



**GAMESPOT GAME GUIDE**

**MADDEN**

**NFL 07**

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Last year's Madden focused on innovation in the passing game; this year it's all about the running backs. Record-breaking running back Shaun Alexander leads the charge as the NFL superstar on this season's cover. Madden 07 enhances the running game with the new lead blocking mode. Instead of controlling just the running back, now you can open holes and pancake defenders with an offensive lineman, fullback, or tight end.

This Gamespot game guide for Madden 07 compiles team and player stats, features profiles of all 32 NFL teams, and reveals offensive and defensive strategies, online tips, and the complete list of Xbox 360 achievements. Note that this guide was written based on the Xbox 360 version of the game. Some details may change based on the console that you're playing on.

- **Team Stats:** Check here for Madden 07 team statistics broken down by offense, defense, and overall rating.
- **Team Profiles:** We profile all 32 NFL teams, highlight key players, and provide some tips on getting the most out of the team's superstars.
- **Offense:** This section reveals team offensive playbooks, provides tips on formations, strategies for passing and running (including the new lead blocker mode) and profiles some of the best offensive players in the game.
- **Defense:** Look here for defensive playbooks, strategies for all formations, and profiles of the best defenders in Madden 07.
- **Online Strategies:** Tips for battling opponents on the online gridiron.
- **Achievements:** Complete list of Xbox 360 achievements and some tips for elevating your gamerscore.

## Chapter 1 - Team Stats

The following table compiles the NFL team statistics from the Play Now screen for Madden 07 teams. These statistics include a relative overall, offense, and defense rating.

TEAM	CONFERENCE AND DIVISION	'05 RECORD	OVERALL	OFFENSE	DEFENSE
Arizona Cardinals	NFC West	5-11	89	90	89
Atlanta Falcons	NFC South	8-8	91	91	86

Baltimore Ravens	AFC North	6-10	89	85	95
Buffalo Bills	AFC East	5-11	79	80	85
Carolina Panthers	NFC South	11-5	95	93	92
Chicago Bears	NFC North	11-5	88	85	94
Cincinnati Bengals	AFC North	11-5	94	92	85
Cleveland Browns	AFC North	6-10	81	82	86
Dallas Cowboys	NFC East	9-7	91	91	89
Denver Broncos	AFC West	13-3	92	95	88
Detroit Lions	NFC North	5-11	77	79	78
Green Bay Packers	NFC North	4-12	83	88	88
Houston Texans	AFC South	2-14	75	82	74
Indianapolis Colts	AFC South	14-2	97	97	89
Jacksonville Jaguars	AFC South	12-4	85	87	88
Kansas City Chiefs	AFC West	10-6	89	96	83
Miami Dolphins	AFC East	9-7	90	90	87
Minnesota Vikings	NFC North	9-7	83	85	87
New England Patriots	AFC East	10-6	93	93	91
New Orleans Saints	NFC South	3-13	78	85	80
New York Giants	NFC East	11-5	88	94	80
New York Jets	AFC East	4-12	77	79	83
Oakland Raiders	AFC West	4-12	74	85	78
Philadelphia Eagles	NFC East	6-10	87	83	90
Pittsburgh Steelers	AFC North	11-5	96	92	96
San Diego Chargers	AFC West	9-7	89	89	97
San Francisco 49ers	NFC West	4-12	73	74	73
Seattle Seahawks	NFC West	13-3	96	97	90
St. Louis Rams	NFC West	6-10	86	90	78
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	NFC South	11-5	89	88	93
Tennessee Titans	AFC South	4-12	76	80	79
Washington Redskins	NFC East	10-6	88	87	89

## Chapter 2 - Team Profiles

This chapter provides in-depth analysis on your favorite National Football League teams. You'll find key player stats and commentary on the team's strengths and weaknesses. Note that some of the preseason player moves (T.J. Duckett from the Falcons to the Redskins and Kevan Barlow from the 49ers to the Jets) are represented in these team profiles but may not be changed in the Madden 07 online rosters as of this writing.

Madden 07 expands player statistics greatly by adding new ball carrier stats (elusiveness, spin, and juke for finesse moves and trucking and stiff arm for power moves), defender, and blocker statistics. The list below describes each statistic and how it affects the player.

- Overall (OVR) - The overall rating for the player. The higher the better!
- Speed (SPD) - How fast the player can run.
- Strength (STR) - The player's strength, which affects his ability to break tackles.
- Agility (AGI) - The player's agility, enhancing his ability to switch directions.
- Acceleration (ACC) - How fast a player reaches full speed. Great for sprinting through open holes in your line.
- Awareness (AWR) - A player's ability to react and adjust. High awareness generally comes with more experience.
- Trucking (TRK) - Player's ability to run over a defender attempting a tackle. Think of it as the offense's hit stick.
- Elusiveness (ELU) - Likely the ability to escape tackles (or perhaps sacks). This is a key statistic for running backs, receivers, and quarterbacks.
- Ball Carrier Vision (BCV) - Ball carrying vision: ability to spot the open field. This is a key statistic for running backs.
- Stiff Arm (SFA) - Player's ability with the stiff arm maneuver.
- Spin Move (SPM) - Player's ability with the spin maneuver.
- Juke Move (JKM) - Player's ability with the juke move.
- Carrying (CAR) - How well the player holds onto the football. A higher rating means the less chance of a fumble.
- Catching (CTH) - How well the player can catch. A higher rating means fewer drops.
- Jumping (JMP) - The player's ability to jump, such as for grabbing high passes.
- Throw Power (THP) - How far a player can throw the ball.
- Throw Accuracy (THA) - How accurate a player throws.
- Tackle (TAK) - A player's ability to tackle.
- Power Moves (PMV) - Look for high power moves in defensive linemen. Power Moves is the ability to power through the block.
- Finesse Moves (FMV) - Similar to power moves but it's the ability to spin or swim around blocks.
- Block Shedding (BSH) - How well the player can shed a block.
- Pursuit (PRS) - Skill in finding and pursuing the ball carrier--likely laterally. For instance: a linebacker moving down the line to cut off the ball carrier.
- Man Coverage (MCV) - Skill of the defender in man coverage.
- Zone Coverage (ZCV) - Skill of the defender in zone coverage.
- Pass Block (PBK) - How well a player pass blocks.
- Run Block (RBK) - How well a player run blocks.
- Impact Blocking (IBL) - Would seem to be the blockers ability to make a leveling "impact" style block.
- Run Block Strength (RBS) - How well the player run blocks.
- Run Block Footwork (RBF) - How well the player maintains footing during a run block.
- Pass Block Strength (PBS) - How well the player pass blocks.
- Pass Block Footwork (PBF) - How well the player maintains footing during a pass block.
- Kick Power (KPW) - A kicker's power. Higher power means longer kicks.
- Kick Accuracy (KAC) - A kicker's accuracy.
- Return (RET) - Skill of the player as a punt or kick returner.
- Stamina (STA) - The player's stamina level. The higher the rating, the more the player can be in the game before he becomes fatigued.
- Injury (INJ) - The likelihood of an injury. The higher the rating, the less likely a player will

get injured.

## Arizona Cardinals

- **'05 Record:** 5-11 (3rd in NFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 348.4 yards per game (8th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 295.6 yards allowed per game (8th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 19.4 pts (17th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 24.2 pts (26th)

The Arizona Cardinals had arguably the best off season acquisition: the talented running back Edgerrin James, highly successful member of the Indianapolis Colts' potent offense. The Cardinals running game last season was anemic; James provides a big boost but the offensive line is still a concern.



Edgerrin James should provide a big boost to the Cardinals' rushing attack.

Edgerrin James is a balanced mix of elusiveness and power (note the high elusiveness, trucking, stiff arm, and spin move ratings). Maintain a steady dose of Edgerrin James with inside and outside runs. Don't neglect to use James' talent as a receiver-a high 79 catch rating for a running back. Keep defenses focused on James on runs and short passes to open opportunities for the Cardinals big play wide outs.

The addition of James can further boost one of the league's best passing attacks-the Cardinals

have two of the best receivers in the game with Anquan Boldin and Larry Fitzgerald. Former league and Super Bowl MVP Kurt Warner is still a quality field general with high awareness and accuracy. The Cardinals drafted Heisman trophy winner quarterback Matt Leinart as their future star. The future may be sooner than later given Warner's low injury rating.

## Arizona Cardinals Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Kurt Warner	QB	87	89	93	92	46	31	49

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Edgerrin James	RB	96	92	93	92	91	92	91	79	90	98	92	96	88

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Anquan Boldin	WR	92	88	91	91	94	90	88	90	75	82	86

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Larry Fitzgerald	WR	93	88	90	90	95	97	86	86	75	80	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Bertrand Berry	RE	93	79	78	78	81	86	95	84	85	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	AWR	KPW	KAC
Neil Rackers	K	97	73	95	93

## Atlanta Falcons

- **'05 Record:** 8-8 (3rd in NFC South)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 326.6 yards per game (12th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 325 yards allowed per game (22nd)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 21.9 pts (14th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 21.3 pts (18th)

The Atlanta Falcons' key offensive player remains the speedy Michael Vick. Although Vick still hasn't proven himself as a consistent passer, he remains one of the most dangerous players in the game because of his speed and elusiveness (95 ball carrier vision and 97 for both spin and juke move). Along with Vick's legs, focus your offensive game plan on shifty veteran running back Warrick Dunn and brawny tight end Alge Crumpler.

Warrick Dunn is one of the fastest running backs in the game and also a talented pass receiver. Utilize packages or motion to shift Dunn into a receiver position (HB Wideout) to take advantage of his talents. Dunn excels in outside runs that take advantage of his speed over slower defenders; don't expect Dunn to truck or stiff arm through big linebackers. After establishing the running game, call play action passes to Alge Crumpler and if that's not open, punish defenses

with Vick's speed and ability to avoid tacklers.

The Falcons' are strong defensively despite allowing 325 yards a game last season. Patrick Kerney and new addition John Abraham are excellent pass rushers; Keith Brooking is one of the league's top linebackers; and DeAngelo Hall is establishing himself as a top corner (high speed and man coverage ability though lower awareness).

## Atlanta Falcons Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
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Michael Vick	QB	91	96	79	77	93	48	79
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Warrick Dunn	RB	90	96	98	96	91	98	91	84	66	95	75	97	96
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
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Alge Crumpler	TE	96	85	84	52	59	97	78	70	84
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
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Patrick Kerney	LE	93	76	76	74	86	88	89	88	83	90
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
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John Abraham	RE	93	80	77	78	83	90	95	87	84	77
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
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Keith Brooking	ROLB	95	82	79	85	76	92	95	90	90
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	ACC	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
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DeAngelo Hall	CB	93	98	98	85	96	86	57	94	83
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## Baltimore Ravens

- '05 Record: 6-10 (3rd in AFC North)
- '05 Offensive Stats: 293.3 yards per game (24th)
- '05 Defensive Stats: 284.3 yards allowed per game (5th)
- '05 Points Scored Per Game: 16.6 pts (25th)
- '05 Points Allowed Per Game: 18.7 pts (10th)



The Ravens finally add stability to their quarterback position with veteran Steve McNair.

Defense isn't a problem for the Baltimore Ravens. Once again the Ravens are strong defensively with former Madden cover man Ray Lewis captaining the defense at middle linebacker, talented Chris McAlister at cornerback, and 99 rated strong safety Ed Reed. The Ravens were 5th in the league last year in yards allowed per game and 10th in points allowed per game. In recent seasons, its the offense that has been the weak link.

The Ravens hope the acquisition of veteran Steve McNair can finally provide some team balance. The Ravens possess several talented receivers, including McNair's former teammate, the underrated Derrick Mason, and one of the best tight ends in the game Todd Heap. If McNair can stay healthy (traditionally an ironman, McNair has suffered several injuries the past few seasons), both Mason and Heap should have big seasons.

Running back Jamal Lewis has lost a step or two from several injuries over the past few years; however, Lewis' 99 trucking and 98 stiff arm rating provides the power to run over oncoming tacklers (don't expect as much from spins or jukes). Run behind strong left tackle Jonathan Ogden; use the all-pro lineman in lead blocking mode and pancake defensive lineman.

**Baltimore Ravens Key Players**

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Steve McNair	QB	88	91	85	83	68	63	67



PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Jamal Lewis	RB	88	86	88	82	85	62	83	60	99	78	98	50	65

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Derrick Mason	WR	90	90	94	93	95	83	93	91	30	90	94

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Todd Heap	TE	95	79	86	55	60	88	72	72	86

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Jonathan Ogden	LT	96	98	92	98	93	98	99	80	79	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Ray Lewis	MLB	98	83	75	83	83	96	99	99	98

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Chris McAlister	CB	95	94	97	95	91	95	68	97	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Ed Reed	SS	99	93	92	93	90	97	67	91	93

## Buffalo Bills

- **'05 Record:** 5-11 (3rd in AFC East)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 257.6 yards per game (28th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 343.5 yards allowed per game (29th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 16.9 pts (24th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 22.9 pts (24th)

The Buffalo Bills remain in rebuilding mode-offensively the Bills are talented but very young and inexperienced (note the low awareness rating of the three primary offense position players). You have options at quarterback. Mobile J.P. Losman will probably be the team's starter but veteran Kelly Holcomb can be used for higher accuracy and awareness. Former Miami Hurricane Willis McGahee is arguably the offense's top talent. Use the stiff arm move to take advantage of McGahee's 99 rating.

Young speedster Lee Evans assumes the number one wide receiver role vacated by longtime Buffalo Bill Eric Moulds, now with the Houston Texans. Challenge defenses deep using Lee Evans' 96 speed. The Bills are more experienced on defense. Takeo Spikes and London Fletcher are excellent linebackers and Nate Clements is a solid strong safety. **Buffalo Bills Key Players**

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
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J.P. Losman QB 77 92 78 67 70 48 78

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Willis McGahee	RB	90	89	95	87	81	73	88	65	94	85	99	70	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Lee Evans	WR	87	96	96	91	88	88	78	79	45	82	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Takeo Spikes	ROLB	95	82	84	83	79	92	99	91	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
London Fletcher	MLB	92	78	68	83	85	95	93	97	93

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Nate Clements	SS	90	92	94	92	95	85	70	95	82

## Carolina Panthers

- **'05 Record:** 11-5 (2nd in NFC South)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 309.4 yards per game (21st)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 282.6 yards allowed per game (3rd)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 24.4 pts (8th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 16.2 pts (5th)

A swarming defense and an assortment of offensive weapons have made the Carolina Panthers a favorite to reach this season's Super Bowl (last year the Panthers' lost the NFC Championship game to the Seattle Seahawks). Jake Delhomme is a consistent pocket passer and the Panthers' feature a duo of elusive running backs in DeShaun Foster and rookie DeAngelo Williams. Both are similarly rated (DeAngelo with higher elusiveness and DeShaun with higher trucking) and can be used simultaneously with clever use of packages.

The Panthers' most potent offensive weapon is Steve Smith, one of the fastest and highly rated receivers in Madden '07. Steve Smith is a game-changing wide receiver. Mix up playcalling and packages (shift Smith to the slot, put him in motion, use any means!) to keep defenses off guard and give Steve Smith as many opportunities as possible. Test a defense with the wide receiver screen play and watch Smith explode down the field. The Panthers' added veteran Keyshawn Johnson; he'll assume the role as a consistent possession receiver to complement Steve Smith's gamebreaking speed.

The Panthers' defensive line is one of the strongest in Madden '07. Julius Peppers, Mike Rucker, and Kris Jenkins can create havoc for opposing quarterbacks without the need for additional blitzing defenders. But a strong defensive line can be even more potent with carefully timed blitzes, which could keep opposing offenses in long yardage situations.

## Carolina Panthers Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Jake Delhomme	QB	92	88	92	92	64	56	85

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
DeShaun Foster	RB	87	92	93	92	82	87	74	70	84	90	87	89	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
DeAngelo Williams	RB	81	92	94	93	62	95	78	70	76	86	60	96	94

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Steve Smith	WR	97	97	98	96	95	91	89	93	75	94	98

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Keyshawn Johnson	WR	87	86	85	86	91	88	90	89	75	72	68

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Julius Peppers	LE	97	86	82	88	77	94	98	89	90	75

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Kris Jenkins	DT	93	64	93	63	88	94	92	95	76	77

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Mike Rucker	RE	91	74	79	72	84	90	86	88	80	90

## Chicago Bears

- **'05 Record:** 11-5 (1st in NFC North)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 256.3 yards per game (29th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 281.8 yards allowed per game (2nd)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 16.3 pts (26th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 12.6 pts (1st)



Chicago's smothering defense will be enough to win several games this season.

