*DISCLAIMER, data is games up until March 9th. Will update once regular season has ended

The Blueprint for Winning in 2025: What Do the Best Teams Have in Common?

1. **Premise / Thesis Statement** : Winning in the NBA is more than just scoring points; the best teams that dominate usually are highly efficient beyond traditional stats like points, rebounds, and assists. By being highly efficient on both the offensive and defensive end is how they score and keep their opponents from not scoring. By analyzing the 2025 NBA season, this project will identify advanced key efficiency metrics that separate elite teams from the rest of the league and determine which factors are most predictive of success.

2. **Audience** : The audience for this project would be towards basketball analysts, coaches, front-office executives and intrigued fans. Anyone in the business of team strategy and player evaluation would find this information useful and could look to incorporate it to make better decisions. While they are already familiar with traditional basketball metrics, this project will persuade them to prioritize advanced efficiency stats such Offensive Efficiency Rating (OER) Defensive Efficiency Rating (DER), Scoring Opportunity Efficiency (SOE) and Pace-Adjusted Efficiency as key indicators of success. The audience will impact the way I tell my story by being catered towards people with basketball knowledge that want to make better decisions.

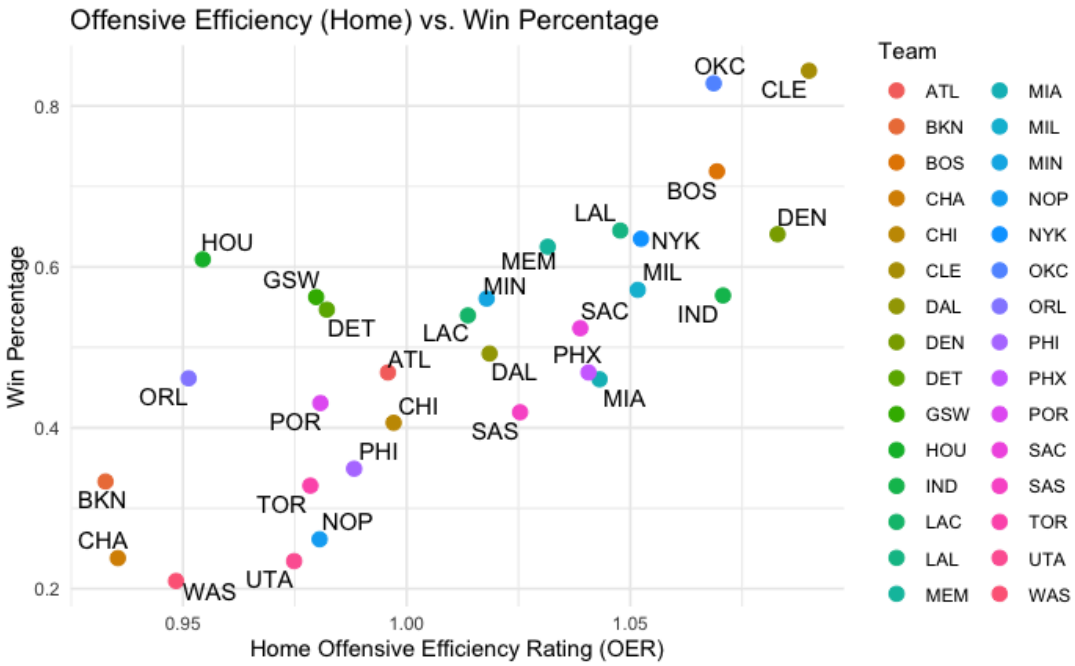
3. **Subject / data context** : The dataset for this project consists of the 2025 NBA regular season games, providing a detailed look at team-level statistics. Using data obtained from NBA game logs, the analysis includes both traditional statistics and advanced efficiency metrics to paint a clear picture of what truly drives team success. The dataset covers key game details such as whether a team played at home or away, game outcomes, and standard performance indicators like field goals, free throws, and turnovers. However, these basic stats often fail to capture the full picture of a team's effectiveness, which is why this project also incorporates advanced metrics such as Offensive Efficiency Rating (OER), Defensive Efficiency Rating (DER), and Scoring Opportunity Efficiency (SOE). These metrics adjust for pace, possessions, and the impact of second-chance opportunities while accounting for mistakes like turnovers. Additionally, the dataset includes

