

Inside TV

Bryan Cranston: 'Breaking Bad' will split final season

By James Hibberd on Apr 6, 2012 at 1:00PM @James Hibberd

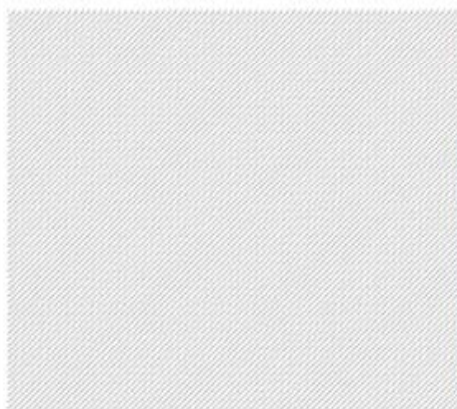


Image Credit: AMC

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The question of whether AMC will indeed split the final season of *Breaking Bad* is close to an official verdict.

Emmy-winning series star Bryan Cranston says AMC will break the award-winning drama's final 16-episode season into two separate runs, as has been speculated for months. "We're splitting it," says Cranston, who's currently shooting the fifth season premiere in New Mexico. "We're going to shoot the first eight, then take a four-month production break, then the rest will air next year."

The network has not announced a premiere date for *Breaking Bad*, though actors on the show say the drama will return in July.

AMC and Sony Pictures TV have maintained radio silence on the show's return and distribution plan. A studio spokesperson says the four-month production hiatus is "one scenario" that's being considered. The network wants to divide the final season so it has a strong summer drama airing this year and the next (it would also presumably allow *Breaking Bad* to be eligible for two award-season cycles). With *Breaking Bad* production under way and summer right around the corner, obviously the schedule should get firmed up soon, though AMC has shown a willingness to engage in some production brinksmanship in the past.

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'Breaking Bad' Creator Vince Gilligan Unsure How Series Will End

1 year ago by [Kevin Yeoman](#)



Like it or not, come the end of its fifth season, *Breaking Bad* will be no more. And while series creator Vince Gilligan is determined to bow out gracefully, he is, understandably, somewhat at odds with just how to wrap up Walter White's epic downward spiral.

Of course, ending such a beloved and critically acclaimed series comes with a notorious bag of challenges that frequently finds creatives at odds with the very audience that adores them. A fact Gilligan is all too aware.

"[It] keeps me awake at night. It gives me nightmares. The closer we get to the final episode, I assume the worse it'll be. But that's why we're ending after 16. You want to go out with fans of the show still being fans. The best we can do is be disciplined and honest in our storytelling, and not go for the bells and whistles. Let the chips fall where they may."

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After some **tense negotiations with AMC**, Gilligan and Sony Pictures Television came to an agreement that would close the series out with a lengthened **16-episode fifth season**. Through it all, there was the underlying belief that, whatever happened, *Breaking Bad's* finale was on the horizon – which makes Gilligan's disclosure that he still doesn't know the final details somewhat unexpected.

"Wish I did," Gilligan says. "I have certain hopes and dreams for how the characters will wind up, but I don't have anything nailed down plot-wise."

With luck, fans won't take that as an admission that Gilligan is entering this climactic season flying blind. Historically, *Breaking Bad* has put on a clinic of tight, concise storytelling, which has never lacked purpose or a sense of destination – so it stands to reason that, for Gilligan and the writers assembled around him, not having anything "nailed down" is still far more concrete than the finished scripts of other programs.

For example, over the course of four seasons, fans have watched Walter White (Bryan Cranston) emerge from the grip of a terminal illness as a progressively hardened and pitiless person, who, in his quest to leave his wife and children in comfort and wealth, has, ironically, robbed them of the man they knew and loved. And, after witnessing the depths to which Walter has sunk – especially in the **season 4 finale** – the question remains: how much further down can he go?



'Breaking Bad' creator Vince Gilligan and Aaron Paul

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