

## Top Houston Texans Players to Watch

Written by Yolande Y. Lezine, Sports Editor  
Tuesday, 14 August 2012 15:28

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The 2011 season was the most exciting ever in Houston Texans franchise history.

Fresh off its first double-digit win campaign, playoff appearance and playoff win, Houston heads into a season of great expectations. National media have listed the Texans as a preseason top five team. A few writers are even talking Super Bowl.

The Divisional Champions lost a lot of key players who have moved on to other teams, including LB Mario Williams(Buffalo Bills), DeMeco Ryans(Philadelphia Eagles), Jacoby Jones(Baltimore Ravens), just to name a few.

Nevertheless, the Texans are determined that a series of off-season moves were only meant to improve the team, not take away, and they are expecting nothing less than the same success plus more that they achieved one year ago.

Offensively QB Matt Schaub is back from injury, and if he can stay healthy throughout the season the offense will be unstoppable. The receivers and tight ends are veterans. WR Andre Johnson, who's still the heart and soul of the team, and TE Owen Daniels are among the top five at their respective positions. RB Arian Foster signed a new five-year contract worth \$40 million in the offseason and will again be a key figure in the Texans offense.

Defensively, former Dallas Cowboys head coach Wade Phillips, brought respectability to the Texans defense, which was in last place before he was brought on. Phillip's 3-4 system emphasizes attacking, especially with outside linebackers who can get to the quarterback.

Brooks Reed and Connor Barwin, along with rookie first-round draft pick Whitney Mercilus, Brian Cushing, and former Dallas Cowboys LB Bradie James will go after the opposing quarterback every time. The front line will boast J.J. Watt, Shaun Cody, and the Ninja Assassin Antonio Smith. In the secondary look for Johnathan Joseph, Glover Quin, Daniel Manning and Kareem Jackson to pick up where they left off last season.

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Here's a look at the **TOP HOUSTON TEXANS PLAYERS TO WATCH** during the 2012 season. They are listed below.

### OFFENSE

### DEFENSE

WR

Kevin Walter

DE

LT

Duane Brown

DE

Antonio Smith

C

Chris Myers

LB

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Connor Barwin

RG

Antoine Caldwell

LB

Bradie James

TE

Owen Daniels

LB

Brooks Reed

WR

Andre Johnson

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CB

Johnathan Joseph

QB

Matt Schaub

FS

Danieal Manning

RB

Arian Foster

CB

Kareem Jackson

FB

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James Casey

LB

Whitney Mercilus

WR

DeVier Posey

DE

Jared Crick

RB

Ben Tate