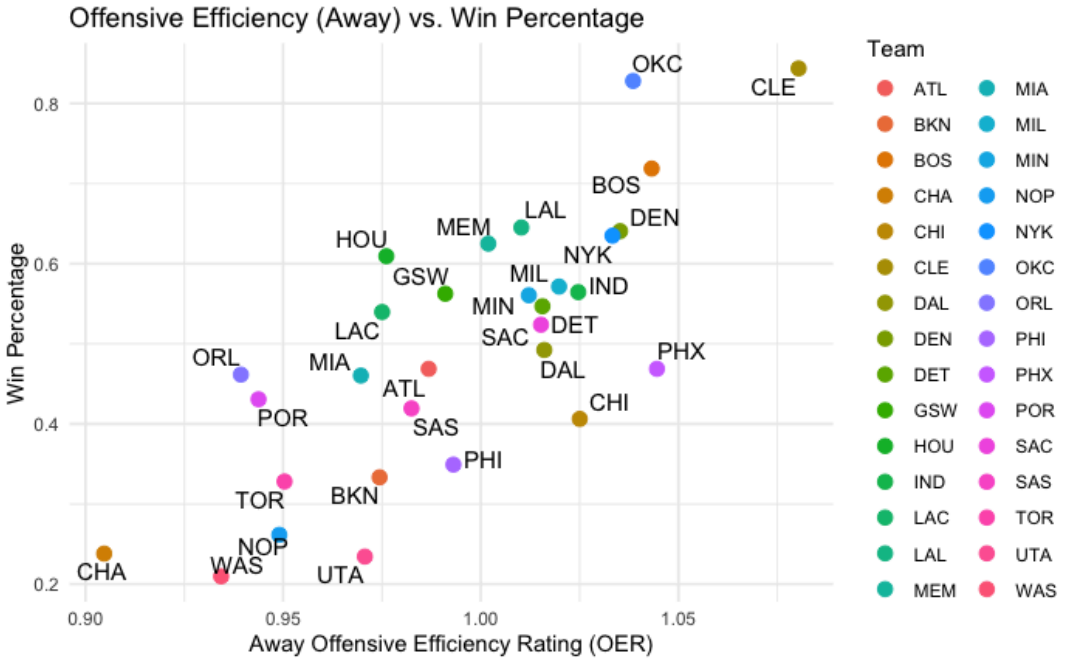
efficiency differentials (TotalEffDiff), which highlight whether a team's offensive and defensive output aligns with their success in the standings. By analyzing these statistics across all teams in the league, this project aims to uncover the key efficiency metrics that separate elite teams from the rest. The study will compare teams with high winning percentages to those struggling at the bottom and identify the statistical patterns that contribute to success. This insight can be valuable for coaches, analysts, and executives looking to improve their approach to team-building and game strategy.

