

= King @-@ Size Homer =

" King @-@ Size Homer " is the seventh episode of The Simpsons ' seventh season . It originally aired on the Fox network in the United States on November 5 , 1995 . In the episode , Homer despises the nuclear plant 's new exercise program , and decides to gain 61 pounds ( 28 kg ) in order to claim a disability and work at home . Homer soon begins to experience the negative aspects of being obese , and his life starts falling apart .

The episode was written by Dan Greaney and directed by Jim Reardon . Joan Kenley makes her second of three guest appearances on The Simpsons in the episode as the voice of the telephone lady . It features cultural references to world 's heaviest twins , the 1993 film What 's Eating Gilbert Grape , and the soft drink Tab . Since airing , the episode has received positive reviews from fans and television critics , and Empire named it the best episode of the show . It acquired a Nielsen rating of 10 @. @ 0 , and was the third highest rated show on the Fox network that week .

= = Plot = =

Mr. Burns organizes a morning calisthenics program at the nuclear power plant , much to everyone 's delight but to the dismay of Homer ( the only worker who hates doing five minutes of light aerobic exercise ) . After learning that someone who is disabled can work from home , and thus be excluded from the exercise program , Homer tries to find a way to achieve this goal . Homer soon discovers that any employee that weighs 300 pounds ( 136 kg ) or more qualifies as disabled , and so he decides to gain the 61 pounds he needs to reach 300 . He begins eating excessively , despite Marge and Lisa 's repeated warnings that he could seriously endanger his health . With Bart 's help , Homer soon reaches his goal , and Mr. Burns installs a stay @-@ at @-@ home work terminal in the Simpson house .

Homer is given simple responsibilities but he still neglects his responsibilities as a safety inspector by simply typing " yes " every time the system prompts him . He also discovers he can no longer fit in his clothes , and he takes up wearing a muumuu as a result . Looking for shortcuts , he leaves his terminal , with a drinking bird to press the Y key to indicate " yes " on the keyboard and goes out to see a film . Refused admission because of his size , Homer is angered after the cinema manager and other members of the public tease him about his appearances . He immediately leaves , claiming that he is not food crazy and that overweight people are as hardworking as anyone else . Returning home , he discovers in his absence that the nodding drinking bird fell over and that a nuclear meltdown is about to take place at the plant unless the system is manually shut down . As he is unable to prevent it via the computer and unable to phone the plant and warn them because his fingers have become too fat to dial properly , Homer tries to run , skateboard , and drive to the plant , all of which fail as a result of his obesity . He eventually gets to the plant by stealing an ice cream truck . Homer arrives at the power plant and climbs up to reach the manual shutdown button , but ends up accidentally falling onto the gas store , blocking the release tube with the oversized lower half of his body and thus preventing the explosion . As a reward for turning the " potential Chernobyl " into a " mere Three Mile Island " , Mr. Burns gives Homer a medal and guarantees that he will make Homer thin once more after he gets decontaminated from the tank . But when Homer could not even do one sit @-@ up in their first work @-@ out session , Mr. Burns reluctantly decides to simply pay for liposuction instead , much to Homer 's delight .

= = Production = =

" King @-@ Size Homer " was written by Dan Greaney , and directed by Jim Reardon . It was the first episode Greaney wrote for The Simpsons . Prior to this episode he was working as a lawyer and was contemplating moving to Kiev , Ukraine , to work for a start @-@ up company . He said that this episode " saved " him from doing so . Greaney pitched some ideas to the writing staff , but none of them were any good , so then @-@ show runner Bill Oakley gave him the idea for this episode . Oakley had Greaney come to Hollywood to write it , and when Greaney showed the first

draft to the staff , they liked it , so Oakley hired him .

The writers wanted the title of the episode to make Homer sound proud about his weight , so they decided to name it " King @-@ Size Homer " . Greaney really enjoyed working on the episode because Homer is constantly happy and goal oriented in it , instead of being a slob and " eating all the time " . The Simpsons animator David Silverman designed the fat Homer for the episode . There was a discussion about what Homer would wear when he became fat , and they decided to go with a muumuu dress . The writers were also discussing about how they were going to treat Homer 's fatness . They did not want Homer to come off as a " hog " , so they decided that the viewer should barely see him eating after he reaches his 300 pounds goal . As the writers were trying to figure out a way to get Homer back to his old weight by the end of the episode , someone suggested that Homer should feel bad about his obesity , and therefore become thin for Marge , but that idea was scrapped in early production . Action figurines based on fat Homer were made for the World of Springfield series shortly after the episode had aired .

