

FANTASY

## NBA Fantasy: 6 Sleeper Picks - Forwards in 2025-26

RotoWire breaks down 6 forwards to keep tabs on heading into the 2025-26 fantasy basketball season.

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September 5, 2025 10:01 AM



Jaylen Wells thrived in Summer League, averaging 18.0 points, 3.0 rebounds, 2.4 assists, 1.2 steals and 2.8 3-pointers.

While top-tier forwards often dominate early rounds of fantasy drafts, the true competitive advantage lies in identifying undervalued options later in the draft. Forwards bring positional versatility, with the ability to contribute in scoring, rebounding, and defensive categories, while many also provide supplementary playmaking. Sleeper forwards, in particular, can emerge as difference-makers when opportunity and team context align in their favor. This article highlights the top sleeper forwards for the upcoming season, focusing on players with underappreciated upside, evolving roles, and the potential to deliver returns well beyond their draft position.

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## **Matas Buzelis, Bulls**

### **94th in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings**

There's a lot to like about the 2024 first-round pick. With the Bulls having a quiet offseason, Buzelis is set up to enter the 2025-26 season as the heavy favorite to start at power forward over [Patrick Williams](#). Across his 31 regular-season starts as a rookie, he averaged 13.0 points, 4.5 rebounds, 1.9 assists and 1.1 blocks in 26.8 minutes with 47.3/34.9/80.6 shooting splits. He ended the season on a high note too, posting sixth-round value in standard nine-category leagues in his final 16 games with 14.1 points, 4.9 rebounds, 1.7 assists, 1.3 blocks, 0.8 steals and 2.3 3-pointers in just 26.8 minutes per game. He was shut down early during the Summer League after dominating the event in two appearances, and he looks poised to make a leap in his second season with increased responsibility on both ends of the court. With one of the best block rates among forwards, the upside here is real.

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## **Toumani Camara, Trail Blazers**

### **107th in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings**

Following his eighth-round finish in standard nine-category leagues in 2024-25, you would think that Camara would be getting some love. But at least early on in mock draft season, he's consistently going well into the 100s. Targeting players heading into their third year has generally paid off for me in the past, and Camara is someone I have highlighted as one of my favorite late-round picks. Camara started all 78 of his regular-season appearances in 2024-25, posting averages of 11.3 points, 5.8 rebounds, 2.2 assists, 1.5 steals, 0.6 blocks and 1.7 3-pointers in 32.7 minutes per game. And he did all this with a usage rate of 14.4%. The Trail Blazers let [Anfernee Simons](#) and [Deandre Ayton](#) go in the offseason, and Camara is positioned to take on a larger share of the offense. He's projected to start over [Jerami Grant](#) once again, and his ability to contribute across the board makes him an excellent addition to most roster builds.

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## Aaron Nesmith, Pacers

### 140th in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings

While much of the fantasy spotlight has been on [Andrew Nembhard](#), [Benedict Mathurin](#), and [T.J. McConnell](#) as the primary beneficiaries of [Tyrese Haliburton](#)'s (Achilles) absence, Nesmith deserves attention as well. Despite missing significant time in 2024-25, he still appeared in 45 games (starting 37) and posted 12.0 points, 4.0 rebounds, 1.2 assists, 0.8 steals, 0.4 blocks, and 1.9 3-pointers in just 25.0 minutes per game. More importantly, he paired that production with elite efficiency: 50.7% from the field, 43.1% from 3, and 91.3% from the line. With [Myles Turner](#) now in Milwaukee, Nesmith is positioned for a notable uptick in minutes, and a healthy offseason should only boost his readiness. His career per-36 averages of 15.0 points, 5.5 rebounds, 1.8 assists, 1.1 steals, 0.7 blocks, and 2.4 3-pointers highlight his ability to scale with opportunity. Nesmith combines high-end efficiency with well-rounded production, making him one of the most overlooked fantasy sleepers at forward.

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## Herbert Jones, Pelicans

## 123rd in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings

Fresh off a three-year, \$68 million extension, Jones enters the upcoming season hoping for improved health after appearing in just 20 games in 2024–25. While his 3-point efficiency dipped to 30.6% last season – well below his career mark of 36.1% – this likely reflects limited rhythm and opportunity, suggesting room for positive regression. Defensively, Jones remains elite, ranking among the league leaders in steals with 1.9 per game and contributing 0.7 blocks per contest, underscoring his two-way impact. With the Pelicans' roster now featuring [Jordan Poole](#) alongside [Trey Murphy III](#), [Zion Williamson](#), and [Yves Missi](#), the team's pace and offensive versatility should create additional opportunities for Jones to contribute across multiple categories. Given that he finished as a sixth-round pick in standard nine-category leagues just one year ago, a rebound to similar or improved fantasy value would not be surprising, making him an intriguing sleeper candidate.

## Jaylen Wells, Grizzlies



## 148th in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings

Wells checks a lot of boxes in what you want from a sleeper forward. He excels as a 3-and-D wing, and his opportunity this season is going to be massive with [Desmond Bane](#) and his 23% usage rate out of the equation. Yes, the Grizzlies brought in [Kentavious Caldwell-Pope](#), but his usage will pale in comparison to Bane's. Wells started 74 of his 79 regular-season appearances as a rookie, earning a spot on the NBA All-Rookie First Team. He averaged 10.4 points, 3.4 rebounds, 1.7 assists, 1.7 3-pointers and 0.6 steals per game in 25.9 minutes with just a 15.6% usage rate, and the Grizzlies rate him very highly. Summer League is always something to take with a grain of salt, but Wells thrived there this offseason, averaging 18.0 points, 3.0 rebounds, 2.4 assists, 1.2 steals and 2.8 3-pointers. He's flying under the radar and is going very cheap in drafts, allowing fantasy managers to grab him in the final rounds as a glue-type player with upside for more.

## Cam Whitmore, Wizards



## 142nd in Top 150 Fantasy Rankings

Whitmore is probably my favorite last-round dart throw in fantasy drafts at the moment. For whatever reason, Whitmore was never given a fair shot in Houston, but the talent he was competing with there was in another galaxy compared to his present-day situation. Now in Washington, Whitmore joins a team in the early stages of a rebuild. Yes, the team has [Khris Middleton](#) and [C.J. McCollum](#) soaking up some usage and minutes, but for how long? Player development is likely to be the sole focus in Washington, and I'm hoping the way they treated [Alex Sarr](#) last season is the way they handle the bulk of their young talents. Whitmore has mouthwatering upside with per-36-minute averages of 22.3 points, 7.0 rebounds, 1.7 assists, 1.3 steals and 3.0 3-pointers over the past two seasons, and all he needs is just an opportunity.

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