



## Top NFL Cut Candidates for All 32 Teams

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We have reached that time of the season when we start to think about which NFL players under contract for the 2025 season could be cut, either for performance or salary cap-related purposes. Identifying cut candidates can be tough, especially with teams who are changing head coaches or coordinators, as it may shift philosophies and make players who were not valued before more valuable.

Below, we will identify the top-cut candidate for all 32 teams, but with some caveats. Several teams have plenty of cap space and may not need to cut anyone for cap space purposes. Their "biggest" cuts may end up being back-end-of-the-roster guys who they do not feel they have a place for. However, in this article, we will try to identify at least one relative "high-value" cut candidate in terms of cap number for each team.

### **Arizona Cardinals: Jalen Thompson, S**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$13.7 million
- Cap Saving: \$6.6 million as a pre-June 1 Cut

It seems unlikely that the Arizona Cardinals will cut Jalen Thompson, but from a pure value standpoint, he is their most obvious candidate. Arizona has over \$70 million in cap space, and Thompson played over 85% of their snaps in 2024.

Cutting Thompson would save them a little over \$6.5 million this year and \$4 million in 2026, with his contract voiding at the end of this season. In terms of cash, it would save \$7.56 million, so that would be their biggest incentive to cut Thompson.

The safety struggled somewhat in coverage, allowing an 80.9% completion rate, 11.6 yards per completion, and two touchdowns on the way to a 120 passer rating allowed. It is hard to judge a safety purely on coverage ability, and he finished third on the team in tackles. Unless they have a plan to replace him, cutting Thompson does not feel like a smart step for a Cardinals team with plenty of cap space.

Other cut candidates for the Cardinals:



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- **Jonah Williams, OT**  
2025 Cap: \$16.1 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.1 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$10.1 million (post-June-1)
- **Justin Jones, DT**  
2025 Cap: \$11.3 million  
Cap Saving: -\$170,000 (pre-June-1), or  
\$3.1 million (post-June-1)
- **DeeJay Dallas, RB**  
2025 Cap: \$3.1 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.4 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$2.7 million (post-June-1)
- **Michael Carter, RB**  
2025 Cap: \$1.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$1.2 million

### **Atlanta Falcons: David Onyemata, DT**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$16.9 million
- Cap Saving: \$8.1 million (pre-June 1) or \$10.5 million (post-June 1)

The defensive line is going to be an interesting spot for the Atlanta Falcons. Both David Onyemata and Grady Jarrett carry big cap numbers, making them cut candidates. Atlanta is currently around \$10 million over the salary cap, so some tough decisions need to be made at certain spots on the roster.

Onyemata is the more logical cut of the two, having played fewer snaps in 2024 and made fewer tackles. A cap number of nearly \$17 million for a player making just 45 tackles and three sacks is a lot to pay. The question will be whether they feel they can get better value with a



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replacement-level player while knowing they are eating \$8.85 million in dead money by moving on.

Other cut candidates for the Falcons:

- Younghoe Koo, K  
2025 Cap: \$5.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.0 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$4.25 million (post-June-1)
- Grady Jarrett, DT  
2025 Cap: \$20.4 million  
Cap Saving: \$16.3 million (pre-June-1)
- Charlie Woerner, TE  
2025 Cap: \$3.7 million  
Cap Saving: \$1.7 million (pre-June-1)

### **Baltimore Ravens: Kyle Van Noy, EDGE/LB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$6.1 million
- Cap Saving: \$4.5 million

The Baltimore Ravens do not have many obvious options they can cut to save cap, which is far from ideal with only around \$13 million in cap space. A lot of their cap-saving moves will likely come in the form of restructures or extensions to shift money out of the 2025 salary cap and into future seasons.

There are really only two options that stand out as potentially saving more than \$2 million while making sense. The biggest cap saving among those is Kyle Van Noy, who has a cap number of \$6.1 million in 2025 and just \$1.6 million in dead money if they were to move on.



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However, Van Noy finished the season with 12.5 sacks, leading the team despite only playing 55.7% of the defensive snaps. With 2025 being the final year of Van Noy's deal, it would not be a major surprise to see the Ravens extend him, spreading some of that cap hit into 2026 and beyond rather than cutting him.

Other cut candidates for the Ravens:

- Arthur Maulet, CB  
2025 Cap: \$2.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.3 million (pre-June-1)

### **Buffalo Bills: Von Miller, EDGE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$23.8 million
- Cap Saving: \$8.4 million (pre-June 1) or \$17.4 million (post-June 1)

The Buffalo Bills will have some tough decisions to make this offseason. They are effectively \$10 million over the salary cap when you project out, and they are currently set to have only have 47 players under contract. There is quite a lot they can do in terms of restructures and extensions, but they may also look to clear some cap space with cuts.

Von Miller is naturally going to be someone they consider cutting. His contract has been ugly for them since they signed it, and he still has more than \$60 million in cash owed over the next three years. That starts with a \$17.1 million salary in 2025, which comes with a \$23.8 million overall cap number.

