

BUY-LOW SLEEPERS: 8 FANTASY BASKETBALL BOUNCEBACK CANDIDATES

Find league winners! JP Aravena's analysis reveals eight fantasy basketball bounceback candidates like Lauri Markkanen and Brandon Miller, who have huge upside potential in 2025-26.

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Every successful fantasy basketball season is built on identifying undervalued players. After a 2024-25 campaign marked by injuries, slumps, or poor team fit, several high-potential stars have seen their Average Draft Position (ADP) plummet. This creates a massive opportunity for savvy managers to find sleepers who are set to drastically outperform their draft slot. We've zeroed in on eight players who are primed for a major statistical rebound. Stop drafting based on last year's stats—here's your guide to the ultimate bounce-back picks for your 2025-26 fantasy draft.



Fantasy Basketball Bounceback Sleepers

Point Guard: LaMelo Ball, Charlotte Hornets



On the surface, it's hard to say Ball can deliver a bounce-back performance in 2025-26. After all, he averaged a career-high 25.2 points per game to go along with 7.4 assists, 4.9 rebounds and 1.1 steals in 47 regular-season contests. That lack of durability is an issue with the star floor general, as Ball has played fewer than 50 games in each of the past three seasons. Simply staying on the court would be enough to believe he can deliver a bounce-back performance, although an improvement in his shooting numbers is also possible. The star floor general finished the 2024-25 campaign shooting 40.5 percent from the floor and 33.9 percent from beyond the arc. Those are subpar numbers regardless of the overall scoring output.

Shooting Guard: Brandon Miller, Charlotte Hornets



Miller is the second Hornets player on this list, and he suffered an unfortunate injury when he was showing signs of having a breakout campaign in his sophomore year. The 22-year-old underwent season-ending surgery in January to repair a torn scapholunate ligament in his right wrist after averaging 21.0 points, 4.9 rebounds, 3.6 assists and 1.1 steals across 27 regular-season games. The Hornets are expected to be an improved team in 2025-26, and Miller is likely to assume a prominent role as an offensive weapon capable of carrying the team on offense alongside Ball. If Miller stays healthy, he should have all the chances in the world to bounce back in 2025-26 and establish himself as a reliable fantasy option due to his excellent two-way ability and ever-improving offensive skill set.

Small Forward: Lauri Markkanen, Utah Jazz



Markkanen showed signs of being a star-caliber player while representing Finland in 2025 EuroBasket. However, the big question is whether he can translate that kind of success into the NBA. The forward had a down year in 2024-25 and averaged 19.0 points, 5.9 rebounds, 1.5 assists and a combined 1.1 steals-plus-blocks in 47 regular-season contests. That's even worse when considering he was coming off back-to-back seasons in which he averaged at least 20 points, eight rebounds and two assists per game. Markkanen also shot the ball poorly from three-point range and only made 34.6 percent of his outside shots on 8.5 attempts per game. Pairing the most volume with the second-lowest percentage of his career isn't ideal. However, if he stays healthy and manages to translate his European success into The Association, then Markkanen could be a strong bounce-back candidate.

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Power Forward: Zion Williamson, New Orleans Pelicans

Williamson's main issues throughout his career have been his weight and injury history - playing more than 60 games in a regular season just twice in his five-year career. Williamson is reportedly healthier and slimmer heading into the 2025-26 campaign, which should boost his chances of having a better year. The talent is undeniable, but his durability will be the key to his having a successful fantasy campaign. Williamson averaged 24.6 points, 7.2 rebounds, 5.3 assists and 1.2 steals per game in 2024-25, and if he stays healthy, his role as the Pelicans' go-to weapon on offense should allow him to clear the 25-point-per-game mark with relative ease.

Center: Rudy Gobert, Minnesota Timberwolves

Gobert averaged 12.0 points, 10.9 rebounds and 1.4 blocks per game in the 2024-25 season. That was his worst scoring average, his second-worst rebounding tally and his joint-worst block-per-game figure since his breakout season in 2016-17. Gobert is clearly a complementary piece on offense in a Minnesota team led by Anthony Edwards and Julius Randle. Still, Gobert should remain productive enough to be effective in most fantasy formats. An uptick in his scoring and blocking numbers would go a long way toward allowing him to deliver a bounce-back effort after a 2024-25 season in which he was one of the biggest disappointments among frontcourt players when comparing the ADP vs. production.

Guard: Jalen Suggs, Orlando Magic

Saying that Suggs underachieved in 2024-25 might be a stretch, but the guard wasn't able to live up to expectations when healthy, and he also missed most of the season with an injury that limited him to a career-low 35 regular-season appearances. Suggs has shown flashes of stardom at times, averaging a career-best 16.2 points per game in the 2024-25 season.

However, injuries have often limited him and prevented him from reaching his full potential. The Magic are primed for taking the next leap as a team in this upcoming campaign, and simply having Suggs healthy for the entire season would already be a bounce-back for the fifth-year veteran.

Forward: **Kyle Kuzma, Milwaukee Bucks**



Kuzma opened the 2024-25 season as one of the go-to offensive options on the Wizards roster and was later traded to the Bucks when Milwaukee wanted to add a punch to their lineup ahead of the second half of the campaign and the playoffs. The results weren't what anyone would've expected, though. Kuzma averaged 15.2 points per game in 32 regular-season games with Washington, and that number dropped to 14.5 ppg in 33 regular-season contests with Milwaukee. Kuzma is too good a scorer to be posting those numbers, especially since he was coming off two straight seasons with over 21.0 points per game in 2022-23 and 2023-24. While Kuzma isn't a dominant force in fantasy, he's tipped to bounce back after an underwhelming showing in 2024-25.

Utility: **Terry Rozier, Miami Heat**



Yes, there's a strong chance that Rozier won't even be fantasy relevant by the time training camp ends. However, he has a shot at earning regular playing time at the beginning of the season if he stays healthy, committed and overcomes the woeful showing he delivered in 2024-25. Rozier averaged 10.6 points, 3.7 rebounds and 2.6 assists per game last season, a far cry from the 19.8 ppg, 5.6 apg and 4.0 rpg he posted in 2023-24. Tyler Herro (ankle) will miss the start of the new campaign, so Rozier could carve out a role off the bench in an attempt to bounce back from one of the worst seasons of his career.



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