The Chicago Bears dominating defense single-handedly led the team to an NFC North division title and playoff birth. Offensively the Bears were rated 29th in yards and 26th in points; but defensively the Bears were rated 2nd in yards and 1st in points allowed. Former Florida Gator star Rex Grossman returns as the Bears' starting quarterback; but he's missed more games than he's played in his short career (hence the low 67 injury rating). The Bears added vet Brian Griese to serve as Grossman's backup (or eventual starter once the controversies begin).

Thomas Jones (last season's real bright spot on offense) and young Cedric Benson are expected to split the duties of primary running back, though Thomas Jones offers better statistics overall. Use lead blocking mode behind perennially highly rated center Olin Kreutz. Take pressure off of Grossman with a strong rushing attack. Burn clock and maintain field position to avoid falling behind; the Bears' lack of offensive firepower in the passing game makes comebacks a long shot. The Bears' defense continues to be led by Pro Bowl linebacker Brian Urlacher, one of the best in the game.

### Chicago Bears Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Rex Grossman	QB	85	89	90	81	59	42	67

  

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Thomas Jones	RB	88	90	93	90	86	90	87	70	84	90	70	84	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Cedric Benson	RB	84	88	91	87	67	72	85	62	89	75	88	62	70

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Mushin Muhammad	WR	89	90	87	86	91	86	94	89	75	74	80

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Olin Kreutz	C	98	92	92	93	93	95	93	95	91	91

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Brian Urlacher	MLB	98	88	78	93	88	95	96	98	92

## Cincinnati Bengals

- **'05 Record:** 11-5 (1st in AFC North)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 358.1 yards per game (6th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 338.7 yards allowed per game (28th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 26.3 pts (4th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 21.9 pts (22nd)

The emergence (and subsequent playoff injury) of Carson Palmer was one of last season's biggest stories. Everyone knew Carson Palmer would be an elite NFL quarterback but not many expected it this soon and this good (remember how pitiful his vision cone was in last year's Madden?). He's one of the top quarterbacks in Madden 07 with high throw power, accuracy, and awareness. Palmer's top target is Chad Johnson, one of the highest rated and most elusive wide receivers in the game. T.J. Houshmandzadeh is a capable weapon if the opposing defense decides to double Chad Johnson.

Run the Bengals' burly running back Rudi Johnson behind highly rated right tackle Willie Anderson. Rudi Johnson is more of a power back (96 trucking, 96 stiff arm) than a finesse back (only 64 elusiveness and 70 juke move). Pound the interior of the defensive line with inside runs; use run to daylight mode with Willie Anderson and open holes for Rudi Johnson. The Bengals feature a solid backup running back in Chris Perry that should be inserted in sets (perhaps in Dual HB or HB Wideout) for his pass catching and elusiveness abilities.

### Cincinnati Bengals Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Carson Palmer	QB	95	97	95	89	56	39	78

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Rudi Johnson	RB	92	87	93	84	89	64	97	62	96	88	96	60	70

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Chad Johnson	WR	97	96	95	95	96	94	92	91	45	90	96

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
T.J. Houshmandzadeh	WR	87	88	91	89	88	85	85	84	72	87	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Willie Anderson	RT	95	97	91	98	95	93	98	80	83	97

## Cleveland Browns

- **'05 Record:** 6-10 (4th in AFC North)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 284.4 yards per game (26th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 316.8 yards per game (16th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 14.5 pts (32nd)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 18.8 pts (11th)

The Cleveland Browns had the worst scoring offense in the NFL last season: not a stat Browns' fans hope their team repeats. But the Browns' offense remains young and inexperienced. Charlie Frye will be a first time starter in the NFL. He's a mobile quarterback but relatively average throw power and accuracy and poor awareness. Braylon Edwards is a young receiver coming off injury and highly touted tight end Kellen Winslow is seeing his first action in more than a season after suffering a vehicle accident prior to the '05 campaign (Winslow's 55 awareness speaks volumes).

Running back Reuben Droughns had his breakout season while in Denver and posted solid numbers for his first season in a Cleveland Brown uniform. He's a bigger back and better with trucking and power moves than finesse spins and jukes. Run to daylight behind LeCharles Bentley, the Browns' highly rated center. Two solid linebackers anchor the Browns' defense (which wasn't bad in '05 ranking 11th in points allowed and 16th in yards per game allowed). Former New England Patriot Willie McGinest joins Andra Davis to provide leadership (97 awareness rating) to the young team.

### Cleveland Browns Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Charlie Frye	QB	81	87	85	72	71	49	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Reuben Droughns	RB	89	86	88	84	88	62	90	64	93	92	95	54	63

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Braylon Edwards	WR	84	91	92	91	86	95	68	80	55	88	89

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Kellen Winslow	TE	85	85	88	52	56	84	74	55	55

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
LeCharles Bentley	C	95	93	90	93	96	94	95	92	91	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Willie McGinest	LOLB	93	79	77	87	75	90	84	87	97

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Andra Davis	MLB	90	77	78	83	75	93	95	90	87

## Dallas Cowboys

- '05 Record: 9-7 (3rd in NFC East)
- '05 Offensive Stats: 325.1 yards per game (13th)
- '05 Defensive Stats: 300.9 yards allowed per game (10th)
- '05 Points Scored Per Game: 20.3 pts (15th)
- '05 Points Allowed Per Game: 19.3 pts (12th)



Will the Dallas Cowboys be able to keep Terrell Owens happy?

Controversial wide receiver Terrell Owens now calls Dallas his home in Madden 07. Terrell basically imploded the Philadelphia Eagles last season, but it didn't stop Dallas owner Jerry Jones from gambling and adding the outspoken wide out to the Cowboy roster. Although a questionable team player, it's impossible to argue against Owens' skills as a wide receiver. He's one of the best in the game and a threat to break open a big play every time he touches the ball.

Other stars on offense include Jason Witten, an above average pass catching tight end, and Julius Jones, the Cowboys' starting running back and an effective blend of speed, elusiveness, and power (though not excelling in any of those specific categories). Note that the Cowboys also utilize backup Marion Barber in a third down back role to spell Jones on occasion. Run both backs behind Marco Rivera, a highly rated right guard. Strong safety Roy Williams leads an above average defense that placed in the top 12 in both yards allowed and points allowed per game.

## Dallas Cowboys Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Drew Bledsoe	QB	87	97	87	89	45	39	65

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Julius Jones	RB	87	91	93	93	79	93	82	70	82	88	73	90	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Terrell Owens	WR	97	93	96	94	94	91	92	91	80	86	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Jason Witten	TE	92	77	82	53	61	85	75	69	80

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Marco Rivera	RG	95	94	92	95	90	93	95	78	80	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Roy Williams	FS	94	85	90	82	55	80	90	78	85

## Denver Broncos

- **'05 Record:** 13-3 (1st in AFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 360.4 yards per game (5th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 312.9 yards allowed per game (15th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 24.7 pts (7th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 16.1 pts (3rd)

The Denver Broncos capped a successful 2005 season with home field advantage in the AFC Championship game. But the Broncos were dominated by the sixth seed Pittsburgh Steelers and left wondering what could have been. In the off season, the Broncos added disgruntled wide



receiver Javon Walker (hurt for all but one game of 2005) to bolster the team's receiving squad, still led by veteran (97 awareness) Rod Smith.

The Broncos have utilized a running back by committee approach the last few seasons. With the departure of Mike Anderson to the Ravens, this season the Broncos look to combine the talents of Tatum Bell, Ron Dayne, and upstart Mike Bell (as of this writing, Mike Bell wasn't in the official Madden 07 roster but expect him to be added to an update if he continues his fine preseason play). Tatum Bell is extremely quick but lacks awareness and high special move abilities. Champ Bailey is the Broncos' defensive stud; he's the highest rated cornerback in the game. Don't hesitate to leave him in man coverage (99 rating).

## Denver Broncos Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
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Jake Plummer	QB	90	89	89	85	71	52	92
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Tatum Bell	RB	84	96	97	92	75	84	80	68	75	65	55	76	84
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Rod Smith	WR	90	89	87	87	93	82	97	90	60	75	80
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Javon Walker	WR	89	94	93	90	88	92	84	80	50	80	80
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
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Tom Nalen	C	95	84	87	92	97	85	85	93	98	95
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
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Al Wilson	MLB	95	86	75	88	83	94	87	96	92
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
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Champ Bailey	CB	99	98	98	99	99	95	65	94	93
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## Detroit Lions

- **'05 Record:** 5-11 (3rd in NFC North)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 269.9 yards per game (27th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 322.4 yards allowed per game (20th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 15.9 pts (28th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 21.6 pts (21st)

Years of adding young talent through the draft has yet to pay dividends for the Detroit Lions. The

franchise added a highly touted quarterback in Joey Harrington and drafted wide receivers in the first round for three years running. As the 2006 season begins, Joey Harrington now plays for Miami and one of the first round receivers may not even make the team. The Lions have been expected to contend for the NFC North titles for years now. Consistency on offense will likely be the key to a successful Lions season.

To replace Joey Harrington, the Lions added former backups Jon Kitna (from Cincinnati) and Josh McCown (from Arizona). Both are similarly rated: Kitna boasts better awareness and accuracy and McCown offers more mobility. A lot was expected of running back Kevin Jones last season but he failed to deliver. His statistics are good but not spectacular in any particular area. Roy Williams has established himself as the team's clear number one wide receiver.

## Detroit Lions Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Jon Kitna	QB	83	88	86	84	54	29	86

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Josh McCown	QB	80	88	80	73	73	40	81

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Kevin Jones	RB	87	91	92	88	76	79	86	64	88	78	94	94	85

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Roy Williams	WR	88	93	91	92	89	94	74	77	65	86	88

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Damien Woody	RG	93	93	90	93	93	93	95	84	86	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Shaun Rogers	DT	95	63	96	64	92	95	75	97	73	80

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Dre' Bly	CB	90	93	96	93	94	85	47	89	86

## Green Bay Packers

- '05 Record: 4-12 (4th in NFC North)
- '05 Offensive Stats: 319.9 yards per game (18th)
- '05 Defensive Stats: 293.1 yards allowed per game (7th)
- '05 Points Scored Per Game: 18.6 pts (22nd)
- '05 Points Allowed Per Game: 21.5 pts (19th)



Future Hall of Famer Brett Favre decided to come back for at least one more season.

The bottom fell out for the Green Bay Packers last season. The Brett Favre era has usually meant division titles and playoff births--not 4-12 and last place in the NFC North seasons. A series of injuries (the Packers lost three of their running backs) forced Brett Favre to try and win games with nothing but his arm, which resulted in a league high interception total. But despite almost retiring, Favre returns for another season with the hope of returning the Packers to their former glory.

If the backs can stay healthy, Green Bay's running game should be solid. Ahman Green is still a proven starter (decent trucking ability and acceleration) and the Packers' blockers, such as William Henderson and fullback and Tauscher and Clifton on the line can open big holes. Donald Driver is Favre's most consistent performer at the receiver position. Use multiple tight end sets for run blocking and as options in the passing game.

### Green Bay Packers Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Brett Favre	QB	88	97	85	92	52	55	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Ahman Green	RB	88	92	93	85	87	72	75	75	87	85	90	78	83

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
William Henderson	FB	96	62	67	55	68	77	80	74	83

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Donald Driver	WR	90	91	92	91	91	93	89	85	45	84	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Mark Tauscher	RT	94	92	97	91	87	95	91	93	87	96

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Chad Clifton	LT	94	92	97	92	85	95	94	86	80	93

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Kabeer Gbaja-Biamilla	DT	89	84	72	79	74	76	95	81	92	75

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Charles Woodson	CB	88	90	90	92	93	92	66	93	85

## Houston Texans

- **'05 Record:** 2-14 (4th in AFC South)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 253.3 yards per game (30th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 364 yards allowed per game (31st)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 16.3 pts (26th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 26.9 pts (32nd)

Five years from now it may be written that this was the year the Houston Texans passed up on one of the best football players ever in Reggie Bush. Then again, it may be written that first overall pick Mario Williams is the next Reggie White. The Texans have not been able to get over the hump and essentially regressed last season with near dead last finishes in major offensive and defensive categories--not to mention a 2-14, last place finish in the AFC South.

The Texans added longtime Buffalo Bill Eric Moulds to the receiving squad providing an additional weapon for quarterback David Carr. Domanick Davis (not Reggie Bush!) remains the Texan starter at running back (though at the time of this writing he's injured and his season is in question: rookie Wali Lundy may replace him). Davis is an elusive back with excellent hands: utilize him out of the backfield and open up opportunities for speedy Andre Johnson.

### Houston Texans Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
David Carr	QB	84	95	80	77	67	45	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Domanick Davis	RB	90	92	95	93	85	94	85	79	82	92	66	90	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Andre Johnson	WR	89	95	94	92	86	94	78	75	85	85	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Eric Moulds	WR	87	91	90	86	85	87	88	83	70	73	75

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Mike Flanagan	C	92	87	93	89	85	88	89	93	87	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Mario Williams	RE	86	85	75	85	76	90	94	86	88	40

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Dunta Robinson	CB	90	96	97	95	91	82	68	87	78

## Indianapolis Colts

- **'05 Record:** 14-2 (1st in AFC South)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 362.4 yards per game (3rd)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 307.1 yards allowed per game (11th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 27.4 pts (2nd)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 15.4 pts (2nd)

The 2005 Indianapolis Colts had one of the best seasons in the history of the National Football League-except for one thing: the season ended after their first playoff game, a home loss to the eventual Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers. The Colts made a run at immortality and an undefeated season before losing games near the end of the season (after the Colts' division title and home field advantage was wrapped up).

Although the Colts lost Edgerrin James to the Arizona Cardinals, their offense remains one of the most potent and feared in the NFL. Peyton Manning is clearly the best quarterback in the game (99 overall, 98 accuracy, 99 awareness, and 98 injury means he's durable). Marvin Harrison and Reggie Wayne are arguably the best wide receiver tandem (close call with Arizona's Fitzgerald and Boldin).

Edgerrin James will be replaced by Dominic Rhodes and rookie Joseph Addai (both are almost identically rated with Rhodes given the awareness "veteran" edge). The Colts' have a strong offensive line for pass protection and lead blocking. Look to run left with Saturday and Glenn opening the big holes. From the "if you can't beat them, join them" book: the Colts' added clutch kicker Adam Vinatieri, formerly of the Super Bowl dynasty New England Patriots.

## Indianapolis Colts Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
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Peyton Manning	QB	99	95	98	99	59	62	98
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Dominic Rhodes	RB	83	89	93	92	76	87	82	74	77	87	70	86	88
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Joseph Addai	RB	80	94	93	90	57	90	77	75	76	84	65	88	92
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Marvin Harrison	WR	97	95	97	97	99	85	99	92	30	97	97
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
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Reggie Wayne	WR	92	89	93	92	95	86	92	88	55	88	90
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
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Jeff Saturday	C	96	90	97	88	78	95	88	98	87	95
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
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Tarik Glenn	LT	95	95	98	93	87	98	93	98	93	92
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
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Dwight Freeney	RE	98	87	76	87	76	87	99	83	97	84
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PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	AWR	KPW	KAC
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Adam Vinatieri	K	97	97	94	90
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## Jacksonville Jaguars

- '05 Record: 12-4 (2nd in AFC South)
- '05 Offensive Stats: 321.8 yards per game (15th)
- '05 Defensive Stats: 290.9 yards allowed per game (6th)
- '05 Points Scored Per Game: 22.6 pts (12th)
- '05 Points Allowed Per Game: 16.8 pts (6th)



The Jaguars have a core of young talent, like wide receiver Matt Jones, that could lead to back-to-back playoff births.

The 2005 Jacksonville Jaguars worked hard for their 12-4 record and playoff birth (lost in the opening round to the New England Patriots). The Jaguars seemed to win games by the narrowest of margins: was it good defense or a sluggish offense? Jimmy Smith, arguably the Jaguars best player and one of the best receivers in the league during his prime, retired in the off season leaving a young squad for the Jags' quarterback Byron Leftwich.