In 2024, Miller only played 25% of the snaps despite being active for 13 games. He did finish the season with 16 pressures and six sacks, but they came at a high price tag. The cost-to-production ratio does not add up. The Bills could designate him a post-June 1 cut, which would save them \$17.4 million in 2025, but they would not feel the benefit of that until that June 1 date passes.

Additionally, the Bills could consider some other post-June 1 cuts, but they can only designate two. Dawson Knox has seen his role reduce but has a \$14.6 million cap number in 2025.



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Meanwhile, Matt Milano has a \$15.8 million cap number in 2025 and has only played nine games in the last two years due to injury.

Other cut candidates for the Bills:

- Dawson Knox, TE  
2025 Cap: \$14.6 million  
Cap Saving: -\$2.4 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$5.0 million (post-June-1)
- DaQuan Jones, DT  
2025 Cap: \$9.4 million  
Cap Saving: \$1.8 million (pre-June-1)  
\$5.5 million (post-June-1)
- A.J. Epenesa, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$7.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.3 million (pre-June-1)  
\$6.2 million (post-June-1)
- Matt Milano, LB  
2025 Cap: \$15.8 million  
Cap Saving: -\$1.4 million (pre-June-1)  
\$9.6 million (post-June-1)

### **Carolina Panthers: Miles Sanders, RB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$8.2 million
- Cap Saving: \$5.2 million (pre-June 1) or \$6.7 million (post-June 1)

The Carolina Panthers look set to be reasonably comfortable when it comes to cap space in 2025, but if they want to make major improvements, they will need to open up a little more



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space. A lot of that can be done with restructures and extensions, but there are a few cut candidates who could make sense to clear both cap space and roster spots.

The most obvious is Miles Sanders, who is set to count over \$8 million against the cap. Sanders only touched the ball 79 times in 11 games in the 2024 season as both Chuba Hubbard and Jonathon Brooks appeared to pass him on the depth chart. Brooks is injured, but Hubbard just signed a new deal and should be the starter in 2025.

Sanders is simply too expensive at \$8.2 million to be a backup, and there is almost certainly no trade market for his contract. With this cut, the Panthers will see \$6.7 million in cash in 2025 and \$5.5 million in cash in 2026.

There are some defensive options, with Dane Jackson or D.J. Wonnum being the most logical. However, they could also consider moving on from Jadeveon Clowney, but his deal is not the most onerous and he should return a reasonable amount of value on his cap number.

Other cut candidates for the Panthers:

- D.J. Wonnum, LB  
2025 Cap: \$8.0 million  
Cap Saving: \$6.2 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$7.1 million (post-June-1)
- Dane Jackson, CB  
2025 Cap: \$5.9 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.4 million (pre-June-1)
- Jadeveon Clowney, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$13.8 million  
Cap Saving: \$7.8 million (pre-June-1)



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### Chicago Bears: Cole Kmet, TE

- 2025 Cap Number: \$11.6 million
- Cap Saving: \$6.8 million (pre-June 1) or \$10 million (post-June 1)

The Chicago Bears do not need to cut anyone of significance for cap-related purposes this offseason. They have more than \$65 million in cap space as things stand on Jan. 23. However, they may decide to part ways with Cole Kmet purely from a cost-to-production standpoint after he had just 474 yards and four touchdowns last season.

Kmet is a good player and had an impressive 85.5% catch rate and 70.9% success rate in the 2024 season. The problem is that they are paying him to be a top-five tight end and not using him like one. Ben Johnson sent 83 targets Sam LaPorta's way, so maybe the arrival of a new head coach changes that.

The Bears used Kmet a lot as a blocker last season, with 73 pass-block snaps and 335 run-blocking snaps, so he has value there. However, he was credited with allowing three sacks, the most at the position, and was tied for fourth with seven pressures allowed.

My gut instinct says that with cap space to spare, he remains on the roster unless his style is not what Johnson is looking for. If they do decide to part ways, a trade may be a more likely avenue than a straight-out cut.

Other cut candidates for the Bears:

- Gerald Everett, TE  
2025 Cap: \$6.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$5.5 million (pre-June-1)
- Cairo Santos, K  
2025 Cap: \$4.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.1 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$3.2 million (post-June-1)



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- Jaquan Brisker, S  
2025 Cap: \$4.0 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.3 million (pre-June-1)

### **Cincinnati Bengals: Zack Moss, RB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$4.8 million
- Cap Saving: \$3.3 million

Despite the Cincinnati Bengals having almost \$50 million in salary cap space, there are a few cut candidates that could be realistic. The most high-profile of those for casual fans will be Zack Moss, who signed with the team last offseason. Cutting Moss would only save \$3.3 million, but it is more about making a clear statement that Chase Brown is their main running back.

Even before his injury, Moss largely lost his claim to the starting role. He finished the season with 74 carries for 242 yards (3.3 yards per attempt), two touchdowns, and a 36.5% success rate on rushes. Moss had better efficiency in the passing game, with a 63% success rate and an 85.2% catch rate that saw him finish with 187 yards and a touchdown.

