

## = The One with the Prom Video =

" The One with the Prom Video " is the fourteenth episode of the second season , and the 38th episode overall , of the American television situation comedy Friends , which first aired on NBC on February 1 , 1996 . The episode focuses on the main characters watching Monica ( Courteney Cox ) and Rachel ( Jennifer Aniston ) getting ready for their high school prom in the titular video . A subplot sees a now @-@ wealthy Joey ( Matt LeBlanc ) buying roommate Chandler ( Matthew Perry ) an unusual gift .

The episode was directed by James Burrows , written by Alexa Junge and guest @-@ stars Elliott Gould and Christina Pickles as Jack and Judy Geller , Michael Ray Bower as Monica 's date and Patrick Kerr as the restaurant manager .

## = = Plot = =

Joey , now earning money , gives Chandler a gaudy gold bracelet as thanks for paying for head shots and food . Chandler mocks it when it costs him a date , upsetting Joey when he overhears . Chandler promises to never take it off again but immediately realizes he can 't find it . He buys a replacement , but the original is found shortly afterwards . He gives one to Joey , repairing their friendship . Ross ( David Schwimmer ) continues to seek forgiveness from Rachel after insulting her in a previous episode , but she tells him that they as a couple will never happen . Monica 's parents bring boxes of her possessions to her apartment , and she finds a video of her and Rachel getting ready for their senior prom .

The friends decide to watch the video , although Ross objects to everyone seeing the tape . On the video , Rachel 's date , Chip Matthews , has not arrived , and Monica refuses to go to the prom without her . Mrs. Geller convinces Ross to wear his father 's tuxedo and take Rachel to the prom himself . Ross reluctantly agrees , but by the time he is dressed and ready to go , Chip has arrived and the girls leave . The video ends with Ross looking disappointed and dejected . Rachel , touched by Ross 's gesture , gets up and kisses Ross , forgiving him for what happened between them . Monica later watches the video alone which features her and her father , Jack , dancing . The video then shows Monica and Ross 's parents in bed , which disgusts her .

## = = Production = =

The producers had kept Ross and Rachel from being together throughout the first season , eventually bringing them together in the second season episode " The One Where Ross Finds Out " , only to split them up in the following episode . Writer Alexa Junge incorporated many of her own experiences into the script , in particular Phoebe 's line about Ross and Rachel being " lobsters " , something Junge 's husband once said . Aniston wore a false nose for the scenes in the video while Cox wore a " fat suit " . While a previous episode had already established Monica as being overweight as a child , this was the first on @-@ screen appearance of " Fat Monica " ( the fat suit made frequent return appearances ) . Rachel 's large nose was added because Junge believed that the characters " were so good @-@ looking , you wanted to feel they had some realness in their past " .

At first , Schwimmer did not want to wear the afro wig and mustache because he thought he would look like Gabe Kaplan in Welcome Back , Kotter ( a similarity referenced in the episode ) . He relented because it enabled him to " tap into a part of himself that was very vulnerable and shy " and incorporate it into his performance . An early script draft featured a scene in the prom video in which an episode of All My Children is on in the background . The scene was intended to feature the character " Bryce " , played by Gunther ( as revealed in " The One Where Eddie Won 't Go " ) .

## = = Reception = =

In 1997 , TV Guide ranked this episode # 100 on their list of the " 100 Greatest Episodes of All Time

" .

Entertainment Weekly rates the episode " A " , welcoming the return of Burrows as director and calling the prom video " witty character development disguised as a standard flashback . " The authors of Friends like Us : The Unofficial Guide to Friends write that it is " a watershed in the history of the show " and " It 's the sign of a good show that they can switch so effortlessly from comedy to pathos to romance in one short scene . " Robert Bianco wrote in USA Today in 2004 , " If any one outing can take credit for moving Friends from good to great , it 's Prom Video " and describes the resolution as an " ingenious , unexpected twist . "

The episode is popular among fans of the series . It appeared on one of the first region 1 " best of " DVD releases and is one of the two episodes to feature an audio commentary on the region 1 DVD release of the complete second season . In a poll conducted shortly before the series finale , " The One with the Prom Video " was voted the best episode of Friends , with 1 @.@ 6 million people polling on the Internet . The episode is the favorite of Schwimmer , who liked the comedic and emotional origins of the Ross / Rachel relationship , as well as the exchange between Monica and Chandler as she defends her weight on the video .

In 2014 , Gawker published a list of every episode of Friends ranked from # 236 through # 1 . " The One With The Prom Video " was ranked as the # 1 best episode on the list .