



Breaking Bad (season 2)

The second season of the American television drama series *Breaking Bad* premiered on March 8, 2009, and concluded on May 31, 2009. It consisted of 13 episodes, each running approximately 47 minutes in length. AMC broadcast the second season on Sundays at 10:00 pm in the United States. The complete second season was released on Region 1 DVD and Region A Blu-ray on March 16, 2010.^[1]

Cast

Main

- Bryan Cranston as Walter White, a terminally ill high school chemistry teacher in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Walt runs a drug business with his partner Jesse.
- Anna Gunn as Skyler White, Walt's pregnant wife and a bookkeeper for the firm Beneke Fabricators.
- Aaron Paul as Jesse Pinkman, a laid-back, small-time drug dealer and cooker who is in partnership with Walter White.
- Dean Norris as Hank Schrader, Walt and Skyler's brother-in-law and a DEA agent.
- Betsy Brandt as Marie Schrader, Skyler's sister and Hank's wife.
- RJ Mitte as Walter White Jr., Walt and Skyler's teenage son, who has cerebral palsy.

Recurring

- Krysten Ritter as Jane Margolis, Jesse's drug addicted landlord and later girlfriend.
- Steven Michael Quezada as Steven Gomez, Hank's partner at the DEA.
- Charles Baker as Skinny Pete, one of Jesse's friends who helps sell Walt and Jesse's meth.
- Christopher Cousins as Ted Beneke, Skyler's former boss whom she begins a brief affair with.
- Matt L. Jones as Badger, one of Jesse's friends who helps sell Walt and Jesse's meth.
- Bob Odenkirk as Saul Goodman, a sleazy lawyer who becomes affiliated with Walt's crimes.
- John de Lancie as Donald Margolis, Jane's father and Jesse's landlord who also works as an air traffic controller.

<i>Breaking Bad</i>	
Season 2	
	
Season 2 DVD cover	
Starring	
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<u>Anna Gunn</u>	
<u>Aaron Paul</u>	
<u>Dean Norris</u>	
<u>Betsy Brandt</u>	
<u>RJ Mitte</u>	
Country of origin	
United States	
No. of episodes	
13	
Release	
Original network	
<u>AMC</u>	
Original release	
March 8 – May 31, 2009	
Season chronology	

- Tom Kiesche as Clovis, Badger's cousin.
- Rodney Rush as Combo, one of Jesse's friends who helps sell Walt and Jesse's meth.
- Michael Shamus Wiles as George Merkert, the head of the Albuquerque DEA office, Hank and Steve's boss.
- Raymond Cruz as Tuco Salamanca, a wrathful drug kingpin and formerly the distributor of Walt and Jesse's meth.
- Giancarlo Esposito as Gus Fring, the owner of the fictional fast-food chain, Los Pollos Hermanos, and secretly a drug kingpin associated with the Cartel who is the new distributor of Walt and Jesse's meth.
- Tess Harper as Diane Pinkman, Jesse's mother.
- Mark Margolis as Hector Salamanca, Tuco's mute and wheelchair-bound uncle who only communicates with a bell.
- Sam McMurray as Dr. Victor Bravenec, one of Walt's surgeons.
- Carmen Serano as Principal Carmen Molina, the principal of J.P. Wynne High School, the school that Walter Jr. attends and Walt works at.

Guest

- Jeremiah Bitsui as Victor, Gus' loyal henchman.
- Nigel Gibbs as APD Detective Tim Roberts, a homicide investigator for the Albuquerque Police Department and one of Hank's colleagues.
- Jessica Hecht as Gretchen Schwartz, Walt's old friend and former fiancée.
- Danny Trejo as Tortuga, a member of the Cartel who's working as an informant for the DEA.
- Jonathan Banks as Mike Ehrmantraut, a "cleaner" and one of Saul's associates who also works for Gus.