The more impactful cuts could come in the trenches. The Bengals had a fantastic pass rush from Trey Hendrickson, but Sam Hubbard only had two sacks and eight pressures. Alongside that duo was Sheldon Rankins, who missed half of the season with an injury and carries a small dead-cap number.

On the offensive side, the Bengals' offensive line was horrific, ranking near the bottom of PFN's offensive line rankings. Alex Cappa's struggles at guard were only part of the reason, but he led all interior offensive linemen with 51 pressures and could easily be cut to make way for changes on the line.



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Other cut candidates for the Bengals:

- Sam Hubbard, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$11.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$9.5 million (pre-June-1)
- Sheldon Rankins, DT  
2025 Cap: \$10.6 million  
Cap Saving: \$8.6 million (pre-June-1)
- Alex Cappa, G  
2025 Cap: \$10.25 million  
Cap Saving: \$8 million (pre-June-1)

### **Cleveland Browns: Dalvin Tomlinson, DT**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$11.4 million
- Cap Saving: -\$5.7 million (pre-June 1) or \$6.4 million (post-June 1)

The Cleveland Browns are in a brutal space when it comes to cap space, sitting \$30 million over the projected cap as things stand. To compound matters, there are not many players they can cut in the immediacy to open cap space. Therefore, they may have to utilize restructures and extensions to be cap-compliant for the league year and then use post-June 1 cuts to open cap space for the remainder of 2025.

The Browns would get the most value from designating either Dalvin Tomlinson, Juan Thornhill, or Ogbo Okoronkwo as post-June 1 cuts. They can only designate two of them, and Thornhill and Okoronkwo make the most sense from a usage standpoint. Tomlinson would give them the most 2025 cap space, but he also played 65%+ of the snaps, had three sacks, and 20 pressures.

Other cut candidates for the Browns:

- Juan Thornhill, S  
2025 Cap: \$5.7 million



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Cap Saving: -\$2.3 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$3.4 million (post-June-1)

- Ogbo Okoronkwo, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$5.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$1.4 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$3.4 million (post-June-1)

### **Dallas Cowboys: Damone Clark, LB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$3.4 million
- Cap Saving: \$3.3 million

The Dallas Cowboys' salary cap situation for next year has not left them with many cut candidates. Donovan Wilson, Malik Hooker, and DaRon Bland open up the most cap space instantly, but none of them make a lot of sense logically, given Wilson and Hooker both played over 90% of the snaps and Bland has game-changing potential when on the field.

That leaves us looking a little lower down the list, and Damone Clark's \$3.3 million in cap savings becomes the most obvious. Compared to what they ideally need, it is a drop in the bucket, but a lot of their cap space will come from restructuring and extending deals.

Clark played less than 15% of the snaps on defense, primarily serving as a special teamer. They should be able to replace him at a cheaper cost, making him a potential cut candidate. Another player that falls into that special teamer category is Sam Williams, who missed 2024 due to injury and could be considered surplus to requirements by a new coaching staff.

Other cut candidates for the Cowboys:

- Sam Williams, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$2.0 million  
Cap Saving: \$1.5 million (pre-June-1)



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### Denver Broncos: John Franklin-Myers, EDGE

- 2025 Cap Number: \$10 million
- Cap Saving: \$7.0 million

Let's start by saying that the Denver Broncos do not need to cut anyone for cap space reasons, with more than \$35 million in cap space and more than 50 players under contract. However, they have some players on the fringe that they could look to cut if they want to open more space without restructures or extensions.

John Franklin-Myers is the most intriguing option, with a cap number of \$10 million and a potential \$7 million in savings. That is a big number for a player who only played 46.2% of the snaps in 2024 despite being available for all 17 games. He did finish with seven sacks and 21 pressures, so the production is not disastrous, but it is on the fringe of being a good return on a \$10 million cap number.

The Broncos have the cap space to have the luxury of carrying Franklin-Myers' production at this value. They can also add void years to his deal and reduce that cap number by up to \$5 million if they want to keep him but at a lower cost. They can also extend him if they feel the production deserves a longer deal.

Other cut candidates for the Broncos:

- Wil Lutz, K  
2025 Cap: \$5.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.9 million
- Malcolm Roach, DT  
2025 Cap: \$4.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.0 million



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- Adam Trautman, TE  
2025 Cap: \$4.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.5 million (pre-June-1)

### **Detroit Lions: DJ Reader, DT**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$12.9 million
- Cap Saving: \$8.0 million (pre-June 1) or \$11.7 million (post-June 1)

The Detroit Lions are another team that does not need to cut players to open cap space. They have over \$45 million in cap space and more than 50 players under contract, so they do not need to force cuts.

If we are looking purely at production to cost, then DJ Reader is an option. He played 15 games in 2024 but only had 23 tackles and three sacks. Those numbers are not terrible, but they are on the low side for a player being paid nearly \$13 million a year. They have the luxury of carrying that contract or restructuring it to save some space if they want to as opposed to cutting him.

With this much cap space, the Lions could cut players if they prefer not to restructure contracts and push a player's salary cap number into future years. Not many options make sense, but there are three or four that they could cut to open another \$15 million in space if they think they can afford to lose those players.