Fred Taylor is the Jaguars' starting running back but don't hesitate to get Greg Jones, a bulky fullback into the mix (at the time of this writing, however, Greg Jones was lost for the season with an ACL tear). The Jags also have several young running backs that are worth consideration. Defensively the Jaguars are strong, especially on the line with two of the best defensive tackles in the game: Marcus Stroud and John Henderson. Safety Donovan Darius and cornerback Rashean Mathis anchor a decent secondary.

### Jacksonville Jaguars Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Byron Leftwich	QB	89	97	87	83	57	54	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Fred Taylor	RB	89	93	92	91	87	90	85	64	86	93	85	90	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Marcus Stroud	DT	97	66	94	67	89	97	87	97	82	80

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
John Henderson	DT	94	62	95	60	92	96	63	93	70	81

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Donovin Darius	SS	93	88	89	82	67	83	93	76	86

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Rashean Mathis	CB	92	94	93	93	89	92	70	95	77

## Kansas City Chiefs

- **'05 Record:** 10-6 (2nd in AFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 387 yards per game (1st)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 328.1 yards allowed per game (25th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 25.2 pts (6th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 20.3 pts (16th)

Last season, the Kansas City Chiefs Pro Bowl running back Priest Holmes was injured paving the way for Larry Johnson to assume the starting job. And did he ever! If he had been the full time starter all year, Larry Johnson may have broken numerous single season rushing records. He boasts excellent speed and acceleration with a 98 trucking ability to break through tackles. Don't neglect the stiff arm move! Use lead blocking mode behind powerful right guard Will Shields.

Larry Johnson isn't the Chiefs' only offensive weapon. Despite having a down year in catches and touchdowns, Tony Gonzalez remains one of the league's best tight ends and one of the best rated in Madden 07. Dante Hall is one of the fastest players in Madden; the Chiefs use the lightning quick Hall primarily as a kick and punt return man (99 acceleration, 99 agility, 99 spin move, 99 juke move, 99 return-you get the point!) but also feature him as a wide receiver. Pound the ball with Larry Johnson and set up a play action pass to Dante Hall on a deep go route.

### Kansas City Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Trent Green	QB	91	87	96	96	51	43	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Larry Johnson	RB	96	93	96	90	86	80	95	67	98	90	97	75	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Tony Gonzalez	TE	97	84	85	50	55	92	72	76	94



PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM	RET
Dante Hall	WR/KR	78	97	99	99	74	70	72	97	25	99	99	99

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Will Shields	RG	97	91	93	94	94	95	95	87	95	97

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Patrick Surtain	CB	92	90	95	94	96	90	50	90	94

## Miami Dolphins

- **'05 Record:** 9-7 (2nd in AFC East)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 324.9 yards per game (14th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 317.4 yards allowed per game (18th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 19.9 pts (16th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 19.8 pts (15th)

The Miami Dolphins upgraded their quarterback position dramatically with the addition of Daunte Culpepper. Although the former Viking quarterback is coming off a devastating injury, he's looked solid throughout the preseason and brings a proven passer (if sometimes inconsistent) for the Dolphins' myriad of offensive weapons.

Ricky Williams departed for the CFL (and various league suspensions) paving the way for former Auburn standout Ronnie Brown to assume fulltime duties as the Dolphins' starting running back. Use the fast and powerful Brown in sets with highly rated fullback Fred Beasley (former 49er) for lead blocking.

Chris Chambers is one of the league's most underrated wide outs and should see serious attention with Culpepper leading the offense. The Dolphins also utilize an excellent tight end in their passing scheme with Randy McMichael. Defensively the Dolphins are led by all-pros Jason Taylor and Zach Thomas. Both are some of the best players at their respective positions.

### Miami Dolphins Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Daunte Culpepper	QB	92	98	84	79	77	44	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Ronnie Brown	RB	89	93	94	90	74	87	85	73	87	87	84	77	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Fred Beasley	FB	97	72	74	51	62	75	85	77	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Chris Chambers	WR	91	95	94	92	88	97	85	84	55	83	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Randy McMichael	TE	92	83	87	55	57	84	74	73	75

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Jason Taylor	RE	96	82	74	78	83	90	97	85	88	91

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Zach Thomas	MLB	96	75	78	80	74	96	97	99	98

## Minnesota Vikings

- '05 Record: 9-7 (2nd in NFC North)
- '05 Offensive Stats: 288.3 yards per game (25th)
- '05 Defensive Stats: 323.3 yards allowed per game (21st)
- '05 Points Scored Per Game: 19.1 pts (19th)
- '05 Points Allowed Per Game: 21.5 pts (19th)



The Vikings added premiere right guard Steve Hutchinson, former blocker for Shaun Alexander.

The 2005 Minnesota Vikings finished the season strong after a terrible start (culminating in Daunte Culpepper's season ending knee injury; the quarterback now plays for the Miami Dolphins). Consistent veteran Brad Johnson resembled his Super Bowl winning self while leading the team to a winning 9-7 record and second place in the NFC North.

The off season has led to even more changes. Gone are wide receiver Nate Burleson and running back Michael Bennett (along with Koren Robinson, who's on the roster in Madden 07 but was recently cut in preseason because of off the field problems). New to the team are former Ravens running back Chester Taylor, a skilled but moderately rated tail back and Steve Hutchinson, a dominant force at right guard (he paved the way for Shaun Alexander's record breaking season last year). Pancake defenders with Steve Hutchinson's 98 impact blocking rated in lead blocking mode.

## Minnesota Vikings Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Brad Johnson	QB	86	86	93	92	46	40	85

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Chester Taylor	RB	85	88	91	89	78	84	85	70	84	86	74	74	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Steve Hutchinson	RG	98	97	88	98	98	95	98	86	91	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Matt Birk	C	93	87	93	88	87	86	87	93	92	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Darren Sharper	FS	96	88	87	85	84	96	70	84	92

## New England Patriots

- **'05 Record:** 10-6 (1st in AFC East)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 352 yards per game (7th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 330.2 yards allowed per game (26th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 23.7 pts (10th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 21.1 pts (17th)

The New England Patriots seem to battle injuries all season (last season the Patriots lost key defenders as well as Corey Dillon for significant time) but still manage to remain in the Super Bowl hunt. In 2005, the Patriots still won the AFC East and won an opening round playoff game against Jacksonville. Tom Brady is one of the best quarterbacks in the NFL and in Madden 07: excellent accuracy and near perfect awareness.

Corey Dillon is a solid power back with 93 trucking and 98 stiff arm. The Patriots drafted Laurence Maroney as their lead back of the future. Deion Branch is a former Super Bowl MVP but a current holdout. As of this writing, it doesn't appear he'll be starting the season in a Patriots uniform.

Despite allowing 330 yards per game (26th in the NFL), the New England defense is strong because the injuries have healed and defensive stars like Rodney Harrison are back on the field. The Patriots have their own defensive playbook which unique defenses such as the Nickel 1-5-5, which features one defensive lineman, five linebackers, and five defensive backs.

## New England Patriots Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Tom Brady	QB	98	92	96	98	60	60	96

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Corey Dillon	RB	89	87	86	83	90	64	92	62	93	84	98	52	64

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Laurence Maroney	RB	82	90	91	92	55	86	86	68	82	83	75	67	80

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Deion Branch	WR	88	94	96	95	89	84	86	90	30	93	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Richard Seymour	RE	97	72	92	70	88	98	91	93	87	88

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Rodney Harrison	SS	94	82	84	78	58	88	92	70	94

## New Orleans Saints

- **'05 Record:** 3-13 (4th in NFC South)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 314.4 yards per game (20th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 312.1 yards allowed per game (14th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 14.7 pts (31st)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 24.9 pts (28th)

Perhaps the New Orleans Saints will have the Houston Texans' management to thank for their future success: that could be the case if number two overall draft pick Reggie Bush flourishes as expected. Reggie Bush is one of the most dynamic players to enter the NFL in some time. In Madden 07, Reggie Bush boasts spectacular ratings for a rookie (the only knock is awareness naturally). Bush is one of the fastest in the game, 98 in both acceleration and agility, and 99 in elusiveness and juke move.

Consider using Saints' running back Deuce McAllister and Reggie Bush simultaneously. Bush's versatility (86 catch rating) allows you to move him around the field in a wide out or slot position to take advantage of his skills as a wide receiver. He's a potent weapon that must be utilized to be successful with the Saints. Drew Brees, former quarterback of the San Diego Chargers, was added to provide consistency at the position. He's a former comeback player of the year and should return wide receiver Joe Horn to downfield threat status.

## New Orleans Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Drew Brees	QB	92	89	95	88	62	54	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Deuce McAllister	RB	88	89	90	84	85	67	84	72	91	85	95	67	76

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Reggie Bush	RB	87	97	98	98	62	99	83	86	74	88	60	97	99

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Joe Horn	WR	90	89	90	89	92	86	93	87	55	84	83

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Charles Grant	RE	91	75	82	77	83	85	86	86	83	73

## New York Giants

- '05 Record: 11-5 (1st in NFC East)
- '05 Offensive Stats: 361.7 yards per game (4th)
- '05 Defensive Stats: 327.5 yards allowed per game (24th)
- '05 Points Scored Per Game: 26.4 pts (3rd)
- '05 Points Allowed Per Game: 19.6 pts (14th)



Tight end Jeremy Shockey is one of the best in the game.

The era of the second Manning began in full force last season. Eli Manning, brother of Peyton Manning, had a fantastic second season and elevated the Giants to a NFC East division title and playoff birth. Running back Tiki Barber is one of the best all-around backs in the game: use Barber's skills as a receiver (84 catch rating) and get him in the open field to take advantage of his speed, elusiveness, and special moves.

Tight end Jeremy Shockey is Manning's best weapon in the passing game. He's one of the highest rated tight ends in Madden 07. Don't hesitate to move him into a wide out position to open new routes for Shockey. On defense, Michael Strahan is a top rated defensive lineman. The Giants also added former Redskin LaVar Arrington to improve the linebacker squad.

### New York Giants Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Eli Manning	QB	88	93	89	83	61	55	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Tiki Barber	RB	94	93	93	94	94	92	86	84	84	96	70	88	91

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Plaxico Burress	WR	90	92	90	93	88	98	81	78	70	82	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Jeremy Shockey	TE	97	84	89	52	55	88	87	67	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Michael Strahan	RE	97	76	86	72	85	96	97	92	88	96

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
LaVar Arrington	MLB	90	87	78	93	86	87	86	87	73

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Sam Madison	CB	90	91	92	91	85	92	58	91	96

## New York Jets

- **'05 Record:** 4-12 (4th in AFC East)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 248.1 yards per game (31st)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 308.8 yards allowed per game (12th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 15 pts (29th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 22.2 pts (23rd)

After a promising 2004, the New York Jets struggled mightily in 2005. Running back Curtis Martin, one of the best in the NFL in 2004, battled injuries throughout 2005 and may not even play in the 2006 season. During preseason, the Jets traded for 49er running back Kevan Barlow to be their new top guy. Barlow isn't featured on the Jets in Madden 07's default rosters but should be included in a roster update once you connect to the EA servers. The Jets drafted left tackle D'Brickashaw Ferguson to provide running room and pass blocking: use Ferguson's 96 impact blocking skill to pancake defenders in run to daylight mode.

Jets' quarterback Chad Pennington has shown promise in the past but has fought shoulder injuries the last few seasons (45 injury rating in Madden 07). Pennington is accurate but lacks throw power for a consistent deep ball. Lavernaeus Coles is the Jets top wide receiver. Utilize his 98 speed on crossing routes against man coverage.

### New York Jets Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Chad Pennington	QB	85	83	92	88	56	52	45

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Kevan Barlow	RB	82	86	89	83	77	60	80	65	88	66	90	51	60

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Lavernaeus Coles	WR	88	98	96	93	88	82	85	83	60	88	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
D'Brickashaw Ferguson	LT	85	88	92	87	96	88	87	98	95	72

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Shaun Ellis	LE	93	70	89	66	90	92	75	93	78	84

## Oakland Raiders

- **'05 Record:** 4-12 (4th in AFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 309.4 yards per game (21st)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 330.8 yards allowed per game (27th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 18.1 pts (23rd)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 23.9 pts (25th)

The addition of elite wide receiver Randy Moss didn't help the Oakland Raiders in 2005: the Raiders finished 4-12 and last in the AFC West division and Moss missed a number of games with a nagging injury. The Raiders hope to improve their deep threat with former New Orleans Saints quarterback Aaron Brooks. He has the throw power (94 rating) and mobility (72 speed) but relatively poor accuracy and awareness for a starter. But to be successful, you must get Randy Moss the ball. The receiver has game-changing speed, special moves, and jump ability.

LaMont Jordan (former Jets backup) made an excellent debut with the Raiders last season and provided a punch to their running back position. Jordan is a good all-around back but doesn't excel in any particular area (decent trucking and average elusiveness). The Raiders drafted much heralded Robert Gallery a few seasons back to anchor the offensive line at left tackle. He hasn't dominated as expected but is a solid performer and a choice to open holes in lead blocking mode.

### Oakland Raiders Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Aaron Brooks	QB	84	94	81	73	72	36	93

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
LaMont Jordan	RB	90	89	92	86	85	74	87	79	89	87	88	72	80

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Randy Moss	WR	97	98	97	96	95	99	89	94	55	90	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Robert Gallery	LT	88	92	90	92	88	89	92	84	85	77

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
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## Philadelphia Eagles

- **'05 Record:** 6-10 (4th in NFC East)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 319.3 yards per game (19th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 325.4 yards allowed per game (23rd)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 19.4 pts (17th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 24.3 pts (27th)

Terrell Owens imploded the Philadelphia Eagles. Last year was a disaster for the team. After a decent start, wide receiver Terrell Owens outspoken criticism of the team began to take its toll and he was eventually suspended for the remainder of the season. Soon after Pro Bowl quarterback Donovan McNabb was injured and also lost for the rest of the season. Did we mention running back Brian Westbrook was also lost to injury? The Eagles had a rough 2005 but hope to bounce back without Terrell Owens in 2006.

Donovan McNabb (former Madden cover man) is one of the game's best quarterbacks: excellent mobility and throw power, though a tad low in accuracy and awareness. Use running back Brian Westbrook in the passing game to take advantage of his speed, acceleration, catch ability (86 catch rating) and elusive special moves. Use lead blocking mode behind big left tackle William Thomas or outside in pitch and sweep plays. The Eagles have several defensive stars, including Jevon Kearse (the "freak") on the line, Jeremiah Trotter at linebacker, and Brian Dawkins at free safety, one of the highest rated defensive backs in the game.

### Philadelphia Eagles Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Donovan McNabb	QB	94	95	87	84	79	54	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Brian Westbrook	RB	89	94	99	96	87	97	85	86	69	95	60	98	97

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
William Thomas	LT	94	95	95	96	93	97	96	92	85	91

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Jevon Kearse	LE	93	85	73	88	74	72	99	79	95	80

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Jeremiah Trotter	MLB	93	77	80	83	74	92	96	87	93

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
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Brian Dawkins FS 98 90 92 92 85 98 80 87 92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	KPW	KAC	AWR
David Akers	K	95	93	91	90

## Pittsburgh Steelers

- **'05 Record:** 11-5 (2nd in AFC North)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 321.8 yards per game (15th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 284 yards allowed per game (4th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 24.3 pts (9th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 16.1 pts (3rd)

With all the hype surrounding the Indianapolis Colts' potential undefeated season and the emergence of Carson Palmer, most prognosticators ignored the steady and eventual AFC and Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers. Sneaking into the playoffs as the lowest rated seed, the Steelers romped through three straight road games to make the big game in Detroit (and then wiped out the Seattle Seahawks for the title).

Big Ben Roethlisberger, a phenomenal record so far as the Steelers' starting quarterback was injured during the off season in a motorcycle accident but has made a full recovery and played well in the preseason. In Madden 07, he possesses decent mobility and solid passer numbers. Fast Willie Parker exploded onto the scene last year and now assumes duty as the Steelers' starting running back. Use his excellent speed behind talented and highly rated left guard Alan Faneca.

With consistent veteran Hines Ward at wide receiver and an excellent defensive cast that includes Casey Hampton at defensive tackle, Joey Porter at linebacker, and the gamebreaker skills of Troy Polamalu at strong safety, the Steelers look to repeat their success in 2006. Unfortunately for the Steelers, they won't be overlooked this time.