Homer has a dream in which he is standing at the foot of a mountain with 300 pounds as the goal at the top . A pig wearing a tuxedo appears next to him in the dream , and motivates Homer to reach the top of the mountain . Homer takes a bite of the pig 's arm , and runs up the mountain . This scene was inspired by the cover of the " Sweetness and Light " issue of the National Lampoon magazine . The staff thought that Cary Grant would have been the ideal for the pig in Homer 's dream sequence , but he died nine years before the episode was made , so they used cast member Hank Azaria for that voice . Joan Kenley guest starred in the episode as the telephone lady who tells Homer : " The fingers you have used to dial are too fat . To obtain a special dialing wand , please mash the keypad with your palm now . " The staff flew her down from Northern California to record her part for the episode .

= = Cultural references = =

While Homer is in the clothes store , as the camera pans with him , two mannequins wearing similar outfits and riding on bikes are shown . These are based on Billy and Benny McCrary , the world 's heaviest twins who weighed over 700 pounds ( 318 kg ) each . They received fame after appearing in the The Guinness Book of World Records in a picture that depicts the twins riding their Honda motorcycles . Also Homer operates an Apple Lisa as his stay @-@ at @-@ home work terminal when the Apple Lisa was discontinued in 1986 . They would appear again in the same season in the episode " The Day the Violence Died " . The scene in which Bart and his friends observe the obese Homer through a window is based on a scene from the 1993 film What 's Eating Gilbert Grape .

Homer thinks that he can order the soft drink Tab by pressing the tab key on the keyboard . When Homer vents gas from a nuclear reactor , the gas destroys crops of corn . A farmer looks and says , " Oh no , the corn ! Paul Newman 's gonna have ma ' legs broke ! " This is in reference to the legend of Newman 's Own popcorn products , in which Newman threatened anyone who might attempt to steal his popcorn . At the cinema , Homer tries to watch the film Honk If You 're Horny , starring actor Pauly Shore and actress Faye Dunaway .

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast , " King @-@ Size Homer " finished 45th ( tied with Grace Under Fire ) in the ratings for the week of October 30 to November 3 , 1995 , with a Nielsen rating of 10 @. @ 0 . The episode was the third highest rated show on the Fox network that week .

Since airing , the episode has received mostly positive reviews from fans and television critics . In 2008 , Empire placed The Simpsons at the top of their list of " The 50 Greatest TV Shows of All Time " , and noted " King @-@ Size Homer " as the show 's best episode , calling it " An unimprovable mix of sharp dialogue , hilarious sight gags and heart . " Kimberly Potts of AOL Television named the episode the seventh best episode of the show , while Michael Moran of The Times ranked it as the tenth best . " King @-@ Size Homer " appeared on The Star @-@ Ledger 's list of the ten best episodes on The Simpsons that represent the comic and emotional scope of the

show . The Herald Sun put the episode at ninth place on their list of the top twenty episodes of The Simpsons , and highlighted the scene in which Homer is seen " commandeering an ice cream truck in a frantic dash to the nuclear plant to avoid an impending meltdown " . Todd VanDerWerff of Slant Magazine named the episode the show 's fifth best , stating " while there are a lot of funny jokes in this episode ( including Homer 's fingers that are too fat to dial ) , the best thing about it is the sight of Homer , weighing well over 300 pounds , dressed in a muumuu and a ' fat guy hat . ' The climax is a little forced and cartoon @-@ y ... but Homer 's weight gain works so well visually that the episode gets away with a lot more than it might . "

Dave Foster of DVD Times said : " The glee to which [ Homer ] takes to the challenge and the enthusiasm which Bart brings to the project show these two really do connect when the situation is oh so wrong , and the method in which the writers tackle the not @-@ always @-@ so @-@ obvious downsides to such a disability are both adult and astutely amusing . " Jennifer Malkowski of DVD Verdict considered the best part of the episode to be during Homer 's shopping trip to The Vast Waistband . The website concluded its review by giving the episode a grade of A. DVD Movie Guide 's Colin Jacobson enjoyed the episode and called it " one of the series ' more cynical episodes " , and said that it " pours on the laughs " . He continued by saying , " It 's amusing to see Homer 's pursuit of obesity , and it exploits his idiocy well . It lacks the expected mushiness about the plight of fat folks , though it does make a point about sensitivity in an understated way . " Despite the numerous laughs at Homer 's appearance from the staff of The Simpsons on the DVD audio commentary for the episode , the authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , wrote : " this isn 't one of the best episodes . Homer 's at his most irritating and childish here ? you really want Marge to beat him up . " They added that Homer 's antics with the computer , such as the scene in which he tries to find the any key , and Mr. Burns running exercise classes are the highlights of the episode .

Nick Offerman has cited this as his favorite Simpsons episode .