Other cut candidates for the Lions:

- Kalif Raymond, WR/KR  
2025 Cap: \$6.4 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.3 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$4.8 million (post-June-1)



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- Za'Darius Smith, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$5.7 million  
Cap Saving: \$5.7 million
- Jalen Reeves-Maybin, LB  
2025 Cap: \$4.6 million  
Cap Saving: \$1.9 million

### **Green Bay Packers: Kingsley Enagbare, EDGE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$3.4 million
- Cap Saving: \$3.3 million

The Green Bay Packers' situation is pretty clean-cut regarding potential cut candidates. They have around \$40 million in cap space with 60 players already under contract and no obvious candidates. Even naming Kingsley Enagbare as a cut candidate is a reach here because he carries just \$3.4 million in cap number.

Enagbare's production has not been that great, but they are not paying him to be an elite pass rusher, playing on the last year of his fifth-round rookie deal. At this cost, if he just ends up with his career average of 3-3.5 sacks and 12 pressures, he will have provided good value on his contract. Enagbare is not a player the Packers should cut; he is just the only one with a significant enough cap hit that you would consider most likely.

### **Houston Texans: Denico Autry, DT**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$10.3 million
- Cap Saving: \$5.8 million (pre-June 1) or \$8.8 million (post-June 1)

The Houston Texans will need to make some moves to open cap space this offseason if they want to challenge for the AFC South title again in 2025. However, their options from a cap-savings perspective are limited, and they might need to do that with restructures and extensions rather than cuts. There are a couple of options to help open that space, with Denico Autry being the primary one.



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Autry played just 25% of the snaps for the team in 2024 and finished with three sacks and nine pressures. Those are not great numbers for someone costing nearly \$11 million against the cap. Therefore, saving just under \$6 million by cutting him might allow them to use that money for a better cost-to-production ratio than they are getting from Autry.

Other cut candidates for the Texans:

- Jalen Pitre, S  
2025 Cap: \$4.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.6 million
- Tim Settle Jr., DT  
2025 Cap: \$4.0 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.0 million

### **Indianapolis Colts: Samson Ebukam, EDGE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$10.5 million
- Cap Saving: \$7.5 million

The Indianapolis Colts are another team that does not need to make many cuts for cap-space purposes, but with just under \$30 million in cap space, a couple moves would not hurt. The decision with Samson Ebukam, who missed all of 2024 with an injury, will be tough.

Ebukam had a strong 2023 season with 9.5 sacks and 21 pressures in 17 games. Those numbers are pretty good for the price they are paying him, but they have other strong options. Kwity Paye led the team with eight sacks in 15 games in 2024, and rookie Laiatu Latu had a solid start to his career with 4.0 sacks.

The problem for the Colts with Ebukam is that 2023 was a career year, and now they face uncertainty after he missed an entire season with an injury. Therefore, making a financial



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decision based on that one year of success might not be wise. Additionally, if the Colts do cut him, there will likely be another team ready to pick him up almost immediately.

Other cut candidates for the Colts:

- Raekwon Davis, DT  
2025 Cap: \$9.0 million  
Cap Saving: \$6.5 million
- Tyquan Lewis, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$7.1 million  
Cap Saving: \$4.6 million

### **Jacksonville Jaguars: Christian Kirk, WR**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$24.1 million
- Cap Saving: \$10.4 million (pre-June 1) or \$16.2 million (post-June 1)

To say that Christian Kirk is a cut candidate is more of a "Would they?" rather than anything else. Entering the fourth year of his deal, Kirk is owed \$16 million in cash and has an incredibly high cap number at over \$24 million. They can save just over \$10 million by cutting him pre-June 1 and over \$16 million as a post-June 1 cut.

Brian Thomas Jr. and Parker Washington's emergence as viable options has made this a possibility, but it still seems unlikely. The Jacksonville Jaguars have \$35 million in cap space as things stand, so they have flexibility. They also have other means to open cap space without getting rid of a dynamic playmaker, even if he is an expensive one.

If saving cap is the name of the game, they could move up to around \$9 million into their 2026 cap by simply restructuring Kirk's deal. They could also add void years and move even more money, so they have other options.



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Other cut candidates for the Jaguars:

- Devin Duvernay, WR/KR  
2025 Cap: \$3.9 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.7 million
- Josh Reynolds, WR  
2025 Cap: \$4.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$4.3 million (pre-June-1)
  
- Ronald Darby, CB  
2025 Cap: \$5.1 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.4 million (pre-June-1)

### **Kansas City Chiefs: Travis Kelce, TE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$19.8 million
- Cap Saving: \$17.3 million

I know. Your instinct is to yell and call me stupid, but first, just hear me out. Travis Kelce is a legitimate cut candidate for the Kansas City Chiefs for a couple of reasons, the first being that he may just retire, which essentially means he will cut himself.