Episodes

The titles of the first, fourth, tenth, and thirteenth episodes form a sentence that reveals an event that takes place in the season finale (Seven Thirty-Seven Down Over ABQ).^[2]

No. overall	No. in season	Title	Directed by	Written by	Original air date	U.S. viewers (millions)
8	1	"Seven Thirty-Seven"	<u>Bryan Cranston</u>	J. Roberts	March 8, 2009	1.66 ^[3]
<p>No-Doze dies from the beating Tuco inflicted on him, and Gonzo leaves to hide the body. Walt and Jesse are horrified by Tuco's violent outbursts, as well as the mysterious appearance of an ominous black SUV. Jesse resolves to shoot Tuco, but Walt has a more surreptitious plan involving poisoning him with <u>ricin</u>, thus leaving their hands clean. Hank reviews the security surveillance footage of the warehouse break-in without realizing he is watching Walt and Jesse, though he can tell they are inexperienced thieves. Investigating the junkyard, he finds Gonzo dead from a botched attempt to hide No-Doze's body. Skyler tells Hank about Marie's shoplifting, and learns she has already been receiving therapy for <u>kleptomania</u>. Jesse and Walt's fears come true as Tuco kidnaps them.</p>						
9	2	"Grilled"	<u>Charles Haid</u>	<u>George Mastras</u>	March 15, 2009	1.60 ^[4]
<p>Tuco takes Walt and Jesse at gunpoint to a remote desert hideout, where he takes care of his sick uncle Hector, a former drug kingpin who is now incapacitated due to a <u>stroke</u> and can only communicate with a bell. Tuco explains that Hank and the DEA have rolled his entire organization. Unaware of Gonzo's death, Tuco believes Gonzo has ratted him out. Tuco now intends to take Walt and Jesse to Mexico, where they will cook meth for him 24/7. Desperate, Walt attempts to poison Tuco, but Hector disrupts his plan. Enraged, Tuco attacks and attempts to kill Jesse, but Jesse manages to wound him and escape with Walt. Meanwhile, Skyler is worried over Walt's disappearance and, after Hank reveals his suspicion that Walt has a second cell phone, remembers that Jesse had been supplying Walt with <u>marijuana</u>. Hank tracks Jesse to Tuco's hideout and gets into a shootout with Tuco, whom he kills in self-defense.</p>						
10	3	"Bit by a Dead Bee"	<u>Terry McDonough</u>	<u>Peter Gould</u>	March 22, 2009	1.13 ^[5]
<p>Walt and Jesse have to get back home and explain their disappearances; Walt forms a plan, and they split up. Alone, Walt goes to a supermarket, removes his clothes, and wanders around the aisles, feigning a disoriented state. He is hospitalized and claims to have no memory of where he has been for the past few days. Jesse, meanwhile returns to his house and, with Badger's help, packs all of his lab equipment into the RV and arranges it to be towed away. He then allows the DEA to find him in a motel room with a prostitute, with whom he claims to have been shackled up all weekend. Hank does not believe him and brings in Hector to identify him, but the old man refuses to cooperate with the authorities. Jesse is freed, but the DEA confiscates all of his money.</p>						
11	4	"Down"	<u>John Dahl</u>	<u>Sam Catlin</u>	March 29, 2009	1.29 ^[6]
<p>Walt and Jesse appear to be in the clear, but Jesse has no money and Walt cannot leave the house to cook meth without Skyler wondering where he is. Jesse's parents, who own his house, order him to vacate. Now homeless, Jesse tracks down his hidden RV and spends the night in it. Suspicious of Walt's actions, including his denial of having a second cell phone, Skyler begins going out all day and refuses to tell Walt of her whereabouts until he tells her the truth about what he has been up to; Walt continues to deny any wrongdoing. After stealing his RV from the impound lot, Jesse arrives at Walt's home and convinces him to give him half of their remaining money.</p>						
12	5	"Breakage"	<u>Johan Renck</u>	<u>Moira Walley-Beckett</u>	April 5, 2009	1.21 ^[7]
<p>Walt continues his treatment and his condition improves, but he is concerned about the growing medical bills. Jesse begins to re-establish himself, paying off his debts and getting a new place to live. He develops an interest in his new next-door neighbor and landlord, Jane Margolis. Hank and the DEA come across the name Heisenberg, but are not sure if he is real or just an urban legend. Hank is promoted and appointed to a tristate drug task force. Walt and Jesse resume cooking. Jesse is not keen on selling on the street and suggests he and Walt take over Tuco's role as a distributor; he recruits his friends Badger, Skinny Pete, and Combo as dealers. Skinny Pete is ripped off by a drug-addicted couple, and Walt tells Jesse that unless he does something about it, word will get around that Jesse and his crew are easy marks.</p>						
13	6	"Peekaboo"	<u>Peter Medak</u>	J. Roberts & <u>Vince Gilligan</u>	April 12, 2009	1.41 ^[8]
<p>Walt returns to work. Skyler receives a call from <u>Gretchen Schwartz</u> and Skyler thanks her for paying for Walt's treatment. Gretchen does not reveal the truth, but Walt's bitterness at their past relationship—personal and business—comes out. In response, Gretchen calls Skyler and tells her that she and Elliott can no longer pay for Walt's treatment; Walt covers by telling Skyler that Gretchen and Elliott are insolvent. Jesse decides to confront the couple who ripped off Skinny Pete and discovers their young neglected son home alone. Jesse bonds with their son until the drug-addicted couple returns home; Jesse is held hostage by the couple. Later, the female addict kills her partner, Spooge,</p>						

