

2021 Best Players

In this article, I'll identify the best players from the 2021 season. There are two ways to use Stapled To The Bench statistics to define "best players", and they will both be used. Productivity Rating (PR) will show which players had the best 2021 season, while Value Rating (VR) will show which players had the most value after the 2021 season.

I won't do much commenting on the players themselves, as the numbers speak for themselves and you can use a search engine as easily as I can.

Productivity Rating (PR) – Best Seasons

One of the main reasons PR was created was to have an objective way to identify the best players in a season. See the article *Introduction to Productivity Rating* for more details on how it works.

The top two categories in PR are PR-Elite and PR-Star. In 2021 there were 11 PR-Elites and 57 PR-Stars. They are listed below, with their "big 5" statistics: games played (GP), average time on ice per game (TOI), goals, assists, points.

PR-Elite

Eleven players were in the PR-Elite category. They are presented in PR-Score order, starting with the highest rated player.

Name	Team	POS	GP	TOI	Goals	Assts	Points
Connor McDavid	EDM	F	80	22.1	44	79	123
Auston Matthews	TOR	F	73	20.6	60	46	106
Victor Hedman	T.B	D	82	25.1	20	65	85
Cale Makar	COL	D	77	25.7	28	58	86
Roman Josi	NSH	D	80	25.5	23	73	96
Leon Draisaitl	EDM	F	80	22.3	55	55	110
J.T. Miller	VAN	F	80	21.1	32	67	99
Adam Fox	NYR	D	78	23.9	11	63	74
Elias Lindholm	CGY	F	82	20.0	42	40	82
Mitchell Marner	TOR	F	72	20.9	35	62	97
Steven Stamkos	T.B	F	81	18.5	42	64	106

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PR-Star

57 players were PR-Stars, and that's too many players for one table in Word (it wouldn't elegantly fit on a printed 8.5"x11" page, a necessary consideration for the PDF version of articles). They will be presented in two tables, in PR-Score order. Kirill Kaprizov is the highest rated PR-Star, while Dylan Larkin is the lowest rated PR-Star.

Name	Team	POS	GP	TOI	Goals	Assts	Points
Kirill Kaprizov	MIN	F	81	19.1	47	61	108
Johnny Gaudreau	CGY	F	82	18.6	40	75	115
Charlie McAvoy	BOS	D	78	24.7	10	46	56
Kyle Connor	WPG	F	79	21.8	47	46	93
Jonathan Huberdeau	FLA	F	80	19.4	30	85	115
Alex Pietrangelo	VGK	D	80	24.6	13	31	44
Matthew Tkachuk	CGY	F	82	17.9	42	62	104
Aleksander Barkov	FLA	F	67	20.3	39	49	88
Mikko Rantanen	COL	F	75	21.0	36	56	92
Patrice Bergeron	BOS	F	73	18.2	25	40	65
Devon Toews	COL	D	66	25.4	13	44	57
John Carlson	WSH	D	78	23.8	17	54	71
Kris Letang	PIT	D	78	25.8	10	58	68
Seth Jones	CHI	D	78	26.2	5	46	51
Mika Zibanejad	NYR	F	81	19.6	29	52	81
Quinn Hughes	VAN	D	76	25.2	8	60	68
Chris Kreider	NYR	F	81	18.7	52	25	77
Morgan Rielly	TOR	D	82	23.7	10	58	68
MacKenzie Weegar	FLA	D	80	23.4	8	36	44
Joe Pavelski	DAL	F	82	18.5	27	54	81
Alex DeBrincat	CHI	F	82	20.9	41	37	78
Moritz Seider	DET	D	82	23.0	7	43	50
Brad Marchand	BOS	F	70	19.3	32	48	80
Nazem Kadri	COL	F	71	19.2	28	59	87

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Name	Team	POS	GP	TOI	Goals	Assts	Points
Cam Fowler	ANA	D	76	24.4	9	33	42
Anze Kopitar	L.A	F	81	20.8	19	48	67
Brent Burns	S.J	D	82	26.1	10	44	54
Patrick Kane	CHI	F	78	21.8	26	66	92
Tomas Hertl	S.J	F	82	19.9	30	34	64
Jake Guentzel	PIT	F	76	20.1	40	44	84
Sebastian Aho	CAR	F	79	18.9	37	44	81
Roope Hintz	DAL	F	80	18.0	37	35	72
Jason Robertson	DAL	F	74	18.1	41	38	79
Damon Severson	N.J	D	80	23.6	11	35	46
Jacob Trouba	NYR	D	81	22.4	11	28	39
Justin Faulk	STL	D	76	23.2	16	31	47
Jacob Slavin	CAR	D	79	23.5	4	38	42
Alex Ovechkin	WSH	F	77	20.6	50	40	90
Rasmus Dahlin	BUF	D	80	24.0	13	40	53
Sidney Crosby	PIT	F	69	20.0	31	53	84
Nathan MacKinnon	COL	F	65	21.1	32	56	88
Matt Duchene	NSH	F	78	19.0	43	43	86
Filip Forsberg	NSH	F	69	18.1	42	42	84
Ryan Hartman	MIN	F	82	18.2	34	31	65
Claude Giroux	FLA, PHI	F	75	19.1	21	44	65
Kevin Fiala	MIN	F	82	17.6	33	52	85
Ivan Provorov	PHI	D	79	24.9	9	22	31
Timo Meier	S.J	F	77	19.2	35	41	76
Pavel Buchnevich	STL	F	73	18.3	30	46	76
Ryan O'Reilly	STL	F	78	19.1	21	37	58
Artemi Panarin	NYR	F	75	19.2	22	74	96
Darnell Nurse	EDM	D	71	25.0	9	26	35
Zach Werenski	CBJ	D	68	25.7	11	37	48
Shea Theodore	VGK	D	78	23.1	14	38	52
Rasmus Andersson	CGY	D	82	22.7	4	46	50
William Nylander	TOR	F	81	18.3	34	46	80
Dylan Larkin	DET	F	71	19.7	31	38	69

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Value Rating (VR) – Best Players

Many people want to know who the better player is, not which ones had the better season. VR addresses that desire: it cobbles together statistics from the previous three seasons and makes an adjustment for games the player didn't play. See the article *Introduction to Value Rating* for more details.