The second reason is that, despite his playoff performances, Kelce has been a fading force this season. His yards per reception had been above 12 for nine straight years entering 2023. Last year, that dropped to 10.6, and in 2024, it fell to 8.5. The eight touchdowns he scored over the last two seasons combined would have been considered a bad year between 2017 and 2022.

Kelce can clearly still be a role player for the Chiefs, but a role player costing \$19.8 million is crazy, no matter how great they have been for your franchise in their career. Any cut for Kelce could be procedural, where he is nominally cut and then re-signed at a more cap-friendly deal. Equally, they could just throw four void years on and move upward of \$12.5 million into the future as a thank-you to the veteran.



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Other cut candidates for the Chiefs:

- Leo Chenal, LB  
2025 Cap: \$3.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.3 million
- Joshua Williams, CB  
2025 Cap: \$3.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.3 million

### **Las Vegas Raiders: Gardner Minshew II, QB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$14 million
- Cap Saving: \$6.3 million (pre-June 1) or \$9.3 million (post-June 1)

It would be a surprise if the Las Vegas Raiders brought Gardner Minshew II back for the 2025 season. With over \$90 million in projected cap space, they do not need to cut him, but keeping him around would muddy the waters.

Minshew finished the season ranked 35th in PFN's QB+ rankings with a D- grade. Aidan O'Connell finished 20th (C) and deserves an opportunity to start if the Raiders do not bring in a clear-cut starter this offseason. For that reason, it would be somewhat tough to keep Minshew as well.

The only reason they may keep Minshew is that, while \$14 million is a lot for a backup if they do not designate him a post-June 1 cut, they will only save \$6.3 million. Finding a reasonable backup on the open market will cost somewhere close to that. However, with cost not being an issue, the Raiders need to make a decision based on harmony. If Minshew is happy to be a backup, they may not cut him, but that feels risky.

The other element to consider is that the Raiders will have a new head coach and offensive structure in 2024. Pete Carroll may want to see O'Connell and Minshew compete, either between themselves or with a rookie in camp. Therefore, we may see Minshew head into camp with the Raiders and then cut closer to the start of the season.



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Other cut candidates for the Raiders:

- Daniel Carlson, K  
2025 Cap: \$5.2 million  
Cap Saving: \$4.4 million

### **Los Angeles Chargers: Joey Bosa, EDGE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$36.5 million
- Cap Saving: \$25.4 million

Joey Bosa will be a bit of a headache for the Los Angeles Chargers this offseason. With just 28 games played out of a possible 51 in the last three seasons -- and 14 sacks and 40 pressures in that time -- the production does not equal the cost when it comes to a basic equation.

However, as of Jan. 24, the Chargers have over \$60 million in cap space. They only have 45 players under contract, so their effective salary cap is closer to \$55 million, but that is still plenty of space to improve their team. Do they need to save another \$25.4 million and let Bosa walk out the door?

The overly simple answer is probably not. If Bosa had multiple years left on the deal with escalating costs, then it would be a case of, "Do they eat the cap now to save in the future?" If they want to free up more cap this year and move it into 2026, they could add void years to the deal and save cap space in 2025.

Cutting Bosa at this point would be about moving on mentally. The cash and cap savings are a "bonus" to the situation but are likely not the driving force behind making a deal.

Other cut candidates for the Chargers:



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- Trey Pipkins III, OL  
2025 Cap: \$9.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$6.8 million
- Gus Edwards, RB  
2025 Cap: \$4.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.1 million

### **Los Angeles Rams: Jonah Jackson, OL**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$14.7 million
- Cap Saving: \$3.3 million (pre-June 1) or \$9.0 million (post-June 1)

There are not many players who stand out as cut candidates for the Los Angeles Rams, and they do need to make moves. Their effective cap space is around \$35 million when you consider they have only 43 players under contract as of Jan. 24. They will likely need to open some cap space, but that can be done with restructures and extensions fairly easily.

Matthew Stafford is the big domino here, but he is not a cut candidate. If Stafford chooses to retire, the Rams will have some dead money to deal with, but they can split that across 2025 and 2026 by officially retiring him after June 1. Short-term, Stafford could reduce his salary to the veteran minimum and forfeit his \$4 million signing bonus, saving around \$25 million in cap space before June 1 and a further \$1.2 million post-June 1.

While the Rams are comfortable from a cap perspective, Stafford retiring would make them very comfortable, with around \$50 million of effective cap space this season. That would mean they can afford to keep players that might otherwise be considered a luxury.

From that perspective, Jonah Jackson is the main variable in this equation. He had a tough season in his first year with the Rams. Jackson opened the season as the starter but got hurt. He returned in Week 9 but, after one game, was benched. His final start came in Week 18 when the Rams rested starters.



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Jackson is a very expensive backup with a cap number of \$14.7 million and \$9 million in cash due this year. They would only save \$3.3 million as a pre-June 1 cut, but they have the short-term cap space to designate him a post-June 1 cut before his salary becomes guaranteed, save \$9 million in 2025, and leave \$5.7 million in dead money next year.

