



# IPL's Catching Crisis: What the Numbers Reveal

In this blog, we dive into the catching performance of teams across the 2024 and 2025 seasons, prompted by a noticeable rise in dropped catches this year compared to last year. Using data from Cricbuzz, which details dropped catches per innings (see Fig. 1), we scraped the information using Python, Selenium and BeautifulSoup to conduct a deeper analysis.



Fig 1: Dropped catch for DC vs PBKS in IPL 2024.

<https://www.cricbuzz.com/cricket-match-highlights/89661/pbks-vs-dc-2nd-match-indian-premier-league-2024>

- *Average dropped catches per match in 2024: 1.22*
- *Average dropped catches per match in 2025: 1.28*

Since the numbers look closer than what we witness, we compute the *catching\_efficiency*. This metric is derived using the number of successful catches and dropped chances. The formula used is:

$$\text{catching\_efficiency} = \frac{(\text{successful\_catches} * 100)}{(\text{successful\_catches} + \text{dropped\_catches})}$$

For this purpose, we extract the number of successful catches taken by each team from the "Wickets" section by filtering entries that contain the keyword "Caught" (see Fig. 2, Fig. 3 and the below code ).



Fig 2: Wickets column for DC vs PBKS.

```
for p in first_innings_lines:
    text = p.get_text()
    if "Caught by " in text:
        try:
            fielder = text.split("Caught by ")[1].split("!!")[0].strip()
            fielder_records.append({
                "Match ID": match_id,
                "Team": first_team,
                "Inning": 1,
                "Fielder": fielder,
                "Catches": 1
            })
        except IndexError:
            print(f"⚠️ Could not parse fielder in 1st innings ({match_id})")
```



Fig. 3: Sample for the dataset

## Overall Trends (last match recorded: RCB vs PBKS, April 18th 2025):

### Year: 2024

- Average dropped catches per match: 1.22
- Max dropped catches: 5.00 (PBKS vs RCB at Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium, Dharamsala while PBKS were the bowling side, Result: **RCB won**)
- Average catching efficiency per match:: 79.21%
- Min catching efficiency in a match: 33.33%

### Year: 2025

- Average dropped catches: 1.28

- Max dropped catches: 5.00
- Average catching efficiency: 76.89% (PBKS vs CSK at Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium, Mullanpur, Chandigarh while CSK were the bowling side, Result: **PBKS won**)
- Min catching efficiency in a match: 25.00%

While the overall averages between the two seasons may not appear drastically different, they can be misleading. Averages tend to mask team-specific variations—some teams may have significantly improved, while others may have regressed. To uncover this, we move toward a team-wise analysis.

## Team-wise Analysis

We now take a closer look at the dropped catches across teams in the 2024 and 2025 seasons (see Fig. 4). Notably, CSK has recorded a significant spike in dropped catches, averaging around 2.3 per match in 2025—nearly 2.5 times their average from 2024. This marks the highest dropped catch rate by any team over the past two seasons. Interestingly, all other teams—except for DC and GT—have shown improvement, dropping fewer catches on average compared to the previous year.



Fig 4: Average dropped catches per match

Figure 5 illustrates the catching efficiency across teams. Interestingly, most teams have shown improvement in 2025. However, CSK, GT, and DC stand out with a significant decline—each experiencing a drop of nearly 20% in catching efficiency compared to 2024. While CSK currently sits at the bottom of the points table, both GT and DC are among the top performers. Some possible explanations could be:

- GT and DC are attempting more difficult or half-chances. Unfortunately, our current analysis does not classify catches based on difficulty level, which leaves room for further exploration.
- Overall balance of GT and DC: strong performances with the bat and ball may have compensated for their fielding lapses. In contrast, CSK have struggled

across departments, particularly in the powerplay, where both their batting and bowling have underperformed.



Fig 5: Catching efficiency across teams

## Venue-wise Analysis:

Cricketers often cite factors like stadium design and lighting as contributors to dropped catches. In Fig. 6, we analyze venue-wise statistics to explore this further. Notably, **Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur** has recorded the **highest average of dropped catches per match**, both in 2024 and 2025.



Fig. 6: Average dropped catches per venue

We further examine **catching efficiency** across venues in Fig. 7. The numbers highlight a worrying trend at the Jaipur stadium, where catching efficiency dipped from **67.5% in 2024** to an even more alarming **29.17% in 2025**, compared to the overall average of **79% (2024)** and **76% (2025)**. Other stadiums have also shown declines in 2025, which we visualise in Fig. 8.



Fig 7: Catching efficiency across venues.

The dramatic drop at **Sawai Mansingh Stadium** can be largely attributed to the **RR vs RCB clash**, where a total of **seven catches were dropped**. As mentioned earlier, **fielding issues also plagued the home sides** at **Narendra Modi Stadium** and **Arun Jaitley Stadium**, with **GT** and **DC** respectively responsible for most of the lapses.



Fig 8: Change in catching efficiency across venues.

Interestingly, the decline at **Wankhede Stadium** was somewhat surprising. On average, **MI dropped only 1 catch per match**, but their efficiency plummeted due

to two outlier games—**dropping 4 catches against KKR** and **2 against RCB**. These performances inflated their dropped catch rate at home, although it was offset by better fielding in away games.

Final Insights:

- CSK must address their fielding concerns to push their way into the top 4.
- DC and GT—despite being among the top teams—need to tighten their fielding efforts to solidify their status as serious title contenders.
- The alarming trends at Sawai Mansingh Stadium also warrant attention. Given the consistently poor catching efficiency recorded there, IPL management may need to review the playing conditions or gather feedback from players to understand the underlying issues.