### Pittsburgh Steelers Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Ben Roethlisberger	QB	92	92	88	87	70	60	94

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Willie Parker	RB	86	97	96	88	82	78	86	68	74	75	62	75	76

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Hines Ward	WR	94	89	91	94	95	86	93	88	85	85	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Alan Faneca	LG	98	96	94	97	97	94	98	86	93	94

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Casey Hampton	DT	97	58	98	59	97	99	67	98	75	86

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Joey Porter	ROLB	97	85	77	95	82	90	91	92	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Troy Polamalu	SS	98	93	95	91	75	85	87	85	80

## San Diego Chargers

- **'05 Record:** 9-7 (3rd in AFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 349.9 yards per game (10th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 309.3 yards allowed per game (13th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 26.1 pts (5th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 19.5 pts (13th)

The Philip Rivers era begins in San Diego. During the off season, the San Diego Chargers let Drew Brees go (he now leads the New Orleans Saints) and are now depending on former first round draft pick Philip Rivers to lead the team back into the playoffs. Fortunately, the Chargers won't have to lean on Rivers' arm for success: just give the ball to LaDainian Tomlinson, one of the best running backs in Madden 07.

LT's all-around ratings are impressive: top speed, acceleration, agility, trucking, and special moves. Also, an 85 catch rating makes LT extremely valuable in the passing game. Run LT in two back sets to take advantage of the top rated fullback in the game, Lorenzo Neal. Use Lorenzo in lead blocking mode to punch open holes for LT.

The Chargers' strong running game should open opportunities for the best tight end available in Madden 07: Antonio Gates. You'll find Gates to be the most dominating force in the Chargers' passing game. Offensively you should concentrate playcalling on sets featuring the tight end. Utilize packages and motion to move Gates around the field to open new routes. On defense the Chargers are decent (top 13 in major categories last season) with two solid linebackers, Merriman and Edwards.

### San Diego Chargers Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Philip Rivers	QB	83	86	93	77	56	55	97

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
LaDainian Tomlinson	RB	97	95	97	95	90	93	87	85	90	98	88	93	97

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Lorenzo Neal	FB	99	60	53	66	85	62	79	70	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Antonio Gates	TE	99	87	91	52	56	90	77	70	85

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Jamal Williams	DT	96	54	98	49	93	98	67	96	70	88

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Shawne Merriman	LOLB	92	86	81	95	85	88	84	88	76

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Donnie Edwards	MLB	91	85	66	90	88	87	75	93	95

## San Francisco 49ers

- **'05 Record:** 4-12 (4th in NFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 224.2 yards per game (32nd)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 391.2 yards allowed per game (32nd)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 14.9 pts (30th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 26.8 pts (30th)



The 49ers are young but are drafting excellent talent, such as speedy tight end Vernon Davis.

The 49ers are slowly developing a nucleus of young talent but will it return the franchise to the glory days of Montana and Rice? The Niners finished almost dead last in offensive and defensive statistics last season: both yards per game and yards allowed per game were the league worst. Inexperienced quarterback Alex Smith is still learning and needs to show improvement. In Madden 07, Alex Smith has good mobility but weak passer and awareness ratings.

During the preseason, the Niners traded Kevan Barlow to the Jets (which should be reflected in Madden 07 roster updates) leaving former Miami Hurricane Frank Gore as the team's featured running back. Gore isn't explosive but does provide decent trucking and stiff arm ability to break through tackles. Run behind long time Cowboy guard Larry Allen. Speedy tight end Vernon Davis was the Niners first round draft pick and could become one of the featured players in the Niners meager passing game.

### San Francisco 49ers Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Alex Smith	QB	82	86	87	70	73	65	93

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Frank Gore	RB	80	88	89	88	60	77	80	64	86	75	93	67	75

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Vernon Davis	TE	86	92	92	46	53	82	72	70	57

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Larry Allen	LG	90	98	83	95	84	93	99	67	70	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Bryant Young	LE	89	64	88	59	90	92	64	92	74	94

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Tony Parrish	SS	91	84	83	82	65	87	73	78	89

## Seattle Seahawks

- **'05 Record:** 13-3 (1st in NFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 369.7 yards per game (2nd)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 316.8 yards allowed per game (16th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 28.3 pts (1st)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 16.9 pts (7th)

The Seattle Seahawks were in the unenviable position of being 2005's Super Bowl runner-up. The Seahawks had a fantastic season led by record-breaking running back Shaun Alexander (he set the single-season touchdown record) and excellent play from quarterback Matt Hasselbeck. A soft division should mean a return to the division title and the playoffs, though the Seahawks expectations are nothing less than a return trip to the big game and a win to complete their season.

Shaun Alexander is your featured player on offense--obviously since he's the Madden 07 cover man! Alexander boasts awesome acceleration, awareness, and trucking ability. He's elusive and powerful, capable of breaking a long run while still knocking over several defenders along the way. Fullback Mack Strong is one of the best in the game; use lead blocking behind this excellent blocker as well as left tackle Walter Jones, one of the highest rated linemen in the game (99 overall, 97 run block, 97 impact block).

Darrell Jackson remains one of the league's better wide receivers. The Seahawks added former Viking Nate Burleson to line up opposite Jackson. The Seahawks also improved their defense with the addition of former 49er Julian Peterson, a highly rated right outside linebacker.

### Seattle Seahawks Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Matt Hasselbeck	QB	93	92	91	91	64	58	88

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Shaun Alexander	RB	98	91	98	89	97	82	98	72	94	99	94	85	86

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Mack Strong	FB	97	83	80	60	70	68	80	68	75

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Darrell Jackson	WR	90	90	92	91	90	88	89	85	55	74	90

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Walter Jones	LT	99	97	98	97	97	99	97	94	98	95

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Julian Peterson	ROLB	96	66	74	90	87	91	90	97	88

## St. Louis Rams

- **'05 Record:** 6-10 (2nd in NFC West)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 348.2 yards per game (9th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 350.1 yards allowed per game (30th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 22.7 pts (11th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 26.8 pts (30th)

Injuries to Marc Bulger and Issac Bruce derailed the 2005 season. The Rams finished just 6-10, which was still good enough for second place in the soft NFC West. To challenge the division champion Seahawks, the Rams must stay healthy and improve on defense, which placed 30th in both yards allowed per game and points allowed per game.

Offensively the Rams remain strong if key players can remain healthy. Marc Bulger is an accurate pocket passer and wide outs Torry Holt and Issac Bruce remain one of the game's best receiving combinations. Torry Holt has explosive speed, best used to stretch defenses and veteran Issac Bruce is slower but remains a solid possession target, especially against defenses that may focus too heavily on Holt's deep threat.

Steven Jackson is a young, promising tailback with bruising power (89 trucking). Utilize lead blocking behind one of the game's best left tackles in Orlando Pace. The Rams improved their defensive line with the addition of La'Roi Glover, which should further increase opportunities for pass rusher Leonard Little.

### St Louis Rams Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Marc Bulger	QB	90	89	94	90	57	49	60

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Steven Jackson	RB	89	88	92	86	81	78	86	77	89	82	86	74	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Torry Holt	WR	97	93	95	95	98	89	97	90	50	86	89

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Issac Bruce	WR	89	91	94	94	93	82	95	88	20	88	93

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Orlando Pace	LT	97	95	97	91	85	97	91	97	96	96

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Leonard Little	LE	94	84	77	80	76	77	97	83	94	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
La'Roi Glover	DT	91	64	85	61	85	88	86	85	87	94

## Tampa Bay Buccaneers

- **'05 Record:** 11-5 (1st in NFC South)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 294.8 yards per game (23rd)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 277.8 yards allowed per game (1st)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 18.8 pts (20th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 17.1 pts (8th)





## Bucs' running back Carnell

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers surprised some with a strong 2005 season and division title in the NFC South. Although last year's starter Brian Griese was injured and later traded to the Chicago Bears, young Chris Simms has shown promise. He's a young quarterback and rated accordingly (low awareness). Second year running back Carnell "Cadillac" Williams offers a shifty mix of elusiveness and power (and 96 acceleration). The Buccaneers can also feature brawny fullback Mike Alstott in their rushing attack. Use speedster Joey Galloway to stretch defenses.

The Buccaneers remain one of the league's best defenses (number one last year in years allowed per game). Tampa Bay features three of the best defenders in the game: Simeon Rice at left end, Derrick Brooks at right outside linebacker, and Ronde Barber at cornerback.

## Tampa Bay Buccaneers Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Chris Simms	QB	84	90	86	79	63	53	84

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Carnell Williams	RB	90	93	96	94	78	93	84	72	83	90	77	89	94

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Joey Galloway	WR	89	97	97	91	89	86	88	85	40	87	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Simeon Rice	LE	95	84	74	78	76	83	97	82	92	93

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Derrick Brooks	ROLB	97	82	72	86	86	89	84	97	98

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Ronde Barber	CB	94	88	95	94	83	99	70	91	95

## Tennessee Titans

- **'05 Record:** 4-12 (3rd in AFC South)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 320.1 yards per game (17th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 319.4 yards allowed per game (19th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 18.7 pts (21st)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 26.3 pts (29th)

The Tennessee Titans made big strides toward the youth movement in the 2006 NFL Draft. The Titans selected both a quarterback (Vince Young of the NCAA Champion Texas Longhorns) and a running back (LenDale White, also known as Reggie Bush's teammate). Both should be future stars in the NFL and may see playing time during this season.

Vince Young may not start the season as the Titans' quarterback (expect Billy Volek to get the nod or, as of this writing, newly signed Kerry Collins) but his Madden 07 speed makes him a powerful weapon even if his awareness is that of an inexperienced rookie. Use Young's speed (rated 89) to frustrate defenses into trying to spy on Young while maintaining coverage on the Titans' downfield receivers (look for the Titans' skilled tight end squad as outlets for Young).

Mix in last year's starter Chris Brown and rookie LenDale White in the backfield (the Titans also have former Bills star Travis Henry on the running back roster). Lead block behind all-pro left tackle Kevin Mawae.

### Tennessee Titans Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Vince Young	QB	82	92	82	56	89	72	92

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Chris Brown	RB	86	89	93	85	80	65	84	60	92	75	97	60	72

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
LenDale White	RB	80	87	90	84	45	62	87	64	93	65	95	69	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Kevin Mawae	C	95	92	92	90	90	94	93	80	83	97

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Keith Bulluck	ROLB	96	86	73	90	87	90	92	94	86

## Washington Redskins

- **'05 Record:** 10-6 (2nd in NFC East)
- **'05 Offensive Stats:** 330.6 yards per game (11th)
- **'05 Defensive Stats:** 297.9 yards allowed per game (9th)
- **'05 Points Scored Per Game:** 22.4 pts (13th)
- **'05 Points Allowed Per Game:** 18.3 pts (9th)



Redskin Clinton Portis is one of the game's best all-around running backs.

Redskin owner Dan Snyder continues to build his team through free agency and trades. In the off season as well as the preseason, the Redskins added former Steeler Randel El and former 49er Brandon Lloyd to bolster a receiving group led by extremely fast Santana Moss (no power, hence the low stiff arm move, but electrifying elusiveness, spin, and juke moves). The Redskins also added a little insurance for their star running back Clinton Portis by trading with the Atlanta Falcons for big running back T.J. Duckett (expect the Madden 07 roster update to reflect this).

Clinton Portis is one of the game's top running backs. Portis, a former Denver Bronco, features excellent speed, acceleration, spin, and juke moves. Chris Cooley has emerged as a potent downfield weapon as a hybrid fullback and tight end (called an H back). In fact he's the highest rated Redskin! Note, however, that Madden lists Cooley as a fullback and once switched to TE, his overall rating decreases a bit. Mix up your playcalling to feature Portis runs behind right guard Randy Thomas, short passes to Cooley and Portis out of the backfield, and deep shots to Santana Moss.

## Washington Redskins Key Players

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	THP	THA	AWR	SPD	CAR	INJ
Mark Brunell	QB	87	89	88	86	65	55	67

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Clinton Portis	RB	94	95	98	95	88	93	85	68	87	95	65	91	96

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
T.J. Duckett	RB	84	86	88	82	76	65	87	56	94	77	95	64	65

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Santana Moss	WR	92	97	98	98	92	85	87	88	30	96	97

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	PBK	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Chris Cooley	FB (TE)	98	82	84	46	54	90	76	68	82

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Randy Thomas	RG	94	92	97	89	87	96	87	99	93	87

PLAYER	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	ACC	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Sean Taylor	FS	95	91	94	93	85	96	85	95	71

## Chapter 3 - Offense

Last season's Madden, with Donovan McNabb on the cover, introduced the vision cone. Each quarterback featured their own unique vision cone which was influenced by their awareness rating (essentially their experience and skill). Elite quarterbacks like Peyton Manning featured a large vision cone while "less experienced" quarterbacks had narrow cones. The vision cone affected accuracy. It was a big change to offensive gameplay. The cone does make a return in Madden 07 but it's not mandatory. You could choose not to use it at all. Instead, the new offensive change in Madden 07 is in the running game.

The lead blocking control is Madden 07's next innovation. On a running play, you can select a blocker and help open a hole for your running back. You can allow the CPU to control the runner

the entire play or switch back to the running back to control your player once he's broken through the block.

In this section we'll cover tips on managing a team's offense including specific tips on passing and rushing attacks, including the new Run to Daylight feature. Find Madden 07's best offenses and stars compiled for easy viewing as well as each team's offensive playbook formations and play types.

## Top Ranked Offenses

The following chart reveals the top offenses in Madden 07 based on overall rating.

<b>TEAM</b>	<b>CONFERENCE AND DIVISION</b>	<b>OFFENSE RATING</b>
Indianapolis Colts	AFC South	97
Seattle Seahawks	NFC West	97
Kansas City Chiefs	AFC West	96
Denver Broncos	AFC West	95
New York Giants	NFC East	94
Carolina Panthers	NFC South	93
New England Patriots	AFC East	93
Cincinnati Bengals	AFC North	92
Pittsburgh Steelers	AFC North	92
Atlanta Falcons	NFC South	91
Dallas Cowboys	NFC East	91

## Worst Ranked Offenses

This chart reveals the worst offenses in Madden 07 based on overall rating.

<b>TEAM</b>	<b>CONFERENCE AND DIVISION</b>	<b>OFFENSE RATING</b>
San Francisco 49ers	NFC West	74
Detroit Lions	NFC North	79
New York Jets	AFC East	79
Buffalo Bills	AFC East	80
Tennessee Titans	AFC South	80
Cleveland Browns	AFC North	82
Houston Texans	AFC South	82
Philadelphia Eagles	NFC East	83
Baltimore Ravens	AFC North	85
Chicago Bears	NFC North	85
Minnesota Vikings	NFC North	85
New Orleans Saints	NFC South	85
Oakland Raiders	AFC West	85

# Offensive Formations and Packages

The table below reveals each Madden 07 team playbook and featured offensive formations. Each team also includes Goal Line and Hail Mary formations.