### **Miami Dolphins: Raheem Mostert, RB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$3.9 million
- Cap Saving: \$2.9 million

The Miami Dolphins are actually in a bit of a hole with their cap situation. As things stand, they have an effective cap space of -\$16 million and no obvious cut candidates that will significantly open cap space. Therefore, a lot of their work will have to be done by pushing the pain into the future with restructures and extensions.

Cutting Raheem Mostert is the obvious thing to do after he touched the ball just 104 times in 13 games. With De'Von Achane and Jaylen Wright on the roster, Mostert is a surplus to requirements in Miami. However, it is hardly the groundbreaking cut they will need from a cap perspective; realistically, they will want to sign at least one more back, so the effective savings will be around \$1.5-\$1.8 million at best.

They could designate Kendall Fuller as a post-June 1 cut to save \$6.8 million from June 1 onward. The problem is that making that move does nothing to help them be cap-compliant to open the league year and sees them cutting a starting corner on a fairly cheap, \$8.2 million deal.

### **Minnesota Vikings: Josh Oliver, TE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$9.4 million
- Cap Saving: \$5.2 million (pre-June 1) or \$8 million (post-June 1)

With a comfortable cap situation, the Minnesota Vikings do not need to make cuts for cap purposes. That is a nice situation to be in and allows them to evaluate their roster based on



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talent and performance rather than finances. Therefore, they may determine that a player like Josh Oliver is a solid value in terms of knowing their scheme at the price they are paying them. From an outside-looking-in perspective, they are paying too much for Oliver, who only played 49.4% of the snaps in 2024. Oliver only saw 28 targets last year, which tied for a career-high mark. He has 44 receptions for 471 yards and five touchdowns in his two years with the Vikings.

Oliver is someone the team relies on when it comes to both pass and run blocking, which carries its own, often-unmeasurable value.

However, it seems too much for a \$9.4 million cap number and could make him a potential cut for the Vikings.

### **New England Patriots: Kendrick Bourne, WR**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$7.7 million
- Cap Saving: \$4.9 million (pre-June 1) or \$6.3 million (post-June 1)

The New England Patriots have an incredible \$120 million in cap space and definitely do not need to make any decisions based on finances. This roster desperately needs an overhaul, and with this much cap space, there could be some surprise cuts. A name to watch would be Rhamondre Stevenson after his fumbling problems, but his style suits what we have seen from a Mike Vrabel team.

The most realistic cut candidate is Kendrick Bourne, who is due to count \$7.7 million against the cap and potentially earn over \$6 million in cash this season. They can save all of that cash and \$4.9 million of cap space by moving on ahead of the 2025 season.

Bourne's role was reduced last season, but the regime may see it as valuable, so we will see what they think. They have the cap space to evaluate things carefully and would actually save \$6.3 million this year if they cut him after June 1 (pushing the extra \$1.4 million into next year).



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Other cut candidates for the Patriots:

- Sione Takitaki, LB  
2025 Cap: \$3.7 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.7 million

### **New Orleans Saints: Derek Carr, QB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$51.5 million
- Cap Saving: \$1.3 million (pre-June 1) or \$30.0 million (post-June 1)

We transition from a team with plentiful cap space to one that is right up against it in terms of cap space, the New Orleans Saints. Despite being \$50 million over the salary cap, the Saints' highest potential pre-June 1 cut is Rashid Shaheed at \$3.7 million. Therefore, they will need to be cap-compliant for 2025 using restructures and extensions.

They have some options for post-June 1 cuts that would allow them to make late summer additions and sign their 2025 NFL Draft class. The biggest of those is Derek Carr, which would save \$30 million in 2025 and shift \$28.7 million of dead money into 2026. It is more likely they will look to trade Carr, with potentially \$11.3 million of cap savings in 2025 if they move him before June 1.

The problem for the Saints is that Carr grades pretty well as a quarterback. In our QB+ ranking, he was the QB11 this season, and it is his fourth top-12 finish in the six years for which we have data. Is a quarterback of Carr's quality simply too valuable to be a cap casualty? Arguably so.

The Saints could choose to restructure his deal and free up \$31 million immediately, but they will be pushing another \$6.2 million onto an already extant \$61.5 million cap number for 2026 and making his cost in 2027 \$36 million when the deal voids.

Other cut candidates for the Saints:



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- Taysom Hill, TE  
2025 Cap: \$18.0 million  
Cap Saving: \$277,000 (pre-June-1), or  
\$10 million (post-June-1)
- Cameron Jordan, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$20.1 million  
Cap Saving: -\$3.9 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$11 million (post-June-1)

### **New York Giants: Graham Gano, K**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$5.7 million
- Cap Saving: \$3.2 million (pre-June 1) or \$4.4 million (post-June 1)

A kicker as the main cut candidate for the New York Giants is hardly exciting, but with effectively over \$35 million in cap space, they do not need to force cuts. The other issue is that most players who could be cut to free up cap space before June 1 were crucial parts of their team in 2024 (Bobby Okereke, Jermaine Eluemunor, Rakeem Nuñez-Roches).

