# Best Skaters Since 2007

Why is the word "skaters" used in the title? I'm going to use Productivity Ratings (PR) to rank players, and goalies can't be evaluated using PR.

And why is the phrase "since 2007" in the title? The detailed data used to create Productivity Rating only goes back to the 2007/2008 season.

**Unit of Measurement**

This list is not going to be a popularity contest. It will be based strictly on data.

As a result, the list includes players I rarely see and players I have never liked, and it will not include players who I really like and players who I see frequently. Frankly, this is one of the main reasons to have a comprehensive set of rated seasons. It allows me to get past my own prejudices and limitations.

Productivity Rating (PR) (see *Introduction to Productivity Rating* for more information) evaluates player-seasons using a number of statistics. The total PR of a player over a number of seasons is meant to be a valid piece of data, as is the total number of minutes played over a number of seasons. When you divide the total PR and total time on ice by the number of seasons involved, you get average PR and average ice-time for the player.

The list of top players will be those who have the highest total PR since 2007.

You may find that some players you expect would be on the list are not on it. I'll explain that using goals.

A list of the players who have scored the most goals since 2007 would not include Auston Matthews or Connor McDavid. By that, I mean they would be on the list, of course, they just wouldn't be at the top of the list. They haven't played half as many games as some of the other high-scoring players in the league.

When you look for the biggest total anything over fifteen seasons and there are many players who have played all of them, players who have played less than half of those seasons aren't going to make it to the top.

So be prepared: the top fifty players since 2007/2008 does not include Auston Matthews, Connor McDavid, Leon Draisaitl and Nathan MacKinnon. Most of those players will be on the list in the next couple of seasons, provided they continue to play at their normal (incredibly high) level.
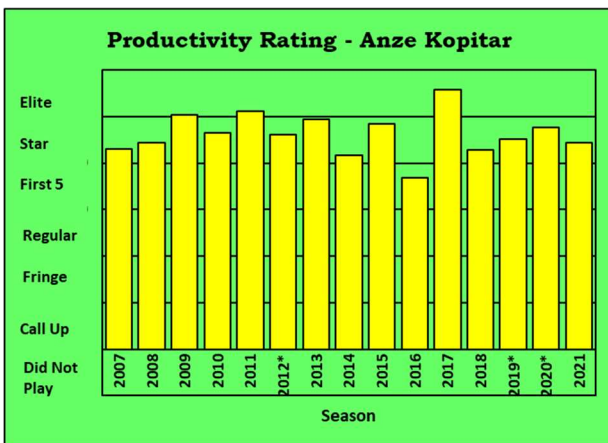
# Best Skaters Since 2007

**The Best Skaters Since 2007 – 1 Through 10**

| Rank | Name | Pos | Seasons | PR Elite | PR Star | Tot PR |
|------|------|-----|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| | | | Best Since 2007/2008 - 1 Through 10 | | | |
| 1 | Anze Kopitar | F | 15 | 3 | 11 | 138.7 |
| 2 | Alex Ovechkin | F | 15 | 3 | 9 | 134.9 |
| 3 | Ryan Suter | D | 15 | 1 | 10 | 132.9 |
| 4 | Sidney Crosby | F | 15 | 4 | 7 | 132.8 |
| 5 | Brent Burns | D | 15 | 4 | 6 | 127.7 |
| 6 | Duncan Keith | D | 15 | 1 | 9 | 125.2 |
| 7 | Patrice Bergeron | F | 15 | 2 | 10 | 124.9 |
| 8 | Joe Pavelski | F | 15 | 2 | 7 | 124.7 |
| 9 | Drew Doughty | D | 14 | 3 | 7 | 120.8 |
| 10 | Nicklas Backstrom | F | 15 | 1 | 8 | 120.6 |

The table shows a player's rank, name and position; the number of seasons he has played; the number of PR-Elite seasons he has had; the number of PR-Star seasons he has had; his total Productivity Rating score.

On the East Coast, Ovechkin gets much more press coverage than Kopitar. His push for the all-time goal scoring record makes it easy to focus on him. Their Career Productivity Rating charts shows why Kopitar ranks first.



