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## LA Lakers 2021-2022 Playoff Odds

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### Verdict: 45%

At this moment, the Lakers sit in 8th place in the West with a 22-22 record. With 38 games remaining, they are 7 games behind the 4th place Jazz and 6 games ahead of the 12th place Spurs, making it highly probable that their final seeding will be within the 5-11 range.

### Strength of Schedule

Here's a look at the remaining strength of schedule rank for all teams within  $\pm 3.5$  games of the Lakers:

1. Dallas Mavericks (+3) - Remaining SOS: 13th
2. Denver Nuggets (+1) - Remaining SOS: 24th
3. Minnesota Timberwolves (0) - Remaining SOS: 12th
4. **LA Lakers (0) - Remaining SOS: 3rd**
5. LA Clippers (-0.5) - Remaining SOS: 5th
6. Portland Trail Blazers (-3.5) - Remaining SOS: 28th

Considering the Lakers have the toughest remaining schedule of all of these teams, their chances of moving up in the standings aren't all that great. There's optimism that Davis will return soon, but even before Davis went down in mid-December, the Lakers were just 16-14. With Vogel now reportedly on the hot-seat as well, it's looking increasingly likely that the Lakers will head to the play-in tournament for the 2nd year in a row, only this time, with a high probability of a lower seed.

### Public Models

We'll look at a couple of models developed by seasoned scientists:

1. FiveThirtyEight's RAPTOR Model, based on it's RAPTOR Plus-Minus statistic, gives the Lakers a **31%** chance of making the playoffs.
2. ESPN's Basketball Power Index (BPI), which simulates the remaining portion of the season 10,000 times each day, gives the Lakers **48%** odds.

While there are certainly drawbacks to one-number-metric predictions, they are certainly valuable data points to take into account, especially with a deeper understanding of the models.

With everything outlined above, I tend to agree roughly with the models, and give the Lakers a **45%** chance of making the playoffs.

### Further Considerations

An important consideration is regarding the mentality within the Lakers, from the players, to

coaches and front office. My best guess is that the Lakers organization will do everything in their power to make the playoffs this year, rather than pivoting toward rebuild. However, with actual knowledge of sentiment within the Lakers, this could have an effect on my playoff-odds-belief.