

TOP 17 TIGHT ENDS FOR 2007

A good TE can be as effective as a #2 WR for a fantasy football team. Owners should be alert that when the run on TE's start, as they often have, a domino effect which occurs in the middle rounds of the draft. Just be careful not to reach for a TE if a better prospect is available.

NAME	TM	HT	WT	AGE	YR	BYE	AV
1. Antonio Gates	SD	6-4	260	27	5	7	10%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	SD	16	71	924	13.0	9	
2005	SD	15	89	1101	12.4	10	
2004	SD	15	81	964	11.9	13	
L3Y AVG			80	996	12.5	11	

After a standout 2005 Gates numbers dropped some as the Chargers let Tomlinson carry the offense in order to let Rivers develop. Gates spent the year improving his blocking skills which can only help keep him among the best TE's in the NFL. Don't expect any dramatic change in the offense for SD as Norv Turner installed it when he was there as an OC

2. Tony Gonzalez	KC	6-5	251	31	11	8	9%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	KC	15	73	900	12.3	5	
2005	KC	16	78	905	11.6	2	
2004	KC	16	102	1258	12.3	7	
L3Y AVG			84	1021	12.2	5	

Gonzalez is the backbone of the Chiefs passing game & while he is on the wrong side of 30 he remains one of the elite TE's in the NFL due to his conditioning. The Chiefs offense goes thru him & RB Johnson so while Gonzalez isn't the king of the TE's he's still one of the top 3 & a solid option for any fantasy owner.

3. Todd Heap	BAL	6-5	252	27	7	8	8%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	BAL	16	73	765	10.5	6	
2005	BAL	16	75	855	11.4	7	
2004	BAL	6	27	303	11.2	3	
L3Y AVG			58	648	11.2	5	

Heap is a big target with nice hands but problems with the aging OL had him do more blocking than usual & he ran shorter routes overall. McNair is used to working in an offense reliant on the TE's but the continuing evolution of Clayton & the shift from power to speed with McGahee on the roster may take a few touches away from him. Heap is a solid option for the TE spot each week & is equivalent to a borderline #2 fantasy WR.

4. Vernon Davis	SF	6-3	256	23	2	6	8%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	SF	10	20	265	13.3	3	

After catching everyones eye by having the best combine EVER for a TE, Davis went to SF & missed 6 games with a broken leg in his rookie season. He figures to be the prime receiving option for the 49ers TY as the WR corps is rather unimpressive. Fantasy owners shouldn't be afraid to take a chance on someone with immense potential.

5. Jeremy Shockey	NYG	6-5	255	27	6	9	8%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	NYG	15	66	623	9.4	7	
2005	NYG	15	65	891	13.7	7	
2004	NYG	15	61	666	10.9	6	
L3Y AVG			64	727	11.4	7	

While Shockey has yet to start a full 16 games in the NFL he is one of the tougher TE's in the league & plays hurt & does go for the tough catches. That said since he works out in Miami in the offseason he doesn't get into a comfort level with Manning until later in the year. Shockey hasn't lived up to his hype but he's still a top 10 fantasy TE.

6. Kellen Winslow	CLE	6-4	250	24	4	6	7%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	CLE	16	89	875	9.8	3	
2005	CLE	1	N	J	U	R	E
2004	CLE	2	5	50	10.0	0	
L3Y AVG			9	47	463	9.9	2

Winslow tied the Browns record for receptions in a season set by Ozzie Newsome & led the NFL in receptions by a TE in 2006. Winslow proved he has elite talent but there has been a lot of speculation about how healthy his right knee is after having microfracture surgery on it in January. He is expected to have an even bigger role in the 2007 offense which means he is an elite fantasy TE but owners should keep a good backup around just to be safe.

7. Alge Crumpler	ATL	6-2	262	29	7	8	7%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	ATL	16	56	780	13.9	8	
2005	ATL	16	65	877	13.5	5	
2004	ATL	14	48	774	16.1	6	
L3Y AVG			56	800	14.3	6	

Crumpler is the most reliable receiver on the Falcons roster. He is Vick's favorite target due to his size & ability to dominate LB's & roll with Vick when he gets out of the pocket. He was slowed by knee & shoulder injuries during the season & isn't expected to be very active in the preseason but Petrino did use his TE's at Louisville & Crumpler has some solid promise here.