Ovechkin's first three seasons were phenomenal, but he hasn't maintained that Elite level of play. Kopitar's career has been remarkably consistent. An answer to the question "which of these two players is better?" is "which player's chart has more yellow on it?" While I generally don't like it when a question is the answer to a question, it is an appropriate if obtuse answer to the question. Kopitar ranks ahead of Ovechkin because his player chart has more yellow (more PR) on it.

In 2021, Kopitar had a higher PR-Score than Ovechkin. How does a player have a better PR than one who scored 50 goals? Kopitar had 100 more minutes of ice-time and played way

more on the penalty-kill (138 minutes to 51 seconds). Kopitar won 858 face-offs, Ovechkin 4. Kopitar had more blocked shots (71-25), more takeaways (48-32) and fewer giveaways (30-50). Ovechkin outhit Kopitar (155-72). Kopitar's team-relative Corsi (TRC) was +33 while Ovechkin's TRC was -33. 34% of the faceoffs Kopitar was involved in came in the defensive zone, while Ovechkin was involved in defensive zone faceoffs 12% of the time. It's quite unusual for a player with so many offensive zone faceoffs to have a negative TRC.

To summarize, a player can have a better PR than another who scored 50 goals by doing everything else much better.

### The Best Skaters Since 2007 – 11 Through 20

| Best Since 2007/2008 - 11 Through 20 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Name | Pos | Seasons | PR Elite | PR Star | Tot PR |
| 11 | Patrick Kane | F | 15 | 0 | 8 | 120.6 |
| 12 | Claude Giroux | F | 15 | 4 | 7 | 120.5 |
| 13 | Zdeno Chara | D | 15 | 3 | 5 | 118.5 |
| 14 | Mark Giordano | D | 14 | 3 | 7 | 117.9 |
| 15 | Ryan Getzlaf | F | 15 | 1 | 7 | 117.7 |
| 16 | Jonathan Toews | F | 14 | 3 | 5 | 116.6 |
| 17 | Kris Letang | D | 15 | 1 | 8 | 115.5 |
| 18 | Shea Weber | D | 14 | 2 | 8 | 114.6 |
| 19 | Eric Staal | F | 14 | 2 | 5 | 112.6 |
| 20 | Alex Pietrangelo | D | 14 | 4 | 7 | 111.8 |

Zdeno Chara would almost certainly have been the number one player had the data gone back far enough, say to the start of the century. Several of his best seasons came before 2007.

### The Best Skaters Since 2007 – 21 Through 30

| Best Since 2007/2008 - 21 Through 30 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Name | Pos | Seasons | PR Elite | PR Star | Tot PR |
| 21 | Steven Stamkos | F | 14 | 4 | 4 | 111.4 |
| 22 | Victor Hedman | D | 13 | 3 | 4 | 110.3 |
| 23 | Evgeni Malkin | F | 15 | 3 | 2 | 109.1 |
| 24 | John Tavares | F | 13 | 0 | 7 | 108.4 |
| 25 | John Carlson | D | 13 | 3 | 6 | 108.3 |
| 26 | Ryan O'Reilly | F | 13 | 2 | 8 | 107.2 |
| 27 | Erik Karlsson | D | 13 | 4 | 1 | 107.1 |
| 28 | Blake Wheeler | F | 14 | 0 | 6 | 105.1 |
| 29 | Joe Thornton | F | 15 | 0 | 8 | 103.5 |
| 30 | Jordan Staal | F | 15 | 0 | 3 | 103.2 |

# Best Skaters Since 2007

Missing games lowers PR-Score. Malkin would have been in the top 10 if he had missed fewer games in his career, while Stamkos and Hedman would have been in the top 20. Jonathan Toews (#16) would also have been in the top 10 but for a missed season.

