fans if they want to start thinking about going into hibernation until



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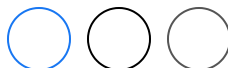
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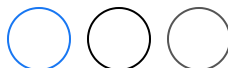
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NFC NORTH

NFC EAST

NFC SOUTH



NFC WEST

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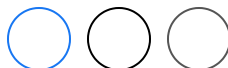
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