

Ware contract details

\$79-million deal sets standard for non-quarterbacks. ★ [Andrew Brandt](#)



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I was able to get my hands on the massive [contract extension between the Cowboys and DeMarcus Ware](#), and my conclusion remains: This is a truly impressive deal. As you watch No. 94 on the Cowboys, know that, in the language of NFL locker rooms – and using a phrase I hear too often among professional athletes -- “He got paayed!”

Here are the particulars on Ware’s bounty:

Signing bonus: \$20 million

Salaries

2009: \$6M (\$5.59M guaranteed)

2010: \$7.8M (all guaranteed)

2011: \$6.7M (\$6.61M guaranteed)

2012: \$4.5M

2013: \$5.5M

2014: \$12.25M

2015: \$13.75M



DeMarcus Ware's new contract includes a signing bonus of \$20 million.

Offseason Workout Bonus: \$500,000 per season 2011-2015

Total Value

All told, the contract worth is \$79 million. That factors out to an APY (average per year) of \$13.16 million.

Ware was under contract at the time of the extension for \$1M. So the “new money” of the deal is \$78M, or an APY of \$13M.

Looking at next year and the prospect of an uncapped 2010, Ware would have been a restricted free agent with the Cowboys. We can assume that the team, absent this deal, would have placed the “super tender” of first- and third-round picks on Ware, an amount of \$3.268M. Under that scenario, the “new money” is worth \$74.732M, a new money APY of \$14.95M.

Analysis: What makes this deal so impressive is where Ware started, not where he finished. Having only a salary of \$1M and an uncertain future with an uncapped 2010, Ware had a long way to go to meet the numbers of the top deals done the past few months around the league.

Specifically, the recent deals of Eli Manning and Philip Rivers were negotiated off escalated salaries in the \$8-9M range.



Ware's total contract is valued at \$79 million

Terrell Suggs' contract was negotiated off a \$10.2M franchise tag number, and Suggs, having received the franchise tag two years in a row, could have only received the quarterback franchise tag in 2010, an amount exceeding \$15M. Even the mother of all free-agent contracts, that of Albert Haynesworth, was negotiated against the backdrop of unrestricted free agent with multiple teams in play.

The fact Ware negotiated this extension off a \$1M number this year and questionable free agency next year makes it truly striking.

Guarantee

The guaranteed amount is \$40M, exceeding the guarantees of Rivers and Manning and pulling in right below the new standards for guaranteed contracts, those of Haynesworth (\$41M) and Matthew Stafford (\$41.7M).

Analysis: This is as impressive a number as there is other than the largest free-agent contract in NFL history (Haynesworth) and the largest rookie contract in NFL history (Stafford). There's not much else to say. The numbers are remarkable.

The only non-quarterback contract that I would say outperforms this deal is the one signed in February by Raiders cornerback Nnamdi Asomugha. Although Asomugha was about to be tagged with a franchise number of \$11.7M before he agreed to terms, it's still the most stunning contract in the league, a three-year deal averaging more than \$15M a year. Even assuming he was to get the franchise tag and the "new money" of "only" \$11.43M a year, the fact that he's a free agent again in three years, at age 30, makes that contract a staggering deal.



Albert Haynesworth is about the only defensive player that will make more than Ware.

As a result, I would give the cornerback a slight edge over the outside linebacker.

I would put Ware's deal right behind it, though. This is a massive contract that sets a new standard for non-quarterbacks. We all knew this deal would be big, given the team and the player. We just didn't know it would be this big.