by unbalancing a stolen ATM he is working on, crushing his head. Jesse recovers the meth and cash from the ATM, calls the police, and flees the scene.

14	7	"Negro y Azul"	<u>Felix Alcala</u>	<u>John Shiban</u>	April 19, 2009	1.20 ^[9]
Walt has trouble getting in touch with Jesse, who has been staying at home since his encounter with Spoooge. Jesse is also not providing product to his dealers, so Walt arranges to deliver it. He learns that the word on the street is that Jesse killed Spoooge and, due to his new reputation as a cold-blooded killer, they are having no problem at all collecting payment. Walt decides the time has come to expand their territory and put Jesse's new reputation to good use. Skyler decides to get a job and goes back to her old employer. Hank struggles to fit in at his new job in El Paso. During an investigation, Hank's task force comes across the severed head of an informant mounted on a tortoise. An explosive strapped to the tortoise goes off, killing several DEA agents and officers; Hank escapes unharmed.						
15	8	"Better Call Saul"	Terry McDonough	Peter Gould	April 26, 2009	1.04 ^[10]
Hank suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder after the bombing in El Paso; Walt tries to cheer Hank up and tells him to move on. Walt and Jesse face yet another problem when Badger is arrested by the Albuquerque police. They end up hiring a shady lawyer, Saul Goodman, who ensures that Badger gets off with a light sentence without having to give away Jesse or Walt's identity. Through a private investigator, Saul tracks down Walt at the school and offers his services for a cut of the profit.						
16	9	"4 Days Out"	Michelle MacLaren	Sam Catlin	May 3, 2009	1.27 ^[11]
Walt is convinced that his medical condition is deteriorating; he continues to have coughing fits and is now coughing up blood. After Saul calculates the numbers, Walt realizes that there is not much money left for his family. With an excuse of visiting his mother, Walt and Jesse set off for the desert for a marathon cooking session over an extended weekend. During their trip, Jesse accidentally leaves the keys in the ignition, inadvertently draining the RV's battery. Walt and Jesse find themselves stuck in the middle of the desert, cold and without food and water. Walt's knowledge of chemistry again saves the day, as they build a makeshift battery able to jump-start the RV. Returning to <u>Albuquerque</u> , Walt and Skyler discover that Walt's cancer is in remission.						
17	10	"Over"	<u>Phil Abraham</u>	Moira Walley-Beckett	May 10, 2009	1.19 ^[12]
Despite the good news about his condition, Walt is unhappy, verging on anger. Skyler decides to throw a party to celebrate the news and thank all of their friends for their support, but Walt gets drunk and then provokes an argument with Hank. He is embarrassed about his behavior and tries to make amends. Walt also tells Jesse the good news and tells him that he is finished with their enterprise. Skyler confides to her boss, Ted, about Walt's condition. Jesse's relationship with Jane continues to grow, but he is taken aback when her father, Donald, drops in to see her; Jane does not introduce Jesse as her boyfriend. The ensuing confrontation compromises their relationship; however, they make up in the end.						