8. Chris Cooley	WAS	6-3	250	25	4	4	7%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	WAS	16	57	734	12.9	6	
2005	WAS	16	71	774	10.9	7	
2004	WAS	16	37	314	8.5	6	
L3Y AVG			16	55	607	11.0	6

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Cooley has been the Redskins #2 receiver the past 2 years & is a key part of the Redskins offense as the other options behind Santana Moss have been a major disappointment. Cooley has surprising speed & his stats should be slightly better than 2006 as he'll be working with a fairly inexperienced QB in Jason Campbell who'll check down to his TE more than an experienced QB would.

9. Ben Watson	NE	6-3	253	26	4	10	7%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	NE	13	49	643	13.1	3	
2005	NE	15	29	441	15.2	4	
2004	NE	1	2	16	8.0	0	
L3Y AVG			10	27	367	13.6	2

Watson sat out 3 games with a knee sprain but is widely considered a rising star amongst TE's in the NFL. He's not quite the blocker that Graham was but has better hands & is more athletic. While his fantasy ranking dips somewhat due to the WR additions keep in mind he has more chemistry with Brady than the WR's do & the WR's will free up the middle of the field for him. For now he is a solid TE prospect but not quite elite.

10. Jason Witten	DAL	6-6	264	25	5	8	7%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	DAL	16	64	754	11.8	1	
2005	DAL	16	66	757	11.5	6	
2004	DAL	16	87	980	11.3	6	
L3Y AVG			72	830	11.5	4	

Witten is essentially the Cowboys possession receiver as he's caught an impressive 72% of the passes thrown his way. He is a reliable outlet when Romo gets flushed out of the pocket but is more valuable in yardage leagues as DAL has a very capable red zone RB & WR. Witten is a solid fantasy starter that has the potential to be elite if he gets more scoring chances.

11. Heath Miller	PIT	6-5	255	25	3	6	6%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	PIT	16	34	393	11.6	5	
2005	PIT	16	39	459	11.8	6	
L2Y AVG			16	37	426	11.5	4

Miller has limited value in yardage leagues as the WR's get the big yards. He is at his best inside the red zone but Tomlin hasn't given much indication if he'll use the TE's much on offense. Miller is worth a look as he has very good hands catching 68% of passes thrown to him as a scoring option but he's more of a 2nd tier TE for now.

12. LJ Smith	PHI	6-3	258	27	5	5	6%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	PHI	16	50	611	12.2	5	
2005	PHI	16	61	682	11.2	3	
2004	PHI	16	34	377	11.1	5	
L3Y AVG			48	557	11.6	4	

Smith is one of the better receiving TE's in the NFL but the Eagles spread the ball around so much he isn't as likely to make a fantasy impact week to week as others would. He has a good size & speed mix but unless PHI has a philosophical change he's a decent fantasy backup.

13. Randy McMichael	STL	6-3	235	28	6	9	6%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	MIA	16	62	640	10.3	3	
2005	MIA	16	60	582	9.7	5	
2004	MIA	16	73	791	10.8	4	
L3Y AVG			65	671	10.3	4	

The good news is McMichael goes to a team with a vastly better QB situation than what he had in MIA & is a quality receiving option having caught 61% of the passes thrown his way the last 2 years. The bad news is the OL needs some work so he'll be held in some to help out & the team is already stocked with solid skill players around him. For now McMichael is a very good option as a #2 fantasy TE in a platoon system.

14. Dallas Clark	IND	6-3	257	27	4	6	6%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	IND	12	30	367	12.2	4	
2005	IND	15	37	488	13.2	4	
2004	IND	15	25	423	16.9	5	
L3Y AVG			14	31	426	13.7	4

Clark missed 4 games with a broken leg but made so much of an impact on the Colts postseason that they let WR Stokely leave & will run more 2 TE sets in 2007. Clark has very nice speed which enables him to line up in the slot & good hands having caught 61% of the passes thrown his way in the last 2 years. However, Clark is playing behind 2 of the best WR's in the game & an up & coming Addai so he's not quite elite material.

15. Owen Daniels	HOU	6-3	247	26	2	10	6%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	HOU	14	34	352	10.4	5	

Daniels missed the last 2 games with a shoulder injury but put up decent numbers in his 1st year here. He should improve upon those numbers with a new QB and is a good outlet with all the attention Andre Johnson gets.

16. Desmond Clark	CHI	6-3	255	30	9	9	6%
	TM	GMS	ATT	YDS	YPC	TD	
2006	CHI	16	45	626	13.9	6	
2005	CHI	16	24	229	9.5	2	
2004	CHI	15	24	282	11.8	1	
L3Y AVG			15	31	379	12.2	3

Clark had a great season for a Bears TE as the position has basically been overlooked in the past few years. CHI still doesn't have an impressive set of WR's to work with & Clark should have a similar year but he's more of a depth TE to use in situational matchups.