Graham Gano played in 10 games in 2024 and made 81.8% of his field goals. That was a big bounce back from a 64.7% success rate across eight games in 2023. Are those numbers good enough for Gano's salary? The money is relatively irrelevant to the potential of simply cutting Gano and bringing in a kicker with a success rate above the league average of 84% in 2024.

Other cut candidates for the Giants:

- Daniel Bellinger, TE  
2025 Cap: \$3.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.3 million

### **New York Jets: Davante Adams, WR**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$38.3 million



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- Cap Saving: \$29.9 million (pre-June 1) or \$36.2 million (post-June 1)

Davante Adams' arrival in the middle of the 2024 season was supposed to change the course of the New York Jets' season, but that did not prove to be the case. Now, the Jets are in limbo, waiting for Aaron Rodgers' decision ... and with just over \$20 million in cap space.

Adams was far from the problem in New York, finishing with 854 yards and seven touchdowns as a Jet (1,063 yards and eight touchdowns in 2024 when including his Raiders totals). However, it is hard to make any case that he merits a \$35.6 million salary in 2025. The Jets can reduce that number fairly significantly with a restructure and push \$25.9 million into 2026 if they want to have Adams under contract next year.

How they approach things will likely depend on Rodgers' status. If the quarterback wants to continue playing for the Jets, Adams may stay with a restructured deal. If Rodgers asks to be traded or retires, the Jets will likely look to trade Adams to save nearly \$30 million in cap space, which they could invest across other positions.

Other cut candidates for the Jets:

- Allen Lazard, WR  
2025 Cap: \$13.2 million  
Cap Saving: \$6.6 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$11 million (post-June-1)

### **Philadelphia Eagles: James Bradberry IV, CB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$7.8 million
- Cap Saving: -\$3.0 million (pre-June 1) or \$4.7 million (post-June 1)

The Philadelphia Eagles are another team in a tough position with their salary cap when it comes to pre-June 1 moves. The only player they could cut that would save them more than \$2 million in cap space before June 1 is Cam Jurgens, and that seems highly unlikely to happen. Therefore, with around \$15 million in effective cap space, the Eagles will need to make other moves ahead of free agency.



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Even when you look at post-June 1 moves, not many make potential cuts sense. They could cut Dallas Goedert, who had 42 catches, 496 yards, and two touchdowns in 10 games. That would seem to be an extreme move unless they really feel they need cap space.

The best option is likely either Darius Slay Jr. or James Bradberry IV, who would both free up over \$4 million in cap space. Rookie DBs Quinyon Mitchell and Cooper DeJean's play has given the Eagles some options at that position, but cornerback is a position where depth is valued; if they can keep both Bradberry and Slay, that would be ideal.

Of the two, Bradberry is the more vulnerable, having given up 11 touchdowns and a 114.3 passer rating in 2023 and then missing the entirety of the 2024 season. However, he was superb in 2022, and the Eagles may feel that his contract is not so bad they have to move on.

### **Pittsburgh Steelers: Preston Smith, EDGE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$13.4 million
- Cap Saving: \$13.4 million

Preston Smith being cut by the Pittsburgh Steelers may end up being one of the easier moves of the offseason. The pass rusher was a midseason acquisition by the Steelers, but the numbers were mediocre, to say the least. Smith had just two pressures and two sacks in eight games with the Steelers while racking up 13 tackles.

Being traded in the middle of the season is tough, and Smith will almost certainly get a deal somewhere in 2025 but probably at a price far below his \$13.4 million hit. With all of that money being owed as salary, the Steelers do have some options if they want to reduce his cap number in 2025 and keep him on the roster for another season.

The Steelers have over \$40 million in cap space, but they do not currently have a firm plan at quarterback, and they have other holes on their roster. With T.J. Watt and Alex Highsmith entrenched as starters at outside linebacker, Smith is a luxury they can afford to cut and re-invest elsewhere.



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Other cut candidates for the Steelers:

- Larry Ogunjobi, DT  
2025 Cap: \$10.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$7.0 million
- Cole Holcomb, LB  
2025 Cap: \$7.6 million  
Cap Saving: \$6.0 million
- Miles Killebrew, S  
2025 Cap: \$4.2 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.2 million

### **San Francisco 49ers: Yetur Gross-Matos, EDGE**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$9.5 million
- Cap Saving: \$2.9 million (pre-June 1) or \$7.8 million (post-June 1)

The San Francisco 49ers are in a somewhat strange position coming off the 2024 season. There is no way of sugarcoating a very disappointing year, but they do have a bit of a mulligan after the injuries they dealt with. They head into the offseason with around \$45 million in effective cap space, which is plenty to make further additions to the roster.

That also means that the 49ers do not need to cut players to free up cap space, which is always a nice position to be in. It is also good because the 49ers do not have many options that even make sense in terms of cap savings.

Yetur Gross-Matos is one of the bigger-savings options and somewhat logical from a production-to-cost ratio. He played only 34.5% of the snaps in 2024. He finished with four sacks and 10 pressures, which are far from ideal numbers, so there is not a huge case to be made for keeping him at that cost.