18	11	"Mandala"	<u>Adam Bernstein</u>	George Mastras	May 17, 2009	1.29 ^[13]
After Combo is murdered by a rival gang, Saul proposes a new distribution method for Walt and Jesse's product. Under stress, Jesse tells Jane what he does. Saul puts Walt in touch with a meth distributor named Gus Fring, who agrees to purchase Walt's product. However, Gus expresses concern about Jesse's drug problem, which has escalated into heroin use due to Jane's relapse. Skyler finds out that Ted has been engaging in tax evasion from the IRS, but due to their past relationship, she decides not to report it. Walt receives a large offer for the short-notice delivery of the remainder of their inventory, but at the same time receives a call from Skyler, notifying him of her imminent labor.						
19	12	"Phoenix"	<u>Colin Bucksey</u>	John Shiban	May 24, 2009	1.19 ^[14]
Walt delivers the inventory in time but misses his daughter's birth. Jesse confronts Walt about his share of the payment, but Walt refuses to disburse the funds until Jesse can prove his sobriety. Jesse and Jane's addiction is discovered by Donald, who agrees to give her one day to settle her affairs before going to rehab. In an effort to minimize the cost of Walt's upcoming surgery, Walt Jr. sets up a website to gather donations for his father's medical expenses. It is quickly used by Saul as a way to launder Walt's earnings so they can be spent without raising suspicion. After discovering Jesse's payday, Jane blackmails Walt into delivering Jesse's share. Later, Walt returns to Jesse's and finds Jesse and Jane passed out in bed after a drug binge, both lying on their sides. He tries to shake Jesse conscious and as he does so, Jane flops over onto her back. Jane vomits and begins to suffocate. Walt leans to turn her over but quickly changes his mind as he stands and watches Jane die.						
20	13	"ABQ"	Adam Bernstein	Vince Gilligan	May 31, 2009	1.50 ^[15]

Jesse discovers Jane's passing and reaches out to Walt. Walt contacts Saul, who sends his private investigator and cleaner Mike to conceal Jesse's involvement in Jane's death. Jesse is distraught and flees; Walt later locates him in a crack house and takes him to rehab. Walt's funds are funneled into his son's website, which attracts the attention of the media, causing him to be overcome with guilt. Walt's secretive behavior becomes a problem once again when he accidentally references a second cell phone while under the initial effects of anesthesia moments before his surgery. This prompts Skyler to investigate deeper, thereby revealing many of Walt's lies, including not taking any money from Gretchen and never visiting his mother, which spurs her to leave him. Jane's father, an air traffic controller, is distraught from his daughter's death, and accidentally allows a mid-air collision to occur between an airliner and a small plane in the sky above Albuquerque. The crash results in debris, including a scorched pink teddy bear and human remains, raining down onto the Whites' residence, as well as much of the city.