VR and PR have the same scoring scale and the same categories. In 2021 there were 8 VR-Elites and 54 VR-Stars. They are listed below, with their "big 5" statistics from their 2021 season: games played (GP), average time on ice per game (TOI), goals, assists, points.

VR-Elite

Name	Team	POS	GP	TOI	Goals	Assts	Points
Connor McDavid	EDM	F	80	22.1	44	79	123
Auston Matthews	TOR	F	73	20.6	60	46	106
Leon Draisaitl	EDM	F	82	22.3	55	55	110
Victor Hedman	T.B	D	77	25.1	20	65	85
Roman Josi	NSH	D	80	25.5	23	73	96
Brad Marchand	BOS	F	80	19.3	32	48	80
Aleksander Barkov	FLA	F	80	20.3	39	49	88
Mitchell Marner	TOR	F	78	20.9	35	62	97

Cale Makar and Adam Fox had great seasons in 2021, but their VR-Score is weighed down by their 2019/2020 statistics. If they have their normal season next year, they will be VR-Elites.

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VR-Star

Name	Team	POS	GP	TOI	Goals	Assts	Points
Adam Fox	NYR	D	78	23.9	11	63	74
Patrice Bergeron	BOS	F	73	18.2	25	40	65
John Carlson	WSH	D	78	23.8	17	54	71
Cale Makar	COL	D	77	25.7	28	58	86
Nathan MacKinnon	COL	F	65	21.1	32	56	88
J.T. Miller	VAN	F	80	21.1	32	67	99
Mika Zibanejad	NYR	F	81	19.6	29	52	81
Ryan O'Reilly	STL	F	78	19.1	21	37	58
Elias Lindholm	CGY	F	82	20.0	42	40	82
Devon Toews	COL	D	66	25.4	13	44	57
Darnell Nurse	EDM	D	71	25.0	9	26	35
Kris Letang	PIT	D	78	25.8	10	58	68
Charlie McAvoy	BOS	D	78	24.7	10	46	56
Anze Kopitar	L.A	F	81	20.8	19	48	67
Alex Pietrangelo	VGK	D	80	24.6	13	31	44
Sebastian Aho	CAR	F	79	18.9	37	44	81
Mikko Rantanen	COL	F	75	21.0	36	56	92
Brent Burns	S.J	D	82	26.1	10	44	54
Kirill Kaprizov	MIN	F	81	19.1	47	61	108
Mark Scheifele	WPG	F	67	21.1	29	41	70
Seth Jones	CHI	D	78	26.2	5	46	51
Artemi Panarin	NYR	F	75	19.2	22	74	96
Kyle Connor	WPG	F	79	21.8	47	46	93
Sidney Crosby	PIT	F	69	20.0	31	53	84

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David Pastrnak	BOS	F	72	18.6	40	37	77
Quinn Hughes	VAN	D	76	25.2	8	60	68
Jonathan Huberdeau	FLA	F	80	19.4	30	85	115
Steven Stamkos	T.B	F	81	18.5	42	64	106
MacKenzie Weegar	FLA	D	80	23.4	8	36	44
Aaron Ekblad	FLA	D	61	24.9	15	42	57
Ivan Provorov	PHI	D	79	24.9	9	22	31
Claude Giroux	FLA, PHI	F	75	19.1	21	44	65
Jacob Slavin	CAR	D	79	23.5	4	38	42
Shea Theodore	VGK	D	78	23.1	14	38	52
Joe Pavelski	DAL	F	82	18.5	27	54	81
Drew Doughty	L.A	D	39	25.7	7	24	31
Jake Guentzel	PIT	F	76	20.1	40	44	84
Sean Couturier	PHI	F	29	20.4	6	11	17
Zach Werenski	CBJ	D	68	25.7	11	37	48
Tomas Hertl	S.J	F	82	19.9	30	34	64
Bo Horvat	VAN	F	70	19.5	31	21	52
Jared Spurgeon	MIN	D	65	21.2	10	30	40
Jeff Petry	MTL	D	68	22.1	6	21	27
Damon Severson	N.J	D	80	23.6	11	35	46
Justin Faulk	STL	D	76	23.2	16	31	47
Matthew Tkachuk	CGY	F	82	17.9	42	62	104
Cam Fowler	ANA	D	76	24.4	9	33	42
Alex DeBrincat	CHI	F	82	20.9	41	37	78
Alex Ovechkin	WSH	F	77	20.6	50	40	90
Mark Giordano	SEA, TOR	D	75	20.9	8	27	35
Ryan Suter	DAL	D	82	23.7	7	25	32
Miro Heiskanen	DAL	D	70	24.9	5	31	36
Gabriel Landeskog	COL	F	51	20.3	30	29	59