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Other cut candidates for the 49ers:

- Kyle Juszczyk, FB  
2025 Cap: \$6.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.9 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$4.6 million (post-June-1)
- Javon Hargrave, DT  
2025 Cap: \$9.7 million  
Cap Saving: -\$15.2 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$2.3 million (post-June-1)

### Seattle Seahawks: Geno Smith, QB

- 2025 Cap Number: \$44.5 million
- Cap Saving: \$31 million

Sitting more than \$25 million over the salary cap, the Seattle Seahawks have a lot of decisions to make if they want to make additions this offseason. Fortunately, they have many potential cut candidates, and it starts with the quarterback position.

Let's start by saying that Geno Smith is fine as a quarterback, but in 2025, he is set to have the eighth-highest cap hit at the position. In his three years in Seattle, Smith has not graded higher than a C+ in terms of QB+. He is a slightly above-average quarterback being paid like a borderline star in 2025.

The problem with Smith at this point is that there is no ceiling. He has played with three good receivers for the last few years and is still only a slightly above-average quarterback. The Seahawks just fired their offensive coordinator, so he will likely be learning a new scheme all over again in 2025.



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Now might be the time for the Seahawks to move on. It is risky, but continuing to invest in Smith will likely only lead to more mediocrity. If Seattle wants to get back to the Super Bowl, they need to be brave, and they have an opportunity to do that this offseason.

Other cut candidates for the Seahawks:

- Tyler Lockett, WR  
2025 Cap: \$30.9 million  
Cap Saving: \$17.0 million
- Noah Fant, TE  
2025 Cap: \$13.4 million  
Cap Saving: \$8.9 million
- Roy Robertson-Harris, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$6.6 million  
Cap Saving: \$6.6 million

### **Tampa Bay Buccaneers: Rachaad White, RB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$3.5 million
- Cap Saving: \$3.3 million

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers have some work to do on their salary cap. They effectively have just \$2.5 million in cap space and not much room to maneuver in terms of cuts. Vita Vea, Jamel Dean, and Jordan Whitehead are the only players who would save over \$4 million as pre-June 1 cuts. All of those seem like unlikely options.

That takes us to the next wave; again, there are a lot of unlikely candidates based on their cap number in 2025. Unfortunately, Rachaad White might be the most replaceable of that group, with Bucky Irving having emerged as a potential lead back and Sean Tucker as a potential No. 2.

If the Buccaneers can keep White, it is not a bad thing. He still had a 50.7% success rate and 4.3 yards per attempt, which are solid numbers. White also caught 51 of his 57 targets for 393 yards and six touchdowns to finish with nine total touchdowns. Those are good numbers, and



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the price is not expensive, but the Buccaneers need to find some cap space to help them improve in 2025.

### **Tennessee Titans: Kenneth Murray Jr., LB**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$10.2 million
- Cap Saving: \$7.7 million

It is somewhat unfair to include any name here because the Tennessee Titans do not need to make cuts for the sake of making cuts with over \$40 million in cap space. There are a few names they could move on from if they did want to open some cap space, and Kenneth Murray Jr. or Amani Hooker are atop that list.

Realistically, neither of them should be a cut candidate, having both played over 75% of the defensive snaps. However, the other names to consider from a pure cap perspective are Arden Key, Harold Landry III, or Tony Pollard, and none of them should definitively be cut based on performance-to-cost and savings numbers.

Murray had a fairly solid year, all things considered. He was not great in coverage, but that should not be a surprise, as he had struggled in coverage with the Chargers. Maybe \$10 million is a touch on the expensive side, and the Titans may decide that is the case and move on. The same could go for others on their roster.

Other cut candidates for the Titans:

- Amani Hooker, S  
2025 Cap: \$11.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$8.8 million (pre-June-1)
- Arden Key, EDGE  
2025 Cap: \$9.3 million  
Cap Saving: \$2.4 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$7.0 million (post-June-1)



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- Tony Pollard, RB  
2025 Cap: \$8.5 million  
Cap Saving: \$1.5 million (pre-June-1), or  
\$3.5 million (post-June-1)

### **Washington Commanders: Jonathan Allen, DT**

- 2025 Cap Number: \$22.5 million
- Cap Saving: \$16.5 million

The Washington Commanders look set to head into the offseason with around \$70 million in effective cap space. Therefore, they do not need to make cuts for the sake of opening cap space, so they can be a little nuanced in how they approach things.

If they do decide to cut some guys with bigger salaries in 2024, then the defensive line could be in the crosshairs. Jonathan Allen and Daron Payne have over \$48 million in cap commitments alone in 2025. Neither is likely to go because they have the cap space to afford it, and both are excellent at what they do. However, that would be the spot where there is the most potential to open cap space.

Allen missed half of the season with an injury, and his 2024 numbers were on pace for around 6-6.5 sacks and 20 pressures. Neither of those numbers is groundbreaking. Payne has also seen his performance drop off over the last two years, but Allen would present the higher cap savings if they did decide to move on from one of them.

Other cut candidates for the Commanders:

- Austin Ekeler, RB  
2025 Cap: \$5.0 million  
Cap Saving: \$3.5 million