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## TOP 20 TEs

1. [Shannon Sharpe](#) - Sharpe is [John Elway's](#) go-to guy. He catches more passes than most wide receivers, which is unusual for a tight end. He has the potential to catch 85 passes this season. You can always see Sharpe lined up in the slot or in motion behind the line. At 6-2, 230 Sharpe runs extremely fluid downfield routes and can run the 40 in 4.6. He caught 80 passes for 1,062 yards and 10 TDs in 1996. Fantasy Note: Sharpe has his best games during the first half, at home, against non-playoff teams.
2. [Ben Coates](#) - Coates had what some may call an off-year in 1996. Double coverage from most defenses contributed to his falloff. He still caught 62 passes for 682 yards and a career-high nine TDs. He has averaged 10 TDs over the past four years. As a 6-5, 245 pound tight end, Coates is very difficult to cover. Fantasy Note: Coates has a history of fumbling, but with teams keying more on WR [Terry Glenn](#), Coates should have another great year.
3. [Wesley Walls](#) - [Kerry Collins'](#) favorite target inside the red zone should put up some nice numbers again this year. He runs well for a big man (6-5, 250) but his soft hands make him a great pass-catching TE. He caught 61 passes for 713 yards and 10 TDs. The Panthers ball-control offense allows Walls to occasionally slip down field. Fantasy Note: WR **Rae Carruth** was drafted by Carolina and may cut into Walls' totals.
4. [Ken Dilger](#) - Dilger shows a propensity for getting downfield and will be a force in the red zone this year. He has soft hands, a big plus for any TE, and is a huge target at 6-5, 259. He slumped a little in 1996, going three games without a catch in December, but he should rebound this season as the Colts line improves. He caught passes for 176 yards against the Jets last year. He totaled 42 catches for 503 yards and four TDs.
5. [Troy Drayton](#) - Drayton fit better into Miami's offensive scheme than St. Louis'. In 10 starts with the Dolphins he

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collected 26 catches. Drayton has the unusual gifts of an agile, fast, big man. A full season with [Dan Marino](#) and Co. could net Drayton 50+ catches and 600 yards.

6. [Mark Chmura](#) - With **Keith Jackson** finally out of the picture, Chmura will be able to return to his 1995 numbers, when he caught 54 passes for 679 yards and jumped into the stands seven times. Not your prototypical TE, but he finds ways to get the job done. When [Brett Favre](#) needs a first down, he'll look to Chmura. Last season, while sharing time with Jackson, he caught 28 passes for 378 yards, an average of 13.2 per catch.
7. [Rickey Dudley](#) - Dudley didn't live up to his potential in his rookie season, but he has tremendous upside potential. If he stops dropping easy passes the Raiders will look to him more often in desperate situations. He displays natural athleticism in a 6-6, 245 pound frame. Once he learns how to block better and hold onto the ball, he'll be one of the top three players at his position. Caught 34 passes for 386 yards in his first season.
8. [Tony McGee](#) - McGee is an excellent athlete and should go in the earlier rounds of most drafts. He caught 38 passes for 446 yards and 4 TDs last season. With [Jeff Blake](#) throwing the ball as often as he does, McGee is sure to have another good season. Needs to be more consistent in 1997.
9. **Tony Gonzalez** - Gonzalez has to be good to make a pre-season Fantasy list. [Ted Popson](#) went to K.C. in the off-season, but may end up being a reserve, just like he was in San Francisco. With Kansas City's new wide-open offense, Gonzalez is sure to make heavy contributions early on. Gonzalez is a big, very athletic tight end with excellent speed and fine receiving skills. He has valuable experience playing in a pro-style, West-coast passing offense. Gonzalez was one of the best receiving TEs in the college ranks this past season, catching 44 balls for 699 yards (15.9 avg.) while also scoring 5 TDs. He has sure hands, excellent leaping ability, and he can extend and make the difficult catch. Gonzalez has great athletic ability, and can make the adjustments to bad passes. He also has the quickness to get separation, the speed to get downfield, and runs very well after the catch.
10. [Pete Mitchell](#) - Undersized as a TE, though he has a talent for getting open and uses his soft hands to reel in catches. Caught 52 for 575 yards last year. The Jaguars use a two-tight end set, but Mitchell catches most of the balls and [Derek Brown](#) mostly blocks. After Gonzalez, the TEs taper off a lot so don't take Mitchell too high.

11. [Jamie Asher](#) - Not a burner by far, but has good hands. Asher is on the rise and could have a great year now that the QB battle is somewhat settled. He was [Gus Frerotte's](#) favorite target last year and caught 42 passes for 481 yards and four TDs. Look for Frerotte to look his way more often in the red zone this year. Dependability makes him a solid pick.
12. [Lonnie Johnson](#) - This could be Johnson's year. Everyone has been waiting for him to step into [Pete Metzelaars'](#) cleats since he left two seasons ago. Needs to work on his blocking more, which will help him get into more pass-catching situations. Also has a hard time holding onto the ball in traffic. Should have no problem beating out **Tony Cline** in training camp.
13. [Jackie Harris](#) - Harris can still run well after suffering some knee injuries. Runs like a wideout, and can slip underneath coverages with the best of them. Entering his eighth season, Harris will be looking to prove to himself that he can still play the game. He missed almost five games last year but still caught 30 passes for 349 yards.
14. [Brian Kinchen](#) - Kinchen's game is on the upswing, but so is his age. At 32 he will be playing in his 10th season. In his ninth, he caught 54 passes for 574 yards. He'll be hard-pressed to repeat those numbers, unless the Ravens do away with **Eric Green**. Only had one TD last year.
15. [Eric Green](#) - Green is further down on the list because of his uncertainty. If you think he is going to play a full season then go ahead and use a higher pick on him. But he probably won't make it through the whole year. He's played for three teams over the past three years. If someone can find something to motivate him in 1997, he could have another year similar to 1993, when he caught 63 passes for Pittsburgh. Baltimore may give up on him during training camp.
16. [Eric Bjornson](#) - Runs well because of his slim frame. Built more like an over-sized wide receiver. When **Jay Novacek** went down with a degenerative back condition, Bjornson stepped right in and played well. Dallas took TE **David LaFleur** with its first pick in the draft, but he shouldn't be a factor early on. Bjornson caught 48 passes for 388 yards in 1996.
17. [Alfred Pupunu](#) - Another undersized TE who is used more as an H-back in San Diego. With new coach Kevin Gilbride on board, Pupunu may excel. Rookie **Freddie Jones** will try to push him for the starting job.
18. [Jason Dunn](#) - Dunn showed some impressive moves as a

rookie in 1996. He needs to get himself out of the coach's doghouse and onto the field more to reach his potential. He caught 15 passes for 332 yards, good for a 22.1 average. He also had two TDs. His role should expand in 1997 as he learns the position more. Could be a sleeper.

19. [Brent Jones](#) - Jones is consistent but doesn't have much more left. He was a favorite target of Joe Montana and [Steve Young](#) but is fading fast. He caught only 33 passes last year for 428 yards. A 12.9 average but with only one touchdown was proof of his diminishing skills. Rookie **Greg Clark** is sure to get a lot of playing time, so be careful with this pick.
20. [Ernie Conwell](#) - Athletic player who is used more as a fullback. Lacks talent as a blocker but sees action because of his soft hands and his 4.6 speed. He caught 15 passes in six games for 164 yards last season after the Rams unloaded Drayton to Miami.

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