Production

The writers of *Breaking Bad* planned the storyline for the entire season in advance of filming and knew how the season would end right from the beginning. That differed from subsequent seasons, in which the writers did not have a complete plan and developed the storyline as the episodes progressed. Series creator Vince Gilligan said of season two, "That came about through many, many hours of beating our heads against the wall—very laborious work, which is probably why we haven't repeated that formula since."^[16]

Music

The original score for *Breaking Bad* was composed by Dave Porter. The show also uses music from other recording artists with music supervision by Thomas Golubić. Selected songs from Season 2 are featured on the *Breaking Bad* soundtrack available through iTunes and Amazon.^[17]

Home video releases

The second season was released on DVD in Region 1 and Blu-ray in Region A on March 16, 2010.^[1] It was released on DVD in Region 2 on July 26, 2010^[18] and in Region 4 on February 8, 2010.^[19]

Reception

Reviews

The second season of *Breaking Bad* received very positive reviews from critics, scoring 84 out of 100 on Metacritic.^[20] On review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes, the second season has an approval rating of 97% based on 36 reviews, with an average rating of 9.1/10. The site's critics consensus reads: "*Breaking Bad* continues to soar, thanks to its artsy style and suspenseful thrills."^[21] *Entertainment Weekly* critic Ken Tucker stated "*Bad* is a superlatively fresh metaphor for a middle-age crisis: It took cancer and lawbreaking to jolt Walt out of his suburban stupor, to experience life again—to take chances, risk danger, do things he didn't think himself capable of doing. None of this would work, of course, without Emmy winner Cranston's ferocious, funny selflessness as an actor. For all its bleakness and darkness, there's a glowing exhilaration about this series: It's a feel-good show about feeling really bad."^[22] *San Francisco Chronicle*'s Tim Goodman claimed "The first three episodes of Season 2 that AMC sent out continue that level of achievement with no evident missteps. In fact, it looks as if Gilligan's bold vision for *Breaking Bad*, now duly rewarded against all odds, has invigorated everyone involved in the project. You can sense its maturity and rising ambition in each

episode."^[23] Horror novelist Stephen King lauded the series, comparing it to *Twin Peaks* and *Blue Velvet*.^[24] Alan Sepinwall of *The Star-Ledger* praised the season, calling it "brilliant". He lauded the sound design as well as the cinematography, enjoying the "emphasis of beautiful desert vistas and disturbing tableaux". He also compared the series to *The Sopranos*, more specifically on the similarity of Walter White and Tony Soprano and their respective reactions to similar situations.^[25] David Hinckley of the *New York Daily News* praised Cranston's performance of Walter White calling him "one of the best played characters on television".^[26]

Awards and nominations

The second season received numerous awards and nominations, including five Primetime Emmy Award nominations with two wins. Bryan Cranston won his second consecutive award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series and Lynne Willingham won her second consecutive award for Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing for a Drama Series for "ABQ". The series received its first nomination for Outstanding Drama Series, Aaron Paul received his first nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series, and Michael Slovis was nominated for Outstanding Cinematography for a One Hour Series for "ABQ".^[27]

Cranston won the Television Critics Association Award for Individual Achievement in Drama, with the series being nominated for Outstanding Achievement in Drama. Cranston won his second consecutive Satellite Award for Best Actor in a Drama Series, with the series winning the award for Best Drama Series. Aaron Paul won the Saturn Award for Best Supporting Actor on Television, with the series winning the award for Best Syndicated/Cable Television Series. The series received two Writers Guild of America Award nominations, for Best Drama Series, and John Shiban for Best Episodic Drama for "Phoenix".^[27]

Year	Award	Category	Recipient	Result	Ref.
2009	<u>Primetime Emmy Awards</u>	<u>Outstanding Drama Series</u>	<i>Breaking Bad</i>	Nominated	[28]
		<u>Outstanding Actor in a Drama Series</u>	<u>Bryan Cranston</u> for the episode: "Phoenix"	Won	
		<u>Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series</u>	<u>Aaron Paul</u> for the episode: "Peekaboo"	Nominated	
		<u>Outstanding Cinematography for a Single-Camera Series (One Hour)</u>	<u>Michael Slovis</u> for the episode: "ABQ"	Nominated	
		<u>Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing - Drama Series</u>	<u>Lynne Willingham</u> for the episode: "ABQ"	Won	

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