

ANALYSIS

Dogs' brutal start, opportunity for Vic giants: Your club's fixture breakdown

Check out when your club's easiest, and most difficult, stretches of the fixture are set to come in 2026

By Dejan Kalinic

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The Western Bulldogs look dejected after a loss to Adelaide in round 18, 2025. Picture: Getty Images

THE WESTERN Bulldogs face a tough start to the 2026 season, while Carlton and Essendon will get an early opportunity to get their campaigns going.

The Bulldogs, who missed the finals in 2025, have the equal sixth hardest fixture based on each clubs six double-up games, but their opening to the season looms as being especially difficult.

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Luke Beveridge's side will play five 2025 finalists in its opening six games in a brutal start to its season.

The Dogs will make the trip to the Gabba in Opening Round to face reigning premier Brisbane, before hosting Greater Western Sydney at Marvel Stadium.

A trip to the Adelaide Oval to take on the Crows follows before a bye in round three and while they resume with a clash against Essendon on the night of Easter Sunday, they then take on Hawthorn in Gather Round and Geelong at GMHBA Stadium.

The Dogs do have the easiest final five games of any club, however, meeting just one 2025 finalist - Fremantle - in that time.



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Carlton will meet just two 2025 finalists in its first six games, and its first four matches will be against teams that missed September this year - Sydney, Richmond, Melbourne and North Melbourne.

Like the Blues, the Bombers will have a chance to make a fast start to their campaign. They will also meet just two finalists in their first six games, with their other matches in that period coming against Port Adelaide, North Melbourne, the Bulldogs and Melbourne.

Similarly to the Bulldogs, St Kilda will have a relatively difficult start, meeting Collingwood, Greater Western Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide in its opening six games.

While the Blues and Bombers could make fast starts, it is Port Adelaide that has the easiest opening six games of any club, at least on paper.



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The Power's first five games under Josh Carr will come against teams that finished in the bottom seven in 2025 - North Melbourne, Essendon, West Coast, Richmond and St Kilda - before they will meet the Hawks, the 2025 preliminary finalists.

One of the most brutal runs of games throughout the season has been given to Gold Coast, which between rounds 14 and 19 is scheduled to meet five 2025 finalists - Geelong, Hawthorn, Fremantle, Collingwood and Adelaide - and the Bulldogs, who finished just outside the eight this year.

See below for a full breakdown of each's club's fixture, with the season

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Adel	7.5	8.8	11.7	10
BL	10.7	8	11.3	7.4
Carl	10.8	7.5	10.7	7.2
Coll	7.3	9.7	12.8	6
Ess	10.3	9	10.2	6.8
Frem	9.8	8.7	9	11.4
Geel	8.3	9	6.5	13
GC	12.7	8.8	5.2	9
GWS	9.2	11.7	8.7	10.4
Haw	9.3	8	10.7	10.6
Melb	8.8	10.8	10	7.6
NM	12.5	6.3	13.3	7.4
PA	13.7	8.5	9	9.4
Rich	10.2	12.3	8.2	9.2
StK	7.2	10.7	9.3	12
Syd	7.8	10.2	8	12.6

WC	9.2	11.3	9.2	7.8
WB	5.7	9.8	9.2	13.2



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