<b>TEAM PLAYBOOK</b>	<b>MADDEN 07 OFFENSIVE FORMATIONS</b>
Arizona Cardinals	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Big 3 TE, Singleback Normal, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback 4WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Big, Strong I Normal, Strong I Normal Flex, Weak I Normal, Weak I Tight Twins, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Normal Offset Wk, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun Slot Strg HB Wk, Shotgun 4WR
Atlanta Falcons	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips TE, Singleback 4WR Falcon, Singleback Flip Trips, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Tight Twins, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Big Tight, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Shotgun 2RB Flex, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun 5WR
Baltimore Ravens	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Big 3 TE, Singleback Normal, Singleback Trips TE, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback 4WR Spread, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3 WR, I Form Twin TE Wing, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun Trips
Buffalo Bills	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Flip Trips, Singleback Tight Slots, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Trips WR, I Form Normal, I Form Close, I Form 3WR, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Strong I H Pro, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun 5WR
Carolina Panthers	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Panther Trips, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Trips WR, Singleback Empty 5WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin TE Wing, Split Backs 3WR, Split Backs Big, Full House Philly, Strong I H Pro, Strong I H Twins, Strong I H TE Flip, Strong I H Twin TE, Weak I H Pro, Weak I H Twins, Weak I H Wing TE, Weak I H Twin TE, Shotgun 4WR Spread, Shotgun 5WR Tight, Shotgun Empty TE Flip, Shotgun Empty Trey Stack
Chicago Bears	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Big 3TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Strg TE Flip, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Tight Slots, Singleback 4WR Spread, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR, I Form Big, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun 4WR
Cincinnati Bengals	Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Normal, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Tight Slots, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Trips WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR, I Form Twin TE Wing, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Weak I Close, Weak I Twin WR, Weak I 3WR, Shotgun Split Offset, Shotgun Trips, Shotgun 4WR
Cleveland Browns	Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Trey Open, Singleback Empty 5WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Close, Split Backs Pro, Split Backs 3WR, Near Pro, Full House Normal Wide, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I 3WR, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun 4WR

Dallas Cowboys	Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Trey Open, Singleback Empty 5WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Close, I Form Big, Split Backs Pro, Split Backs 3WR, Full House Normal Wide, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun 4WR
Denver Broncos	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Base Flex, Singleback Empty Trey, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Close, I Form Big, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Big Tight, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Weak I Close, Weak I Tight Twins, Shotgun Normal Slot, Shotgun Empty Trey, Shotgun 5WR
Detroit Lions	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Tight Slots, Singleback 4WR Flex, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR Tiger, I Form Close, I Form Big, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Strong I H Pro, Weak I H Twins, Weak I 3WR, Weak I Big, Shotgun 4WR
Green Bay Packers	Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Big 3TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Empty Bunch, Singleback Bunch TE, Singleback Tight, Singleback Flip Trips, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Big, I Form Twin TE Wing, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Split Backs 3WR, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun 4WR
Houston Texans	Singleback Big, Singleback Big TE Flip, Singleback Big 3TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Base Flex, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Empty Trey, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Close, I Form Big, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twins WR, Weak I Close, Weak I Tight Twins, Shotgun Wing Trips, Shotgun Slot Strg HB Wk, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun Trey Open
Indianapolis Colts	Singleback Deuce, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Dice, Singleback Dice Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback 4WR Stack, Singleback 4WR, I Form Normal, I Form Big, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Strong I Jumbo, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun Normal Slot, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun Slot Strg HB Wk, Shotgun 4WR
Jacksonville Jaguars	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback 4WR Special, Singleback Empty 4WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Twin TE, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I Jumbo, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Slot Strg HB Wk, Shotgun Trips Bunch, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun 5WR
Kansas City Chiefs	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips TE, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Flip Trips, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Twin TE Wing, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Normal Flex, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Shotgun 2RB Flex, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun Slot Strg HB Wk, Shotgun 5WR
Miami Dolphins	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Normal, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR, I Form Twin TE, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Normal Slot, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun Wing Trips, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun 5WR
Minnesota Vikings	Singleback Big, Singleback Normal, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Bunch TE, Singleback Flip Trips, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Trips WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin TE Wing, I Form 3WR, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Near Normal, Near 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun 4WR Spread

New England Patriots	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Big 3TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback 4WR Spread, Singleback Empty 4WR, Singleback Empty 5WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin TE, Strong I Normal, Strong I Jumbo, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun Twin TE Trips, Shotgun Slot Strong TE Flip, Shotgun Trips TE, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun 5WR, Shotgun Empty Trey Stack
New Orleans Saints	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal, Singleback Tight Doubles, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Empty Trey, I Form Normal, I Form Big, I Form Twin TE, Split Backs Normal, Full House Normal Wide, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun Empty 4WR, Shotgun 5WR Bunch
New York Giants	Singleback Normal, Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Flip Trips, Singleback Empty 4WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Close, I Form Twin WR, Full House Normal Wide, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun Normal Offset Wk, Shotgun Trips Bunch, Shotgun Slot Strong TE Flip
New York Jets	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Normal, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Tight Flex, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Empty 4WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Big, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Normal Flex, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Close, Shotgun Normal Offset Wk, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun 4WR
Oakland Raiders	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Offset Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Tight, Singleback Empty 4WR, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR, I Form Twin TE, Split Backs Flex Close, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Weak I Close, Weak I Tight Twins, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun 2RB 3WR
Philadelphia Eagles	Singleback Big, Singleback Normal, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Bunch TE, Singleback Flip Trips, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Trips WR, Singleback Empty 5WR, I Form Normal, I Form 3WR, I Form Twin TE, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Near Normal, Near 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twins WR, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun 4WR Spread
Pittsburgh Steelers	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Big, I Form Twin TE Wing, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Jumbo, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twin WR, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun Trips Bunch, Shotgun Trips, Shotgun 4WR
San Diego Chargers	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Base Flex, Singleback 4WR Spread, Singleback Flip Trips, Singleback Trey Open, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form Twin TE, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Strong I Normal Flex, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Close, Shotgun 2RB Flex, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun 4WR
Seattle Seahawks	Singleback Big, Singleback Normal, Singleback Tight Doubles, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Bunch Swap, Singleback 4WR Spread, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Trey Open, Singleback Empty Trey, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR, I Form Big, Split Backs Pro, Split Backs 3WR, Far Pro, Far Tight Twins, Far 3WR, Near Pro, Near Close, Near Jumbo, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Weak I Twin WR
San Francisco 49ers	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback 4WR, Singleback Empty Trey, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR, I Form Big, Split Backs Normal, Strong I Normal, Strong I Twin WR, Weak I Normal, Weak I Close, Weak I Twin WR, Weak I Twin TE, Shotgun Normal, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun Trips Bunch, Shotgun 4WR



St. Louis Rams	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singelback Big Wing, Singleback Normal, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, I Form Normal, I Form Twin WR, I Form 3WR, I Form Twin TE, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Strong I H Pro, Weak I Normal, Shotgun 2RB 3WR, Shotgun Normal Slot, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun 4WR, Shotgun 5WR
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	Singleback Big, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Normal, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Bunch TE, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Tight, Singleback 4WR Flex, Singleback Flip Trips, Singleback Empty Bunch, Singleback Empty 4WR, Singleback Empty 5WR, I Form Normal, I Form Tight Twins, I Form Big, Split Backs Normal, Split Backs 3WR, Strong I Normal, Strong I 3WR, Strong I Twin TE, Weak I Normal, Weak I Twins WR
Tennessee Titans	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Big Wing, Singleback Big 3TE, Singleback Normal Slot, Singleback Slot Strong, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Tight Flex, Singleback 4WR Spread, Singleback Trey Open, Singleback Empty 5 WR, I Form Normal, I Form Big, Strong I H Pro, Strong I H Twins, Weak I H Pro, Weak I H Twins, Shotgun Normal Offset Wk, Shotgun Slot Strong, Shotgun Trips TE, Shotgun 4WR
Washington Redskins	Singleback Big, Singleback Big Twin WR, Singleback Twin TE, Singleback Twin TE WR, Singleback Big TE Flip, Singleback Deuce Wing, Singleback Big Jumbo Wing, Singleback Normal TE Flip, Singleback Strg TE Flip, Singleback Trips Bunch, Singleback Stack Doubles Wk, Singleback 4WR Stack, Singleback 4WR Spread, Singleback Trips WR, I Form Close, I Form 3WR, I Form Twin TE, Split Backs 3WR, Full House Normal Wide, Strong I H Twin TE, Weak I H Wing TE, Weak I H Twin TE, Shotgun Normal Slot, Shotgun Wing Trips

Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of each formation can be a key to victory. Some formations are better suited for the run while others are used in the passing game. However, it's important to play on these strengths and weaknesses when up against a savvy opponent. Throwing out of a run formation can create mismatches against a defense that expected a run.

- Goal Line: This is a short yardage formation. Perhaps you're on the goal line (hence the name) or need less than a yard for a first down. It can be used as a deceptive formation, such as calling a play action pass. Be careful, however, since most opponents call a heavy blitz against short yardage hoping to plug the running lanes. Could also be used to take advantage of an inside run against an opponent calling a lot of dime or quarter coverage. Quarterback sneak is effective if you're a yard or less to go. Just hike and push forward!
- I Form: Another typical run formation, though I Form does offer a lot of versatility, particularly in the short passing game. In the I Form formation, a fullback and a running back (in default packages) line up behind the quarterback in an "I" formation. Teams with strong fullbacks may find effectiveness in lead blocking mode or even mixing it up and using the fullback as a runner. Call passing plays that send your backs out into the flats for short yardage passing if downfield receivers are covered. If your favorite team has two solid running backs (such as Deuce McAlister and Reggie Bush at New Orleans), switch to Dual HB packages to take advantage.
- Strong I, Weak I: These are similar to the I Form formation but the fullback (or second running back) is offset to the strong side (side of the field with more linemen, essentially

the tight end) or the weak side (side of the field with less linemen and without the tight end). Use in a lead blocking ground game or short passing situations.



Formations with two backs are excellent for lead blocking mode--especially with a skilled fullback doing the blocking.

- Far, Near: The Far and Near formations are rare in Madden 07 playbooks; find them in Seattle and Minnesota's playbook for instance. These formations are similar to Strong and Weak, but the fullback (or second running back) are positioned close together behind the quarterback. It can give the fullback another step to find his blocker. These are good formations for backs with strong receiver skills as well.
- Split Backs: Two backs (a fullback and a running back or two running backs depending on the package) line up split behind the quarterback. It's also been called the Pro Set or Pro Formation. Blocking is a bit more challenging because of the position of both backs. For instance, pitch plays means typically losing a blocker since the other back can't get into position quickly.
- Full House: This formation is another rare set seen in a few playbooks, including Carolina and Dallas. The Full House features three backs behind the quarterback. You can use packages to alter the personnel. The extra backs can provide blocking or use them in the passing game. It's also useful to disguise the direction of your run and who will be the runner given the number of options.

- **Singleback:** In this formation, one back lines up behind the quarterback. It's a common formation and numerous variations fill team playbooks. Some have more wide outs suited for the passing game while others utilize multiple tight ends for extra run blocking or disguised passing. You do lose the extra lead blocker but if your team lacks a good fullback, it's likely optimal to use singleback formations with extra blocking tight ends to bust open holes with lead blocker control.
- **Shotgun:** Although not exclusively, shotgun is traditionally a passing formation. The quarterback lines up steps behind center and takes the snap back from the oncoming rush. It provides extra time for receivers to get open (and extra time for the quarterback not to get crunched!). It can also be a deceptive run formation if your opponent lines up in dime or quarter playing the pass. Call a HB draw play, block the linebacker with lead blocking, and get your running back into the secondary.

When selecting your formation, you can also use package substitutions to alter the formation's personnel. Perhaps you want to move Reggie Bush to the wide out position, shift Steve Smith or Jeremy Shockey into the slot, or send in tight ends and fullbacks instead of wide receivers for better blocking. We've listed some of the common packages below and tips on using each.

- **Dual HB:** In formations with two running backs (including Form, Strong, Weak, and Shotgun-2RB 3WR), this package switches the fullback for the team's secondary running back. This can be an effective substitution for teams with two decent running backs (for instance, New Orleans, Carolina) for pass plays to the backs. Also if you want a quick way to utilize the secondary running back on plays designed for the fullback.
- **Jumbo Backfield:** Substitutes your running back for the fullback for dual fullbacks. Good for short yardage situations and for teams with good fullbacks (San Diego, Seattle, Tampa Bay for instance) for use in runs designed for running backs.
- **WR Swap:** Swap the primary and secondary receiver positions to alter their assigned pass routes. Could create mismatches against a defense that hasn't made defensive assignments for man coverage.
- **WR Swap Strong:** Places your best two receivers on the strong side then swaps their position (essentially placing your top receiver in the slot position).
- **HB Slot:** Substitution your running back into the slot position in a three or more receiver set--a great way to get a stellar pass receiving running back into the passing game. For instance, pass a ball deep to Atlanta's speedy Warrick Dunn, Philadelphia's shifty Brian Westbrook, or New Orleans' elusive Reggie Bush.



Take advantage of running backs skilled with pass catching by moving them into the slot or receiver positions.

- **HB Wideout:** Substitutes your running back into the wideout position. Much like HB Slot, useful if your favorite team has a running back with great hands.
- **Strong Slot:** Substitutes your best receiver into the slot position. Excellent for opening new routes for a star receiver and putting that receiver up against new defenders--possibly a mismatch against a safety or even a linebacker. Move Steve Smith around the field to give him more route options. Use that speed!
- **TE Slot:** Substitutes your tight end into the slot position. Use this package if your team has a good receiving tight end (San Diego, Kansas City, Washington, Baltimore, New York Giants) or plan to run in the formation toward the tight end--the tight end is usually a better blocker.
- **TE Swap:** Switch tight end positions in formations with two tight ends. Also could be strong and weak.
- **TE Backfield:** Switched the tight end into the backfield. Useful for a good blocking tight end in lead blocking mode. It can also provide some unique passing routes for your excellent pass catching tight ends.

- WR Strong: Places your top receivers on the strong side of the formation.
- WR Strong Weak: Places your best two receivers on the same side in a multiple receiver set--for instance in a five receiver set.
- WR Bunch: Positions the top receivers into the "bunch" area of the formation.
- Big: Substitutes wide receivers for tight ends and fullbacks for a "big" formation. This could turn a bunch formation passing play into a solid running play with the increased blocking abilities of the tight ends and fullbacks.
- Strong Solo: In formations with multiple receivers on one side and one receiver on another, places your top receiver in the solo position.
- Heavy: A linemen subs for a tight end, optimum for extra blocking in lead blocker mode.
- Miami: On goal line, substitutes your receiver for a tight end and a defensive lineman for your tight end.

## The Passing Game

An effective pass attack requires skill in play-calling, reading the defense, finding the open man, tossing a correct pass, and catching the ball. This section covers the fundamentals of succeeding as a passer. You'll find a rundown of pass play types in each team's playbook and strategies and tips for getting the ball from quarterback to receiver.

### Team Playbooks: Passing Plays

The chart below reveals the passing play types in all NFL team playbooks. Note that each team also features a Hail Mary play not included in this table. There is variation in the team playbooks that should be considered when selecting a team (the play types typically mirror their real life counterparts). For instance, the Indianapolis Colts' playbook features 50 play action passes-- Peyton Manning is arguably the best play action passer in the NFL. Note that Seattle and Tampa Bay playbooks offer no shotgun formations.

TEAM	QUICK	SHOTGUN	SCREEN	STANDARD	PLAY ACTION
Arizona Cardinals	13	46	12	79	15
Atlanta Falcons	8	34	21	73	34
Baltimore Ravens	10	30	15	74	46
Buffalo Bills	16	34	11	90	30

Carolina Panthers	25	31	7	78	16
Chicago Bears	13	22	18	87	36
Cincinnati Bengals	10	20	16	90	40
Cleveland Browns	17	23	21	77	27
Dallas Cowboys	17	23	19	81	34
Denver Broncos	16	33	7	85	37
Detroit Lions	15	12	7	92	22
Green Bay Packers	11	25	15	90	39
Houston Texans	16	27	8	88	23
Indianapolis Colts	9	62	21	64	50
Jacksonville Jaguars	11	51	13	81	33
Kansas City Chiefs	8	35	17	80	34
Miami Dolphins	16	53	10	71	26
Minnesota Vikings	11	13	14	100	35
New England Patriots	6	48	13	77	31
New Orleans Saints	24	43	10	59	21
New York Giants	13	25	8	80	27
New York Jets	10	32	11	74	27
Oakland Raiders	17	6	11	95	21
Philadelphia Eagles	12	13	16	107	37
Pittsburgh Steelers	8	42	12	70	42
San Diego Chargers	15	19	9	74	29
Seattle Seahawks	32	0	12	103	25
San Francisco 49ers	31	36	8	73	24
St. Louis Rams	16	47	9	87	24
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	13	0	10	121	38
Tennessee Titans	18	39	7	80	24
Washington Redskins	13	12	8	104	19

## Top Ranked Quarterbacks

If you're looking to become an elite passer, than you should probably start with a skilled quarterback. We've compiled the top 20 ranked quarterbacks in the chart below. The quarterbacks are sorted by overall rating. If you use the vision cone, note the quarterback's awareness rating since it affects the cone's size. Other important quarterback stats include throw power (distance), accuracy, speed (for all you Michael Vick scramblers out there!), and injury-some quarterbacks aren't as durable as others so be careful if you decide to take off downfield with the football!