4. Supporting points

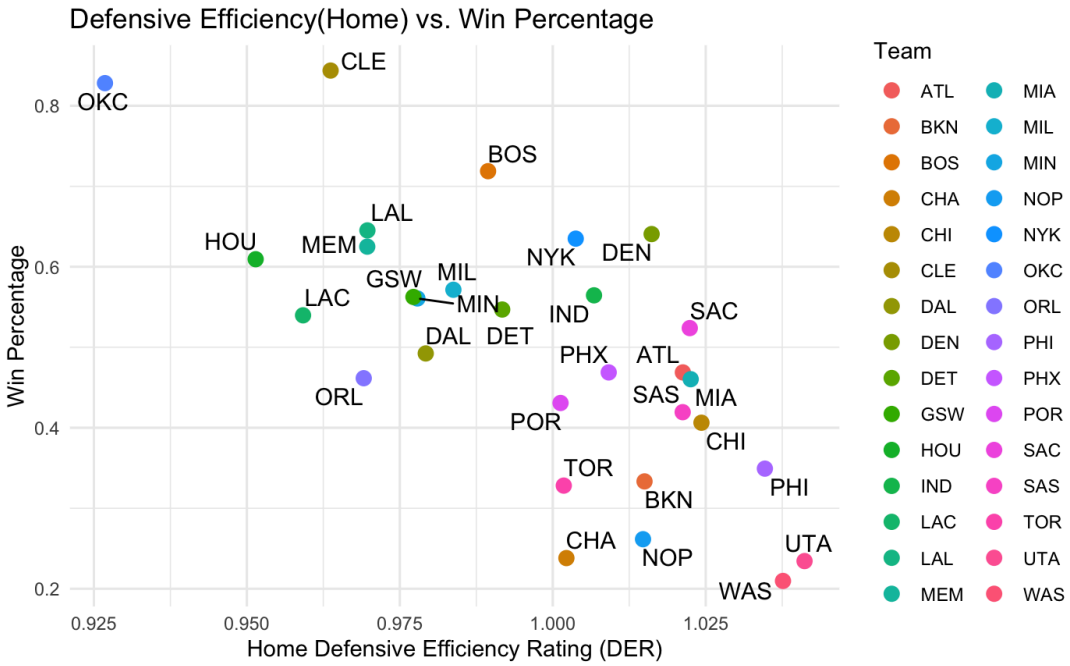
1. **Good teams are highly efficient and have high offensive efficiency ratings compared to worst teams**. This would mean that teams that are higher in the standings are the teams with the higher OER. By comparing the worst and best teams we should be able to see this relationship. (split offensive and defensive into two different points , elaborate that elite teams should do both. Good teams may do one or the other
2. **Good teams are highly efficient and also have high defensive efficiency ratings.** This would mean that teams that are higher in the standings are also teams with the higher DER. When teams are good at both OER and DER they could be considered elite, while teams good at one or the other would be considered good and more than likely in the middle of the standings.
3. **Scoring opportunity efficiency is impacting in dictating wins.** SOE takes into account offensive production, rebounding and turnover rates, making it useful in analyzing how teams are performing holistically. Teams with a high SOE will have higher win percentages as they make the most of their possessions and rebound the ball.

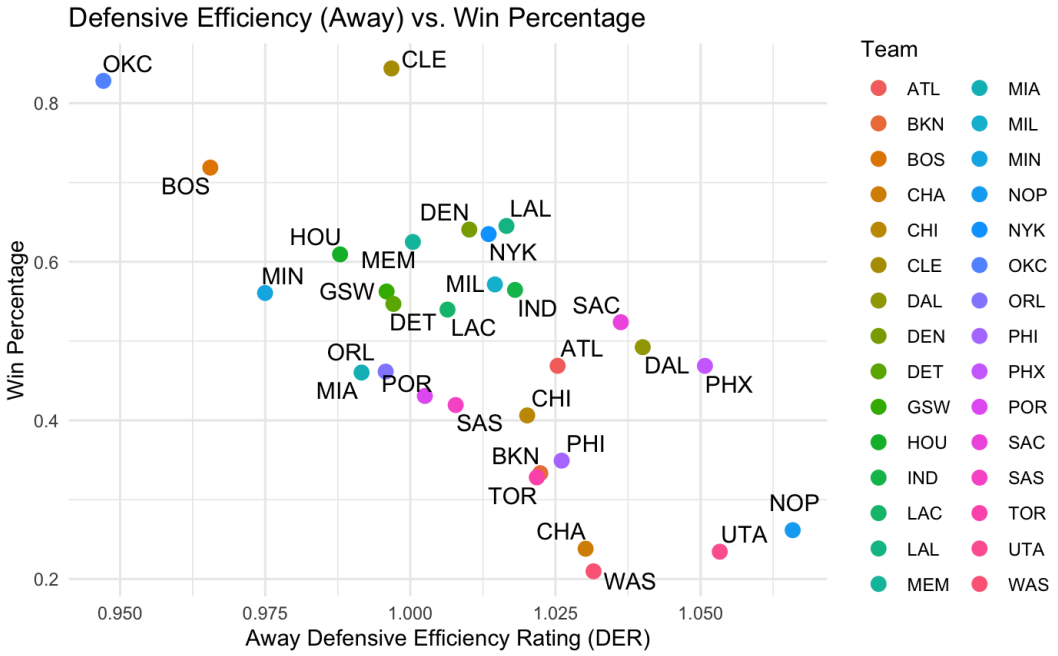
4. **Visualizations**:





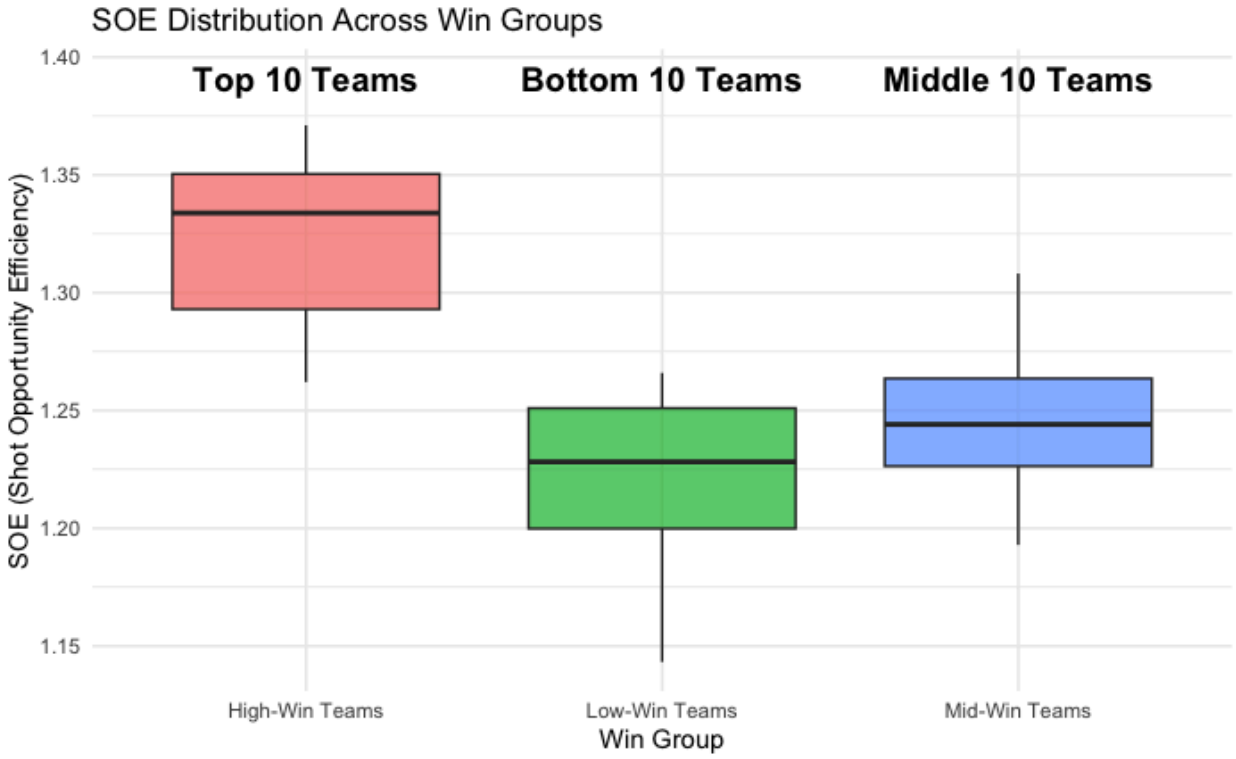
Insights: Teams like the Cavaliers (CLE) and the Thunder (OKC) who are 1st in their respective conferences have the two highest offensive efficiency at home and on the road. However, teams like the Hornets (CHA), Wizards (WAS) which are teams at the bottom of their conference often struggle with efficiency at home and on the road. Being efficient often leads to wins and teams that can be great offensively at home and on the road should thrive in the playoffs.





Insights: Again the teams with the best DER are the Thunder and Cavaliers. Unlike offense the Thunder have the best DER both home and away whereas the Cavs had the best OER both home and away. The teams with some of the worst records such as the Wizards, Jazz (UTA) and Pelicans (NOP) can be seen towards the bottom in one of the graphs. If you can't defend, especially on the road you are more susceptible to lose. According to OER and DER the teams

with the best chances at postseason success are the Thunder and Cavaliers with my edge being to the Thunder since they are better defensively.



Insights: Teams with top 10 most wins have an average SOE that is well above the other 20 teams. It's a lot closer between the middle 10 and bottom 10 win teams but the middle 10 still has a higher average. Although it is close, this is when you can compare the teams OER and DER to see why they may be winning more games than others.