



2021-22 STAT-Alytics



DENVER NUGGETS

(Statistics and Rankings Updated Through Friday)

Overview: Nuggets Playing Average Ball Down Stretch

After a month of so-so basketball, the Nuggets find themselves uncertain whether they will wind up 5th or 6th in the Western Conference. Following a win over the Kings on Mar. 9, Denver looked as though it might be able to get as high as 4th in the West, as it stood 40-26 and just a game and a half behind Utah.

But since Mar. 10 the Nuggets have gone just 8-7, including alternating wins and losses in each of their last five games, and have settled into the current position in the conference – tied with the Jazz for 5th.

Since the Nuggets joined the NBA for the 1976-77 season, they have only swept the Lakers in a regular-season series once, that coming in 2013-14 (3-0). They will have a chance to complete just their second season series sweep of the Lakers in this game, as they are 2-0 this season vs L.A.

Offense at its Best vs Lakers

The Nuggets have not just won the first two meetings with the Lakers, their offense has dominated. For the first time since that 2013-14 season, Denver has scored 125 points or more in back-to-back games vs L.A. And the last time Denver had three straight games of 125+ points vs the Lakers was 1981-82 (4 straight).

The Nuggets have done just about everything right against the Lakers' this season.

Nuggets Offense vs Lakers – This Season

		Nuggets Note
Offensive Efficiency	133.0	Best vs any opponent
Effective FG Percentage	64.5%	Best vs any opponent
Assist-to-Turnover Ratio	3.8	Best vs any opponent
Turnover Percentage	9.1%	Best vs any opponent

>>DEN: +24.9 Net Efficiency vs Lakers (best vs any opponent)

Offense on Fire Against Everyone

While the Nuggets' offense has been spectacular against the Lakers, they've been pretty good against everybody. In fact, after a slow start to the season, the Nuggets will enter the playoffs with one of the league's top offenses.

Nuggets Offense – This Season

	Through Dec. 31	Since Jan. 1	
Offensive Efficiency	108.5	117.1	
NBA Rank	19th	3rd	(No. 1 MIN, No. 2 BOS since Jan. 1)
Effective FG Pct	53.3%	57.2%	
NBA Rank	10th	1st	

Defense With Issues at the Rim

While the offense has been productive, the defense has not – at least not lately. Since the beginning of March, Denver ranks bottom 10 in both Defensive Efficiency (21st – 116.9) and Opponent Effective FG Percentage (22nd – 55.8%).

The Nuggets' biggest issue defensively has been defending shooters at the rim. Denver has the highest opponent field goal percentage in the Restricted Area.

Highest Opponent FG Percentage in Restricted Area – This Season

Nuggets	68.9%
Rockets	68.7%
Wizards	68.0%
Pelicans	67.2%
Kings	66.8%

The Lakers' offense has had plenty of success against the Nuggets in this area. In two games, the Lakers, No. 1 in scoring in the Restricted Area (40.6 PPG), are shooting 71% from there vs. Denver and scoring 59 points a game. Only the Hawks (61.0 PPG) have averaged more PPG in the paint against Denver.

Player Notes

Nikola Jokic

Whether or not he wins a second straight MVP Award, Jokic's importance to the Nuggets' success cannot be overstated. Along with ranking top 10 in PPG, RPG and APG, the difference in the Nuggets' offense when Jokic is on and off the court is 13.0 points per 100 possessions, which is second-best in the NBA behind only the Suns' Mikal Bridges (+13.7).

However, when you look at the Nuggets over the last couple of weeks, the difference in their offense when Jokic is on and off the court is even more eye-opening.

Nuggets Highest On-Off Court Offensive Efficiency Differential – Since Mar. 26

	On Court	Off Court	Diff.
Nikola Jokic	122.4	90.7	+31.7
Aaron Gordon	122.6	96.1	+26.5
Bones Hyland	122.9	109.0	+13.9
Jeff Green	120.0	114.6	+5.4
Will Barton	117.4	112.5	+4.9

Aaron Gordon

Gordon is finishing the season with a strong closing kick, averaging 20.0 PPG, 7.6 RPG and shooting 59% from the field over his last eight games.

And because he is shooting 74% in the Restricted Area and 50% from 3-point range over that stretch, Gordon has the third-highest Effective FG Percentage since Mar. 24. One of the two ahead of him is his teammate.

Highest Effective FG Percentage – Since Mar. 24

Drew Eubanks	68.0%
Nikola Jokic	67.8%
Aaron Gordon	66.2%
Miles Bridges	62.9%

Minimum: 100 field goal attempts

Glossary of “Advanced” Terms

Assist Ratio: Assists per 100 possessions.

Boxout Percentage: The number of times a player makes physical contact with an opponent who is actively pursuing a rebound, and successfully prevents opponent from securing the rebound.

Clutch: Any situation where less than five minutes are left in regulation (or in overtime) and the two teams differ in score by five or fewer points.

Effective FG Percentage (or EFG%) is an adjusted FG percentage, which accounts for a 3-point FG being worth 50% more than a 2-point FG.

Efficiency is a metric calculating points per 100 possessions. Offensive Efficiency is points scored per 100 possessions, while Defensive Efficiency is points allowed per 100 possessions. Net Efficiency is point differential per 100 possessions.

Free Throw Rate is the number of free throw attempts per field goal attempts. A Free Throw Rate of .300 means a team takes 3 free throw attempts for every 10 field goal attempts.

Pace is the number of possessions per 48 minutes.

Screen Assists are screens that lead directly to a teammate's made field goal.

Secondary Assists are passes that lead to the pass that results in an assist.

Turnover Ratio: Turnovers per 100 possessions.

Usage Rate is a metric that estimates the number of plays “used” by a specific player. “Uses” in a possession mean either shooting the ball, turning the ball over or getting to the free-throw line.

Definitions per nba.com