PLAYER	TEAM	OVR	AWR	THP	THA	SPD
Peyton Manning	Indianapolis Colts	99	99	95	98	59
Tom Brady	New England Patriots	98	98	92	96	60
Carson Palmer	Cincinnati Bengals	95	89	97	95	56
Donovan McNabb	Philadelphia Eagles	94	84	95	87	79

Matt Hasselbeck	Seattle Seahawks	93	91	92	91	64
Ben Roethlisberger	Pittsburgh Steelers	92	87	92	88	70
Drew Brees	New Orleans Saints	92	88	89	95	62
Daunte Culpepper	Miami Dolphins	92	79	98	84	77
Jake Delhomme	Carolina Panthers	92	92	88	92	64
Michael Vick	Atlanta Falcons	91	77	96	79	93
Trent Green	Kansas City Chiefs	91	96	87	96	51
Marc Bulger	St. Louis Rams	90	90	89	94	57
Jake Plummer	Denver Broncos	90	85	89	89	71
Byron Leftwich	Jacksonville Jaguars	89	83	97	87	57
Eli Manning	New York Giants	88	83	93	89	61
Steve McNair	Baltimore Ravens	88	83	91	85	68
Brett Favre	Green Bay Packers	88	92	97	85	52
Kurt Warner	Arizona Cardinals	87	92	89	93	46
Drew Bledsoe	Dallas Cowboys	87	89	97	87	45
Mark Brunell	Washington Redskins	87	86	89	88	65

## The Huddle

Your decisions begin at the play call screen. It's important to mix up your play calling. If you are simply calling shotgun, four wide receiver formation every single time you pass the ball, a savvy opponent will pick up on that tendency and focus entirely on the pass. Expect good online opponents (or a friend sitting next to you) to check your offensive personnel before deciding on a defense. When your opponent sees three or four wide receiver, he's going to think pass.

To mix it up you'll want to call pass plays during expected run situations (such as 1st and 10 or 2nd and 2). And when you select a formation and personnel, consider a standard formation of two wide receivers, one or two running backs, and a tight end. Through play calling and personnel, you've disguised--as best as possible--your intended play call. Now your opponent may try and stuff the run but be burned deep by your fast wide receiver.

While choosing your formation, consider package options. If you have selected a team with a strong tight end, utilize a package that moves the tight end around the field, perhaps sending him on a wide receiver's route. You could also move around your best wide receiver to try and match him up against the defense's weaker cornerback.



## Exploit an opponent's aggressiveness with a play-action pass.

When selecting the specific pass play, consider your opponent's play calling. Crossing routes will work against man defenses or middle linebacker blitz defenses (hitting a receiver in the middle of the field becomes more challenging when that middle linebacker is sitting there in a zone defense). Does your opponent leave the flats unprotected? Take advantage with by utilizing your running back out of the backfield. Call plays that feature an outlet man, perhaps a quick out pattern or a running back in the flat. That way if you're pressured, you have a quick pass opportunity to dish off the ball and avoid the sack.

Play action is also a powerful offensive weapon. In a play action pass (marked "PA" on the pass plays), the quarterback (and even offensive linemen) simulates a run play but it's actually a pass play. The action can cause defenders to cheat against the run, which could leave a wide receiver open downfield.

Be cautious calling play action plays against a blitzing opponent. The play action animation isn't quick. Although some blitzing defenders may be confused and attempt to tackle the running back, others may ignore the runner and head straight for the quarterback and an easy sack. It's a nice weapon to have in your arsenal. Set it up with running plays then call a typical run formation with a play action pass and hit a speedy receiver on a go route.

### **At the Line**

As your players move to the line of scrimmage, there are two key moments to look for to help you



gauge where to best throw the ball. It's right before the snap of the ball and right after the snap of the ball.

Before the snap, see how the defenders adjust to your play call. If you notice a safety cheating up toward one of your wide receivers, the defensive play call is likely double coverage on that receiver (an opponent may feel it requires two defenders to handle Steve Smith!). If the safety moves to the line, it's probably a safety blitz (which could leave a receiver in single coverage for a deep pass).

At the snap of the ball, check defenders and their positions. Watch the linebackers. If they charge the line, they're likely on a blitz. Hit a wide receiver on a quick pass in the area where the linebacker vacated. Watch how the cornerbacks affect your receivers on the line. You may spot your receiver tangled up with a corner, which makes a play take longer giving more time for defenders to reach your quarterback.

Adjust the play if necessary with an audible or a hot route. With a hot route, you can change a wide receiver's route. If you spot single coverage, use the hot route to send a receiver deep. You may see a safety cheating over in double coverage on another receiver or coming into blitz. If you have single coverage, consider a hot route to a deep ball. Or if you spot a heavy blitz coming, change the route a quick out or in.

Check the safeties. If a safety comes in toward a receiver, he's in man coverage. If the safeties retreat, they're in zone and will likely double downfield receivers on post or go routes. Look to hit underneath receivers or running backs in the flat.

Focus your eyes on defenders not your receivers. Know where your receivers will be by remembering your play selection--your receivers will run those routes! During the play, by looking at the position and actions of defenders, you will know which receiver is open and which is not. Watching defenders will tell you when and where to throw the football.



Knowing when to toss a lob and when to toss a bullet pass is an important element for a successful passing attack.

## Completing the Pass Play

When deciding on where to put the ball, look for single coverage or mismatches. You have a much higher chance of completing a pass when there aren't multiple defenders draped over your receiving target. The position of the wide receiver is also important. If the defender is between the quarterback and the receiver, the ball will likely be knocked down or intercepted. For mismatches, look for receivers matched up against a linebacker or a nickel defenders (not as skilled as the starting cornerbacks).

Give your receivers a chance to run under the ball using a lob pass. Tap the button briefly to toss a lob pass or hold it down to fire a bullet pass. For instance, on a crossing route, toss a lob pass then control the receiver and run under the ball and make the catch. On a wide receiver screen or hook route, fire a bullet pass to get the ball into your receivers hands as quickly as possible. Don't throw a bullet pass if there are defenders in the passing lane. The ball's low trajectory could result in an interception.

Don't neglect precision passing. When you pass the ball, tap the left-analog stick or D-pad in the direction you want to place the ball. For instance, the receiver is running a crossing route from left to right. Throw the ball and tap the left analog stick to the right and your quarterback will lead the receiver. Combine this with selecting the receiver and sprinting to the ball.

Use your quarterback's legs to your advantage, especially if you have a mobile quarterback like Michael Vick, Vince Young, or Daunte Culpepper. Scrambling out of the pocket can buy extra time for receivers to get open and also give you a chance to run downfield if the field is clear. If you can't find a receiver open, wait until one breaks off his route and returns toward the quarterback. The defender is usually behind the receiver at this point. If the passing lane is clear, fire a bullet pass on the returning receiver. With no defender in front, it's almost always a completion.

## Top Ranked Wide Receivers

Who's the fastest receiver in Madden 07? Which receiver has the best hands? Which receiver has the elusiveness to catch a short pass and spin and juke his way through the secondary? The following chart lists the top receivers and their important statistics, including speed, catching, jumping, and special moves.

PLAYER	TEAM	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	CTH	JMP	AWR	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Steve Smith	Carolina Panthers	97	97	98	96	95	91	89	93	75	94	98
Chad Johnson	Cincinnati Bengals	97	96	95	95	96	94	92	91	45	90	96
Randy Moss	Oakland Raiders	97	98	97	96	95	99	89	94	55	90	95
Torry Holt	St. Louis Rams	97	93	95	95	98	89	97	90	50	86	89
Terrell Owens	Dallas Cowboys	97	93	96	94	94	91	92	91	80	86	87
Marvin Harrison	Indianapolis Colts	97	95	97	97	99	95	99	92	30	97	97
Hines Ward	Pittsburgh Steelers	94	89	91	94	95	86	93	88	85	85	90
Larry Fitzgerald	Arizona Cardinals	93	88	90	90	95	97	86	86	75	80	87
Anquan Boldin	Arizona Cardinals	92	88	91	91	94	90	88	90	75	82	86
Reggie Wayne	Indianapolis Colts	92	89	93	92	95	86	92	88	55	88	90
Santana Moss	Washington Redskins	92	97	98	98	92	85	87	88	30	96	97
Chris Chambers	Miami Dolphins	91	95	94	92	88	97	85	84	55	83	87

## Top Ranked Tight Ends

More and more teams are utilizing skilled pass-catching tight ends to exploit defensive coaches focused on stopping the run or defending deep balls against faster receivers. Some tight ends are their team's most potent weapon in the passing game--examples include Antonio Gates, Jeremy Shockey, and Alge Crumpler. Get them the ball! Note that Chris Cooley is a hybrid fullback and tight end, though mostly used as a pass catching tight end.

PLAYER	TEAM	OVR	SPD	ACC	CTH	TRK	AWR
Antonio Gates	San Diego Chargers	99	87	91	90	77	85
Chris Cooley	Washington Redskins	98	82	84	90	76	82
Jeremy Shockey	New York Giants	97	84	89	88	87	84
Tony Gonzalez	Kansas City Chiefs	97	84	85	92	72	94
Alge Crumpler	Atlanta Falcons	96	85	86	87	78	84
Todd Heap	Baltimore Ravens	95	79	86	88	72	86
Jason Witten	Dallas Cowboys	92	77	82	85	75	80

## The Running Game

With record-breaking running back Shaun Alexander on the cover, it shouldn't come as a surprise that the biggest new gameplay feature in Madden 07 involves the running game. On a run play, you can select a particular lead blocker, hike the ball, and attempt to pancake a defender to open a gaping hole for your running back.

Patience in the running game is still important. You're not going to break a long touchdown run every time you touch the ball. Astute play calling can give your running game an advantage. It's about giving your running game the best chance to succeed. If you spot the defense with a crowded line and eight defenders "in the box" then don't be surprised when you're tackled for a loss.

This section reveals team playbook running play types and provides tips on using Madden 07's lead blocking mode. You'll also find general strategies for maintaining a strong ground game as well as a compilation of the best running backs, fullbacks, and offensive linemen in the game.

### Team Playbooks: Running Plays

The following table dissects each NFL team playbook and reveals the number of different run play types available. Note that the QB Run column also includes the quarterback sneak plays.

TEAM	INSIDE	OUTSIDE	PITCH	COUNTER	DRAW	FB RUN	QB RUN
Arizona Cardinals	33	11	10	21	17	9	1
Atlanta Falcons	31	15	16	15	16	7	8
Baltimore Ravens	36	18	15	22	18	9	3
Buffalo Bills	32	13	17	16	14	8	1
Carolina Panthers	33	10	10	26	10	9	1
Chicago Bears	32	13	15	15	16	12	4
Cincinnati Bengals	31	14	16	17	18	11	1
Cleveland Browns	27	12	15	20	15	12	3
Dallas Cowboys	30	14	14	16	16	11	3
Denver Broncos	32	22	12	19	6	5	2
Detroit Lions	33	6	13	23	9	7	1
Green Bay Packers	33	8	14	17	20	9	3
Houston Texans	35	10	14	17	14	8	1
Indianapolis Colts	29	14	13	14	18	6	1
Jacksonville Jaguars	28	13	12	16	13	10	4
Kansas City Chiefs	33	16	14	14	19	8	2
Miami Dolphins	27	11	13	18	16	8	1
Minnesota Vikings	30	10	10	17	15	12	4
New England Patriots	28	12	13	18	16	8	1

New Orleans Saints	30	11	13	16	9	10	2
New York Giants	33	10	13	19	15	7	2
New York Jets	34	9	16	17	9	10	1
Oakland Raiders	32	11	11	16	11	8	1
Philadelphia Eagles	31	10	12	16	16	13	5
Pittsburgh Steelers	37	21	15	16	17	10	2
San Diego Chargers	31	10	14	21	11	11	1
Seattle Seahawks	32	6	14	19	9	20	1
San Francisco 49ers	34	8	11	13	8	10	2
St. Louis Rams	29	12	13	20	12	6	1
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	30	9	17	15	15	10	2
Tennessee Titans	35	13	7	17	14	6	4
Washington Redskins	36	13	9	24	14	6	1

## **In the Huddle**

Your running game decisions at the play call screen mirror your decisions in the passing game. Don't become one-dimensional and predictable. Running every single time out of two wide receiver, two running back, one tight end sets will alert an opponent to your tendencies. The same goes for game situations. Don't run on 1st and 10 every time. When it is 2nd and 15, your opponent is probably thinking pass: not a bad time for an unexpected run call.

Running against situation can create match up advantages. For instance, running out of a three or four wide receiver set can cause your opponent to think pass and select a nickel, dime, or quarter defense. This puts more defensive backs on the field (worse at tackling) and fewer linebackers (better at tackling). This is a huge plus for a good running back.

Call plays that take advantage of your running back's strengths. A slower, but more powerful back is better suited for inside runs (Dives, Whams) while a faster, but less powerful back excels in outside runs (or runs that take a bit longer to develop like Counters, Pitches). This isn't a black and white issue, though, since smaller backs can certainly pick up big yardage by running inside.

## **Before the Snap: Lead Blocker Control**



Lead blocker control allows you to open the holes for your running back.

Check the defense's alignment before snapping the ball. If the defense has overloaded one side that protects your outside run, flip the play at the line. Likewise if the defense is pinching the interior, consider calling an audible to another run play or even a pass play. You can use motion to move receivers, tight ends, or fullbacks into better blocking position. Use the hot route button to force a wide receiver to block in a particular direction, which could assist your run call.

Madden 07's new gameplay feature is lead blocking control. Before the snap, you can use the shoulder button to cycle through blocking options (lineman, tight ends, fullback) and choose to control the specific blocker. Hike the ball as normal but now you're in control of the blocker and can choose which defender to engage. At any point you can revert back to controlling the running back.

When using lead blocker control, know the design of the play. If it's an inside run between the left guard and left tackle then that's where you want to open the hole. Control one of the interior linemen and push the defender away from the other side to open a hole for the running back. On an outside run, you may control the tight end or fullback and push a defender inside so your running back can turn the corner and scamper down the sideline for a big gain.

If you have a lineman that isn't lined up with a defensive counterpart (depends on the defensive alignment), then use lead blocking control to engage a linebacker or even a defensive back. The fewer defenders available, the easier it will be to advance your running back for big yardage.

There are a few options you can tweak, such as making it automatically switch back to your running back after the lead blocker engages or to keep the camera viewpoint extended. You'll also note that another player (even online) can spot your selection of the lead blocker. This is a tip off that you're running and where you're running. Of course, it can be used as a mind game. There's nothing stopping you from selecting a blocker on a pass play. Hike the ball and you'll control the quarterback as normal while your opponent may be adjusting for your "fake out" run play.

## **After the Snap**

When engaging the defender in lead block mode, you can use the right thumb stick for an impact block or a cut block. An impact block is essentially a pancake block: shove the defender down and out of the way then find another defender to engage. A cut block sends your lineman lower to "cut" the defender's legs and drop him to the ground. Take note of your blocker's impact blocking rating if you hope to pancake defenders, which is usually the best option cause it keeps your blocker upright and ready to engage another defender.

When controlling the running back, follow the design of the play. That's where the hole should open up. However, if there's no running room, don't hesitate to switch direction and look for another running lane. Don't press the sprint button immediately. If you do you may outrun blockers and can weaken some of your running back's special maneuvers.

Be careful overusing special moves and the right analog stick. It would seem these moves make you more susceptible to fumbles. Dancing around the sidelines with special moves when a high profile defender lays on a big hit can easily lead to a game-changing fumble.



Use the new highlight stick to pull off your running back's special moves, like a juke to dodge an approaching defender.

Madden 07 adds the "highlight stick" to the right analog controls. Essentially this means the right analog stick can be used for special moves like juke moves and trucking (break tackles). Spins and jukes are ways of avoiding oncoming defenders. As the defender approaches, use a spin or juke away from other defenders and continue running down the field. Utilize "trucking" when smashing into a tackler. Running backs with high trucking can break through these tackles more easily. The stiff arm is also highly underrated. Top power running backs feature high stiff arm ratings. Hit the stiff arm just as the tackler hits you to shove him off.

### Top Ranked Running Backs

A consistent running game begins with a star running back. Some running backs excel in power, inside runs (higher trucking and stiff arm rating) while others are shifty and elusive and excel in outside runs (higher elusiveness, spin and juke move ratings). And some of the elite running backs can do both! The catch rating is also a valuable running back asset. Utilizing your running back in the passing game as short dump offs in the flat, screen passes, and even as downfield threats.