### The Best Skaters Since 2007 – 31 Through 40

| Best Since 2007/2008 - 31 Through 40 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Name | Pos | Seasons | PR Elite | PR Star | Tot PR |
| 31 | Alex Goligoski | D | 15 | 0 | 7 | 102.3 |
| 32 | Jeff Carter | F | 15 | 1 | 3 | 102.1 |
| 33 | Brad Marchand | F | 13 | 3 | 4 | 102.1 |
| 34 | Paul Stastny | F | 15 | 0 | 2 | 101.8 |
| 35 | Alexander Edler | D | 15 | 0 | 2 | 101.1 |
| 36 | Keith Yandle | D | 15 | 0 | 3 | 98.78 |
| 37 | Zach Parise | F | 15 | 0 | 4 | 98.37 |
| 38 | Phil Kessel | F | 15 | 0 | 2 | 98.29 |
| 39 | Roman Josi | D | 11 | 2 | 6 | 97.71 |
| 40 | Jamie Benn | F | 13 | 0 | 4 | 97.29 |

Some of the players are in the top fifty solely due to longevity. I have no problem with this. A car that is driven 40 km each day (280 km in a week), will travel more total distance than a car that is driven 100 km a day on the weekends (200 km in a week).

Total PR over fifteen seasons is exactly that: a total of seasonal PR scores. A player with a shorter career and higher peaks (Roman Josi) has a lower total PR than a player with a longer career and lower peaks (Paul Stastny).

### The Best Skaters Since 2007 – 41 Through 50

| Best Since 2007/2008 - 41 Through 50 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rank | Name | Pos | Seasons | PR Elite | PR Star | Tot PR |
| 41 | Mikko Koivu | F | 14 | 0 | 5 | 96.5 |
| 42 | Patrick Marleau | F | 14 | 1 | 4 | 95.2 |
| 43 | Marc-Edouard Vlasic | D | 15 | 0 | 0 | 95.1 |
| 44 | Corey Perry | F | 15 | 1 | 3 | 94.8 |
| 45 | P.K. Subban | D | 13 | 1 | 5 | 93.7 |
| 46 | Brent Seabrook | D | 13 | 0 | 4 | 93.3 |
| 47 | Andy Greene | D | 15 | 0 | 2 | 92.6 |
| 48 | Dustin Brown | F | 15 | 0 | 1 | 92.0 |
| 49 | Oliver Ekman-Larsson | D | 12 | 0 | 6 | 91.7 |
| 50 | David Krejci | F | 14 | 0 | 1 | 91.3 |

Vlasic, Brown and Krejci are other examples of players being on the list because of longevity.

# Best Skaters Since 2007

**Knocking on Heaven's Door**

| Rank | Name | Pos | Seasons | PR Elite | PR Star | Tot PR |
|------|------|-----|---------|----------|---------|--------|
| Best Since 2007/2008 - Select Up-And-Comers | | | | | | |
| 106 | Connor McDavid | F | 7 | 5 | 1 | 74.6 |
| 108 | Nathan MacKinnon | F | 9 | 2 | 3 | 74.3 |
| 110 | Seth Jones | D | 9 | 0 | 5 | 73.2 |
| 115 | Aleksander Barkov | F | 9 | 3 | 2 | 72.6 |
| 128 | Leon Draisaitl | F | 8 | 3 | 2 | 70.5 |
| 138 | Dougie Hamilton | D | 10 | 0 | 3 | 69.6 |
| 155 | Jonathan Huberdeau | F | 10 | 0 | 3 | 66.4 |
| 233 | Auston Matthews | F | 6 | 3 | 1 | 56.5 |
| 282 | Mitchell Marner | F | 6 | 1 | 3 | 50.7 |
| 446 | Charlie McAvoy | D | 5 | 0 | 2 | 37.8 |

This final table shows players currently outside the top 50 who will break into the top 50, as long as they maintain their health and productivity. Connor McDavid is probably three years away from cracking the list.

**Summary**

Fifteen seasons isn't really a lot of time for a "best of" list. It would be nice if we had a set of detailed data that goes as far back as baseball data does, but that simply doesn't exist and it's pointless to worry about it. I'm using all of the data which exists, and that's the most data I can use.

The list absolutely includes players who are on it due to career longevity. David Krejci has played 14 seasons with only one season as high as PR-Star. Marc-Edouard Vlasic has played one more season than Krejci with no season as high as PR-Star. In the coming years, they will be replaced in the top fifty by players who have the combination of "longevity" and "great seasons" that one would expect to see on a "best of" list.

There will be a data list on the site accompanying this article, showing the top 75 players plus the next top 25 players who are still active. If you don't find your favourite active player on the data list, he'll never be a top 50 player since 2007.