PLAYER	TEAM	OVR	SPD	ACC	AGI	AWR	ELU	CAR	CTH	TRK	BCV	SFA	SPM	JKM
Shaun Alexander	Seattle Seahawks	98	91	98	89	97	82	98	72	94	99	94	85	86



LaDainian Tomlinson	San Diego Chargers	97	95	97	95	90	93	87	85	90	98	88	93	97
Larry Johnson	Kansas City Chiefs	96	93	96	90	86	80	95	67	98	90	97	75	84
Edgerrin James	Arizona Cardinals	96	92	93	92	91	92	91	79	90	98	92	96	88
Clinton Portis	Washington Redskins	94	95	98	95	88	93	85	68	87	95	65	91	96
Tiki Barber	New York Giants	94	93	93	94	94	92	86	84	84	96	70	88	91
Rudi Johnson	Cincinnati Bengals	92	87	93	84	89	64	97	62	96	88	96	60	70
Carnell Williams	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	90	93	96	94	78	93	84	72	83	90	77	89	94
Domanick Davis	Houston Texans	90	92	95	93	85	94	85	79	82	92	66	90	92
Willis McGahee	Buffalo Bills	90	89	95	87	81	73	88	65	94	85	99	70	82
LaMont Jordan	Oakland Raiders	90	89	92	86	85	74	87	79	89	87	88	72	80
Warrick Dunn	Atlanta Falcons	90	96	98	96	91	98	91	84	66	98	75	97	96

## Top Ranked Fullbacks

Level a defender in lead blocking mode with one of the league's best fullbacks. A good fullback is a running back's best friend. Would LaDainian Tomlinson be the running back he is without Lorenzo Neal punishing defenders? The chart below compiles the best fullbacks in the game. Use these backs in lead blocking mode, as short yardage runners, and even as a receiver when mixing it up. We didn't include Redskins' Chris Cooley in this table since he's primarily used as a tight end.

PLAYER	TEAM	OVR	SPD	RBK	CTH	TRK	CAR	AWR
Lorenzo Neal	San Diego Chargers	99	60	85	62	79	70	90
Mack Strong	Seattle Seahawks	97	83	70	68	80	68	75
Fred Beasley	Miami Dolphins	97	72	62	75	85	77	90
William Henderson	Green Bay Packers	96	62	68	77	80	74	83
Justin Griffith	Atlanta Falcons	92	80	66	70	82	75	66
Dan Kreider	Pittsburgh Steelers	92	63	84	54	75	55	80
Tony Richardson	Minnesota Vikings	91	77	61	70	84	76	75
Mike Alstott	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	91	82	53	61	97	72	91
Jerald Sowell	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	90	67	68	77	69	64	73
Alan Ricard	Baltimore Ravens	89	65	82	64	72	64	72

## Top Ranked Offensive Lineman

This table reveals the best offensive linemen in the game. The lineman are sorted by overall rating but check statistics for pass and run blocking, impact blocking (pancake defenders!) and blocking strength and footwork.

PLAYER	TEAM	POSITION	OVR	STR	PBK	RBK	IBL	PBS	RBS	PBF	RBF	AWR
Walter Jones	Seattle Seahawks	LT	99	97	98	97	97	99	97	94	97	95

Steve Hutchinson	Minnesota Vikings	LG	98	97	88	98	98	95	98	86	91	90
Alan Faneca	Pittsburgh Steelers	LG	98	96	94	97	97	94	98	86	93	94
Olin Kreutz	Chicago Bears	C	98	92	92	93	93	95	93	95	91	91
Will Shields	Kansas City Chiefs	RG	97	91	93	94	94	95	95	87	95	97
Orlando Pace	St. Louis Rams	LT	97	95	97	91	85	97	91	97	96	96
Jeff Saturday	Indianapolis Colts	C	96	90	97	88	78	95	88	98	87	95
Mike Wahle	Carolina Panthers	LG	96	94	92	94	94	94	94	93	85	87
Jonathan Ogden	Baltimore Ravens	LT	96	98	92	98	93	98	99	80	79	95
Willie Anderson	Cincinnati Bengals	RT	95	97	91	98	95	93	98	80	83	97
Marco Rivera	Dallas Cowboys	RG	95	94	92	95	90	93	95	78	80	95
LeCharles Bentley	Cleveland Browns	C	95	93	90	93	96	94	95	92	91	84
Kevin Mawae	Tennessee Titans	C	95	92	92	90	90	94	93	80	83	97
Tom Nalen	Denver Broncos	C	95	84	87	92	97	85	85	93	98	95
Tarik Glenn	Indianapolis Colts	LT	95	95	98	93	87	98	93	98	93	92

## Chapter 4 - Defense

A strong defense can win a game on its own. Prevent the other team from scoring points and put a few on the board via turnovers, defensive returns for touchdowns, or just great field position and that's likely enough to win the game. A great offense could put up 45 points a game but if it can't stop anyone on defense then all those offensive fireworks won't matter.

This section covers the defensive side of the ball. We'll compile the best and worst defenses in Madden 07, provide a breakdown of the formations in each defensive playbook and for each team, and tell you when to select 4-3, Nickel, or Dollar sets. You'll also find general strategies for stuffing your opponent's pass or run plays and a list of the top defensive players in Madden 07.

### Top Ranked Defenses

Having trouble stopping the opposition? Here are the best defenses in Madden 07 sorted by defensive rating.

TEAM	CONFERENCE AND DIVISION	DEFENSE RATING
San Diego Chargers	AFC West	97
Pittsburgh Steelers	AFC North	96
Baltimore Ravens	AFC North	95
Chicago Bears	NFC North	94
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	NFC South	93
Carolina Panthers	NFC South	92
New England Patriots	AFC East	91
Philadelphia Eagles	NFC East	90
Seattle Seahawks	NFC West	90

## Worst Ranked Defenses

If you want a challenge in stopping a high powered offense, consider one of these teams: they're the worst ranked defenses in Madden 07.

TEAM	CONFERENCE AND DIVISION	DEFENSE RATING
San Francisco 49ers	NFC West	73
Houston Texans	AFC South	74
Detroit Lions	NFC North	78
Oakland Raiders	AFC West	78
St. Louis Rams	NFC West	78
Tennessee Titans	AFC South	79
New Orleans Saints	NFC South	80
New York Giants	NFC East	80
New York Jets	AFC East	83
Kansas City Chiefs	AFC West	83

## Defensive Formations and Packages

In Madden 07, each team uses a specific defensive playbook that includes specific formations. You can switch defensive playbooks at the team selection screen. Note that two teams, the Baltimore Ravens and New England Patriots have their own playbooks (the Patriots' playbook features unique Nickel formations).

PLAYBOOK	4-3 DEFENSES	3-4 DEFENSES	46 DEFENSES	NICKEL DEFENSES	DIME DEFENSES	DOLLAR DEFENSES	QUARTER DEFENSES
4-3	Normal, Over, Under	None	Normal	Normal, Strong, 3-3-5	Normal, Flat	Normal	Normal, 3 Deep
3-4	None	Normal, Over, Under, Solid, Even, Stack	None	3-3-5, Strong, 2-4-5	Normal	Normal	Normal, 3 Deep
Cover 2	Normal, Under, Over	Over	None	Normal, 3-3-5, Strong	Normal, Flat	Normal	Normal
46	Normal, Under	Even, Solid	Normal, Bear	Normal, Strong, 3-3-5	Normal, Flat	Normal	Normal
Multiple D	Normal, Under, Over	Normal, Under	None	Normal, Strong, 3-3-5	Dime, Flat	Normal	Normal, 3 Deep
Baltimore Ravens	Normal, Under	Even, Solid	Normal, Bear	Normal, Strong, 3-3-5	Normal, Flat	Normal	Normal
New England Patriots	None	Normal, Over, Under, Solid, Even, Stack	None	2-4-5, 3-3-5, 1-5-5, 1-5-5 Prowl	Normal	Normal	Normal, 3 Deep

The table below reveals the default defensive playbook for each NFL team in Madden 07. There are a few changes from last year, including specific playbooks for the Ravens and Patriots.

<b>TEAM</b>	<b>DEFAULT DEFENSIVE PLAYBOOK</b>
Arizona Cardinals	4-3
Atlanta Falcons	4-3
Baltimore Ravens	Bal - Ravens
Buffalo Bills	4-3
Carolina Panthers	4-3
Chicago Bears	Cover 2
Cincinnati Bengals	4-3
Cleveland Browns	3-4
Dallas Cowboys	3-4
Denver Broncos	4-3
Detroit Lions	Cover 2
Green Bay Packers	4-3
Houston Texans	4-3
Indianapolis Colts	Cover 2
Jacksonville Jaguars	4-3
Kansas City Chiefs	Cover 2
Miami Dolphins	Multiple D
Minnesota Vikings	Cover 2
New England Patriots	NE - Patriots
New Orleans Saints	4-3
New York Giants	4-3
New York Jets	3-4
Oakland Raiders	4-3
Philadelphia Eagles	4-3
Pittsburgh Steelers	3-4
San Diego Chargers	3-4
San Francisco 49ers	3-4
Seattle Seahawks	4-3
St. Louis Rams	4-3
Tampa Bay Buccaneers	Cover 2
Tennessee Titans	4-3
Washington Redskins	4-3

Knowing when and how to use each defensive formation will help keep your defense in good match-up situations. But it can be guesswork since your opponent may call a passing formation but still run. Keep your opponent's tendencies in mind when selecting your formation but consider the offensive personnel carefully to have the best chance of stuffing the play.

In general, linemen and linebackers are your run stoppers. If you want to stop the run, call formations that feature more lineman and linebackers. In general, linemen and linebackers are

better at tackling and pursuing than pass coverage. Defensive backs protect against the pass. These players have high man and zone coverage ratings but poorer tackling ratings. When you believe the offense will pass, select a defense with more defensive backs.

The table below covers all formations, reveals the personnel and packages, and offers some tips on when and when not to use them.

<b>FORMATION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PACKAGES</b>	<b>ADVANTAGES</b>	<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>
Goal Line	Run prevent in short yardage situations, specifically third or fourth and short or on the goal line.	Safety Swap, Jumbo, 3 DT, Strong, LB Ends	Packed defense to prevent the short run. There are a lot of tacklers near the line of scrimmage.	Audible to another defense if the offense changes formation. So many defenders near the line can be disastrous if a running back breaks through.
4-3 Normal	Four defensive linemen, three linebackers, four defensive backs.	CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Flip, LB Flip, DE Flip	A balanced run and pass defense. Good against inside runs and short to medium passing.	Avoid using against four or more receiver sets (even three is risky). Blitzing linebackers can leave slants and outside runs open.
4-3 Over, Under	Moves an outer linebacker to the line for five defensive linemen, two linebackers, and four defensive backs (Over and Under refers to different sides of the line).	CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Flip, LB Flip, DE Flip,	Increased pass rush possibilities. Protect against inside and outside runs.	Vulnerable to the passing game and fewer linebackers in the middle could mean fewer tacklers if the back breaks the line.
3-4 Normal	Three defensive linemen, four linebackers, and four defensive backs.	CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Flip, OLB Flip, MLB Flip, DE Flip	A balanced run and pass defense. Defends outside runs and flat passes.	Softer pass rush, though more blitz variation with extra linebackers. Vulnerable to multiple receiver sets.
3-4 Over, Under	Three defensive linemen, four linebackers, and four defensive backs. An outside linebacker tightens up the edge of the line (Over and Under refers to different sides of the line).	CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Flip, OLB Flip, MLB Flip, DE Flip	Increased pass rush with linebacker at the line.	Fewer linebackers defending the short passes. Vulnerable to multiple receiver sets.
3-4 Solid	Three defensive linemen, four linebackers, and four defensive backs. Both outside linebackers crowd the line.	CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Flip, OLB Flip, MLB Flip, DE Flip	Increased pass rush opportunities and disguised blitzing. Stuff the run with increased penetration.	Vulnerable to quick passes if outside linebackers blitz. Avoid against multiple receiver sets.

3-4 Even	Three defensive linemen, four linebackers, and four defensive backs. Outside linebackers crowd the line and middle linebackers tighten up.	CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Flip, OLB Flip, MLB Flip, DE Flip	Balanced run stoppage for inside and outside runs.	Tighter formation could be vulnerable to the pass.
3-4 Stack	Three defensive linemen, four linebackers, and four defensive backs. Resembles a 4-3 in alignment.	CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Flip, OLB Flip, MLB Flip, DE Flip	A 4-3 look for your excellent linebackers. Variation in pass rushing for fast outside linebackers.	Avoid using against heavy passing situations.
46 Normal	Four defensive linemen, three linebackers, four defensive backs but shifts one safety up to the linebacker position leaving one safety deep.	Speed, OLB Swap	Similar to 4-3 but safety provides extra run stopping support. Pressuring defense.	Vulnerable to deep passes with just one safety back. Avoid using against heavy passing situations and multiple receiver sets.
46 Bear	Six defensive linemen (some are linebackers on the line), one linebacker, three defensive backs with one safety playing in a linebacker spot leaving one deep safety.	46 Swap, LB/DE Swap, LB Coverage	Combines the 46 Normal and 4-3 Over defenses. Increased pressure along the line for stronger run defense and pressure.	Weak pass defense. Avoid using against multiple receiver sets.
Nickel Normal	Four defensive linemen, two linebackers, five defensive backs.	Strong Nickel, Strong Shift, CB Swap, Safety Swap, LOLB Right, LOLB Left, LB Swap	An additional defensive back helps protect against the pass. Be sure the "nickel back" is lined up against the slot receiver. Optimum against 3 WR sets.	Losing a linebacker means losing a good tackler. Use packages to ensure best corners are against best receivers. Your nickel back isn't as skilled as your starters, usually.
Nickel Strong	Same as nickel but shifts the safety toward the strong side.	Strong Nickel, Strong Shift, CB Swap, Safety Swap, LOLB Right, LOLB Left	Increased safety help on the strong side. Helps provide additional coverage on a stacked formation (where more receivers and/or tight ends are on one side).	Similar to the standard nickel. Also the safety shifted over could leave the other side open, especially if there are backs on pass patterns.

Nickel 1-5-5, 1-5-5 Prowl	One defensive lineman, five linebackers, five defensive backs. Crowded line of scrimmage with basically one MLB (prowl with two). Found in the New England playbook.	DE Pass Rush, MLB Swap (MLB 2 in Prowl), OLB Swap, CB Swap, Safety Swap, SS Nickel, FS Nickel	Five linebackers help defend against a run and five defensive backs help defend the pass. Allows for some blitzing variation.	Can be a weak run defense if your linebackers focus on coverage.
Nickel 2-4-5	Two defensive linemen, four linebackers, five defensive backs.	DE Pass Rush, MLB Swap, OLB Swap, CB Swap, Safety Swap, SS Nickel, FS Nickel	Added linebackers help defend against an unexpected run. In the 3-4 playbook because of the team's typical linebacker skill.	Need to increase pass rush with linebacker pressure.
Nickel 3-3-5	Three defensive linemen, three linebackers, and five defensive backs.	4th CB, OLB Flip, Safety NB, Safety Flip, DE Flip, CB Flip	An added linebacker to defend the run or short passing.	Need to increase pass rush with linebacker pressure.
Dime Normal	Four defensive linemen, one linebacker, six defensive backs.	ROLB, LOLB, CB Swap, LB Pass Rush	Six defensive backs to counter the passing game. Use against four or more wide receiver sets.	Weak against an unexpected run.
Dime Flat	Same as dime but closes safeties in and backs off corners.	ROLB, LOLB, CB Swap, DE Swap, DT Swap, LB Rush	Defenders are tighter and closer to the line to protect against run or short passing. Good for end zone defense.	Weaker against deep passing.
Quarters Normal	Three defensive linemen, one linebacker, seven defensive backs.	Linebackers, LB Pass Rush, LOLB, ROLB, CB Flip, Safety Swap, Slot CB Flip, SS Tight,	Seven defensive backs as a pass prevent defense.	Easy to run against.
Quarters 3 Deep	Same as quarters but shifts a defensive back into a deep safety position for three deep safeties.	ROLB Swap, CB Swap, Safety Swap, Coverage Swap, Slot Swap, LB Pass Rush, LOLB Swap	Three deep safeties to protect against the deep ball. Use in long yardage situations.	Easy to run against.
Dollar Normal	Eight defensive backs.	4th CB, MLB/ROLB Swap, MLB/LOLB Swap, Safety Flip, CB Strong RT, CB Strong LT,	Eight players focused on stopping the pass. Use in certain passing situations (long yardage) or even in the red zone to crowd the end zone.	You have a lot of bad tacklers on the field if your opponent runs the ball!

# Defensive Shifts

After you've called your defensive formation and personnel, you can still make adjustments to your current alignment. You can make shifts to the line, linebackers, or defensive backs to guard against your opponent's tendencies or expected play.

POSITION	SHIFTS (LEFT STICK)	COMMENTARY
Defensive Line	Shift outside tackles, shift tight between tackles, shift line left, shift line right	Against an expected inside run, shift line tighter; against an expected outside run, spread line out. Shift line toward a left or right run or toward a tight end to bump him at the line.
Linebackers	Spread linebackers out, shift linebackers in tight, shift linebackers left, shift linebackers right	Against an expected inside run, shift linebackers tighter; against an expected outside run, spread linebackers out. Shift linebackers left or right against corresponding run or to help free up blitzing linebackers.
Defensive Backs	Put defensive backs into bump and run (tighter coverage at line), put defensive backs in loose coverage, show blitz or align coverage.	Play tight coverage when your defensive backs have an advantage over opponent's receivers; play looser against expected deep passes. Show blitz to disguise coverage and perhaps force opponent to throw earlier. Align to line defenders up against their assignment.

By using the right stick, you can use "hot routes" for the different defenders.

POSITION	HOT ROUTES (RIGHT STICK)	COMMENTARY
Defensive Line	Crash the line left, crash the line right, crash the line outside, or crash the line inside.	Adjust the line depending on where you think the run play will go. Crash left or right against runs expected in those directions. Crashing outside can help guard against either and inside against inside runs.
Linebackers	Blitz the left linebacker, blitz the right linebacker, hook zones for all linebackers (up), blitz all linebackers (down).	Change your defensive call at the linebacker position with these hot routes. Add pass rush to the left or right side (or all) with linebacker pressure or call them back into a zone to protect the middle of the field.
Defensive Backs	Shift deep zones left, right, or out.	Shift deep zone coverage toward the side of the field with more receivers.

## Managing your Defense

Bolster your defense with these general strategies. These include tips on play calling, containment, and choosing your coverage.

- Offensive personnel often dictate your defensive play calling decisions. An opponent could certainly call pass plays out of goal line formation or run plays out of four wide receiver shotgun formation but you must put your defense in the best position to counter the play. If you see the offensive personnel as four wide receivers, call a nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar defense. If you see the offensive personnel as all tight ends and running backs, counter with a 4-3 or 3-4 defense. These aren't always the correct decisions but if you see that it's



2nd and 1 and assume a run and call goal line and then the offense sends out four wide receivers, your personnel aren't equipped to stop the play.

- Madden 07 expands player stats considerably and breaks down defensive players with block shedding, pursuit, and coverage statistics. Check your favorite team's defensive players and know which defender excels in man or zone coverage. Stronger man coverage cornerbacks can be left against your opponent's top receivers while weaker man coverage corners may need extra zone or double-team help. Who's your fastest linebacker with excellent block shedding to use for aggressive blitzing? Know your personnel.
- If you're up against a player who likes crossing routes through the field's center, call defensive plays with middle linebackers in zone coverage. That will protect the middle of the field but can leave the route open if the quarterback is patient enough (couple with a blitz package to put pressure on the quarterback). If your opponent uses a lot of flat passes, call a zone defense that moves linebackers or corners in the flat. Watch deep outs or fades against zone coverage.
- Counter a team with one excellent wide receiver with double coverage. There are many defensive plays that will double certain receiver positions. The safety (usually) will move up to help defend against the particular receiver. Many receivers are skilled enough to conquer double coverage but it's a play that could lead to an interception against a careless quarterback.



Online opponents love to scramble. You must counter that ability with careful defensive play selection.

- Defending against the scrambling quarterback can be a challenge. Look for defenses with outside blitzes, such as a corner blitz, or defenses that use "spies" that will follow the quarterback around the field to help against the fleet footed signal callers (the speed of Vick and Vince Young are especially dangerous). An outside blitzing defender can help push the quarterback back to the inside where defensive help will be found (or if you lucky make the tackle). Avoid dive tackling the quarterback and instead just contain until help arrives. This would be important for any tackles. Don't dive haphazardly. Force a runner right or left instead of downfield to give other defenders time to shed blocks and reach the ball carrier.
- There's no "best defender to control" in the game. It's a personal preference. Just be sure that you follow the defender's role. If the defender is assigned to man coverage, then you need to follow the assignment or you will leave a receiver open. If the defender is in zone coverage, remain in the zone or a receiver could enter the zone and find it quite empty.

## Top Ranked Defensive Linemen

Here are the top ranked defensive linemen available in Madden 07.

PLAYER	TEAM	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	AGI	TAK	PMV	FMV	BSH	PRS	AWR
Dwight Freeney	Indianapolis Colts	RE	98	87	76	87	76	87	99	83	97	84
Julius Peppers	Carolina Panthers	LE	97	86	82	88	77	94	98	89	90	75
Richard Seymour	New England Patriots	RE	97	72	92	70	88	98	91	93	87	88
Michael Strahan	New York Giants	LE	97	76	86	72	85	96	97	92	88	96
Casey Hampton	Pittsburgh Steelers	DT	97	58	98	59	97	99	67	98	75	86
Marcus Stroud	Jacksonville Jaguars	DT	97	66	94	67	89	97	87	97	82	80
Jamal Williams	San Diego Chargers	DT	96	54	98	49	93	98	67	96	70	88
Jason Taylor	Miami Dolphins	RE	96	82	74	78	83	90	97	85	88	91
Simeon Rice	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	RE	95	84	74	78	76	83	97	82	92	93
Shaun Rogers	Detroit Lions	DT	95	63	96	64	92	95	75	97	73	80

## Top Ranked Linebackers

This chart compiles the top ranked linebackers in Madden 07.

PLAYER	TEAM	POSITION	OVR	SPD	STR	ACC	AGI	TAK	BSH	PRS	AWR
Ray Lewis	Baltimore Ravens	MLB	98	83	75	83	83	96	99	99	98
Brian Urlacher	Chicago Bears	MLB	98	88	78	93	88	95	96	98	92
Joey Porter	Pittsburgh Steelers	ROLB	97	85	77	95	82	90	91	92	92

Derrick Brooks	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	ROLB	97	82	72	86	86	89	84	97	98
Zach Thomas	Miami Dolphins	MLB	96	75	78	80	74	96	97	99	98
Keith Bulluck	Tennessee Titans	ROLB	96	86	73	90	87	90	92	94	86
Julian Peterson	Seattle Seahawks	ROLB	96	66	74	90	87	91	90	97	88
Al Wilson	Denver Broncos	MLB	95	86	75	88	83	94	87	96	92
Keith Brooking	Atlanta Falcons	ROLB	95	82	79	85	76	92	95	90	90
Takeo Spikes	Buffalo Bills	ROLB	95	82	84	83	79	92	99	91	92

## Top Ranked Defensive Backs

Here are the top ranked cornerbacks and safeties in Madden 07.

PLAYER	TEAM	POSITION	OVR	SPD	ACC	ACC	MCV	ZCV	TAK	JMP	AWR
Champ Bailey	Denver Broncos	CB	99	98	98	99	99	95	65	94	93
Ed Reed	Baltimore Ravens	SS	99	93	92	93	90	97	67	91	93
Troy Polamalu	Pittsburgh Steelers	SS	98	93	95	91	75	85	87	85	80
Brian Dawkins	Philadelphia Eagles	FS	98	90	92	92	85	98	80	87	92
Darren Sharper	Minnesota Vikings	FS	96	88	87	85	84	96	70	84	92
Chris McAlister	Baltimore Ravens	CB	95	94	97	95	91	95	68	97	92
Sean Taylor	Washington Redskins	FS	95	91	94	93	85	96	85	95	71
Roy Williams	Dallas Cowboys	SS	94	85	90	82	55	80	90	78	85
Rodney Harrison	New England Patriots	SS	94	82	84	78	58	88	92	70	94
Ronde Barber	Tampa Bay Buccaneers	CB	94	88	95	94	83	99	70	91	95

## Chapter 5 - Online Strategies

All-Madden difficulty can put up quite a challenge but you won't see some of the unpredictable situations you'll find against a human opponent. You may find an online opponent blitzing every single play on defense or scrambling with the quarterback on every offensive play (expect a lot of this!). This section provides some tips on navigating the unpredictable play of online opponents.

- Consider your team selection as well as your opponent's team selection. Expect to face a lot of Atlanta Falcons online! Madden players just can't resist Vick's speedy legs. You'll face a lot of drop back, scramble around, and either chuck it 50 yards downfield or run outside and around your sluggish line and linebackers. Counter these players with outside blitzes and containment defenses (especially those that include spies that follow the quarterback). Don't go for dive tackles or you'll miss and Vick will pick up another 20 yards running the football.
- If you're a fan of the NFL you'll know who's who on each team and know who to get the ball to on your offense and who to watch out for on your opponent's offense. Know the playmakers. Know which of your receivers can stretch a defense deep and which is better on hooks or out patterns that don't require game-breaking speed. Know your opponent's

best player and game plan to shut down that player.

- You can use Madden 07's new lead blocker feature online; however, realize that your opponent can see the "yellow circle" that's selecting your lead blocker. This obviously will tip your opponent off to a run as well as the direction of the run. You can use that information to your advantage, though, and toggle through blockers on a pass play. When you hike the ball, you'll gain control of the quarterback immediately as if you hadn't even selected lead blocker mode.



You can use lead blocker online, though your opponent will see the marker. Use the new mode even when passing to disguise your play call.

- When you're up against an opponent who likes to make frequent defensive adjustments, such as showing blitz or aligning coverage, don't hesitate to quick snap the ball. A defense that's shifting around can be caught out of position. Against an opponent who blitzes frequently, be wary of the play action pass. The animation is rather slow and gives a lot of time for blitzing defenders to reach your quarterback. Focus on quick passes, such as receiver screens or slants to counter the blitz.
- The mental game begins at the coin toss. A lot of online players will elect to kickoff when they've won the coin toss. Kicking off to start the game means getting the ball first at the start of the second half. Many players try to capitalize on this by scoring late in the second half and hoping to put up more points at the start of the second half. This is also a good

strategy for teams with strong defenses because you put a solid unit on the field to start the game. Shut down your opponent here and you further elevate the advantage.

- Observe your opponent's tendencies throughout the game. Don't be rigid in your game plan. If something's not working, change it. Figure out how to counter your opponent's strategy. If your opponent likes to play run defense when you're on 1st and 10, call a pass play disguised as a run play. If your opponent blitzes heavily, call formations with additional blockers or plays with quick outlet passes. Burn your opponent enough times and he'll have to lay off the blitz. When on defense, check your opponent's personnel before calling a defensive formation. On offense, be unpredictable and pass in expected run situations and run in expected pass situations.
- Utilize the clock to your advantage. The pro football game has a long play clock. If you're ahead late in the game and have the ball, don't rush things. Call your play, get to the line, and run down some clock before hiving the ball. On the flip side, use your time outs wisely. You may need them on offense to make a last second comeback or on defense to try and stop the opposition for one last try for the win.

## Chapter 6 - Achievements

This section reveals Madden 07 Xbox 360 achievements and completion tips. The table below reveals all Madden 07 achievements, corresponding description and gamer score.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>GAMER POINTS</b>
Madden Gamer Level 2	Successfully reach a Madden Gamer Level of 2	10
Madden Gamer Level 10	Successfully reach a Madden Gamer Level of 10	20
Madden Gamer Level 20	Successfully reach a Madden Gamer Level of 20	40
Madden Gamer Level 30	Successfully reach a Madden Gamer Level of 30	70
Madden Gamer Level 40	Successfully reach a Madden Gamer Level of 40	85
Madden Gamer Level 50	Successfully reach a Madden Gamer Level of 50	100
Season Record: Receive TD	Set the season record for Receiving Touchdowns	20
Season Record: Receiving Yards	Set the season record for Receiving Yards	20
Season Record: Receptions	Set the season record for Receptions	20
Season Record: Rush Touchdowns	Set the season record for Rushing Touchdowns	20
Season Record: Rush Yards	Set the season record for Rushing Yards	20
Season Record: Pass Yards	Set the season record for Pass Yards	20
Season Record: Pass TD	Set the season record for Passing Touchdowns	20
Season Record: Sacks	Set the season record for Sacks	20
Season Record: INT's	Set the season record for Interceptions	20
Game Record: Interceptions	Set the single game record for Interceptions	10
Game Record: Sacks	Set the single game record for Sacks	10
Game Record: Pass Yards	Set the single game record for Passing Yards	10
Game Record: Pass Touchdowns	Set the single game record for Pass Touchdowns	10

Game Record: Rushing Yards	Set the single game record for Rushing Yards	10
Game Record: Rush TD's	Set the single game record for Rushing Touchdowns	10
Game Record: Receptions	Set the single game record for Receptions	10
Game Record: Receiving Yards	Set the single game record for Receiving Yards	10
Game Record: Receiving TD's	Set the single game record for Receiving Touchdowns	10
All-Madden Shut Out	Pitch a shut out on All-Madden difficulty	10
30 Years of Franchise	Complete 30 years of Franchise mode	100
Perfect Season	Successfully complete a Perfect Season	30
Super Bowl Win	Win the Super Bowl	30
Import Draft Class	Successfully import a Draft Class	10
Mini-Games	Enter the Mini-Games mode	5
Create-A-Player	Successfully create a player	5
Live Opponent	Play a Live Opponent game	5
SS Season: 30 Pass TDs	30 Pass TDs in Superstar Mode season	10
SS Season: 10 Receiving TDs	10 Receiving TDs in Superstar Mode season	10
SS Season: 1400 Rush Yards	1400 Rushing Yards in Superstar Mode season	10
SS Season: 140 Tackles	140 Tackles in Superstar Mode season	10
SS Season: 16 Sacks	16 Sacks in Superstar Mode season	10
SS Season: 7 Forced Fumbles	7 Forced Fumbles in Superstar Mode season	10
SS Season: 7 INTs	7 INTs in Superstar Mode season	10
SS Career: 200 Pass TD's	200 Pass TD's in Superstar Mode career	20
SS Career: 60 Receiving TDs	60 Receiving TDs in Superstar Mode career	20
SS Career: 10000 Rush Yards	10000 Rush Yards in Superstar Mode career	20
SS Career: 500 Tackles	500 Tackles in Superstar Mode career	20
SS Career: 100 Sacks	100 Sacks in Superstar Mode career	20
SS Career: 20 Forced Fumbles	20 Forced Fumbles in Superstar Mode career	20
SS Career: 25 Interceptions	25 Interceptions in Superstar Mode career	20

Madden 07 increases the achievement difficulty somewhat over last year's game. However, there is a "workaround" of sorts to clear out a large chunk of the achievements with very little effort on your part (so much for difficulty). You can reach the highest Madden level and break season and game records through simulations. Select franchise mode and select every single team in the league. Then just start simulating seasons.



A few achievements just require you test out some new Madden 07 features, such as Live Opponent or the mini-games.

There's a 100 point achievement for completing 30 years franchise mode so that's a good target number. Keep simulating seasons until you reach 30, which will unlock that achievement and should knock out many of the single season and single game record achievements as well. Simulating a season will also knock out the Super Bowl win and, if you're patient and don't mind restarting each week, could complete the perfect season.

The few 5 point achievements are easy. Just enter the mini-games section (you don't even have to play) to unlock one achievement; create-a-player to unlock a second 5 point achievement; and play a Live Opponent game. You need a Gold account to complete this achievement it seems. Go to the Play Now screen, select a team and hit LB on your controller to connect to live and unlock the achievement-without having to play the game.

Superstar mode achievements can be simulated as well but are much more time consuming to achieve (since there are different positions). You can tweak AI sliders or even move penalty sliders, such as Offside, to zero, if you want to do it without simulation but still easily. Getting sacks or tackles is cake with no offside penalties! Just line up next to the quarterback or running back, without touching the offensive player, and get an easy sack or tackle after the ball is snapped.