ENGLISH LESSON · FRIENDS S01E02 · INTERMEDIATE

Friends S01E02 (Part 1) — Carol's News

Clip: 7:15 · 13 words · 7 idioms & phrasal verbs · 2026-09-28

Watch again online



Friends — a scene from today's lesson

1 Before You Watch

The story so far

In Episode 1, Ross's wife Carol left him for a woman, Susan. In the 1990s this was a very new situation for a TV comedy. Rachel ran away from her wedding to Barry, so tomorrow she must give his ring back. Listen for 'gonna have to', 'don't have to' and 'up to me': people talk a lot about duty and choice in this clip.

Ở Tập 1, vợ của Ross là Carol đã ly hôn để sống cùng người yêu đồng giới Susan, còn Rachel bỏ trốn khỏi đám cưới với Barry nên ngày mai phải đem trả nhẫn đính hôn.

Ross	a scientist at a museum. His ex-wife Carol left him for a woman. nhà khoa học ở bảo tàng; vợ cũ Carol bỏ anh để sống với một phụ nữ
Monica	Ross's sister. A chef. She likes everything clean and perfect. em gái Ross, đầu bếp, mê sạch sẽ và hoàn hảo
Rachel	ran away from her own wedding. Now she lives with Monica. bỏ trốn khỏi đám cưới của chính mình, giờ ở chung với Monica
Chandler	the joker. He makes a joke when he feels awkward. anh chàng hay đùa, ngượng là pha trò
Joey	an actor. Kind, but slow to understand. diễn viên, tốt bụng nhưng chậm hiểu

Phoebe	a masseuse who sings at the café. Strange, sweet ideas. thợ mát-xa, hay hát ở quán cà phê; suy nghĩ kỳ quặc mà dễ thương
Carol & Susan	Ross's ex-wife and her girlfriend. vợ cũ của Ross và bạn gái của cô
Marsha	Ross's colleague at the museum. đồng nghiệp của Ross ở bảo tàng

2 Watch once — with subtitles

Just enjoy it. Then: Two problems happen in this clip. What are they?

- **A.** Carol is pregnant, and Rachel loses her ring.
- **B.** Ross loses his job, and Monica burns the dinner.
- **C.** Rachel meets Barry, and Chandler moves out.

3 Bit by bit — where's the joke? — 7 short bits

1 Kissing is just the opening act (0:00–1:08)

Hôn chỉ là tiết mục mở màn

The girls say the first kiss is very important. The guys don't agree. Chandler explains with a picture from a rock concert. Các cô nói nụ hôn đầu rất quan trọng. Các anh không đồng ý, và Chandler giải thích bằng hình ảnh một đêm nhạc rock.

At a big rock concert, a comedian comes on first. Nobody came for him. Everyone is waiting for the band.

the comedian	=	**kissing**
Pink Floyd (the band)	=	**sex**
the album, alone	=	**being alone at home**

Chandler says kissing is boring — you just sit through it. Rachel uses his own picture against him: be nice, or you'll be alone with your album.

Chandler chê hôn là màn phụ, ráng ngồi cho qua. Rachel lấy luôn cái ví của anh để dằn mặt: không chịu "mở màn" thì về nhà "nghe đĩa một mình".

> **Joey:** "Are we still talking about sex?" — Joey is always the last to understand. The metaphor got too long for him.

opening act **tiết mục mở màn**	the short show before the main show *"kissing is pretty much like an opening act"* The whole joke is built on this.
sit through (something) **ráng ngồi cho hết**	stay until the end of something boring *"the stand-up comedian you have to sit through before Pink Floyd comes out"* Use it: I sat through a 3-hour meeting.
word of advice **khuyên thật một câu**	let me tell you something useful (often a warning) *"word of advice. Bring back the comedian."*

Pink Floyd **US culture**	a very famous British rock band ban nhạc rock Anh cực nổi tiếng

Check: Why does Rachel say “Bring back the comedian”?

- **A.** She likes stand-up comedy.
- **B.** She wants men to take kissing seriously.
- **C.** She wants to see Pink Floyd.

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2 Cave people have “issues” (1:08–1:49)

Người tiền sử cũng “có vấn đề”

Ross works at a museum. He and Marsha are looking at a model of a cave family. Marsha thinks the cave woman looks angry. Ross làm ở bảo tàng. Ross và chị Marsha đang xem mô hình một gia đình người tiền sử. Marsha thấy bà vợ tiền sử trông có vẻ bực.

Today, “she has issues” means she has emotional problems. Marsha talks about cave people like a modern unhappy couple.

the husband with a club	=	**a cheating husband**
mastodon smell in the carpet	=	**boring housework**
Ross: “that glacier's getting close”	=	**real cave problems = ice, not feelings**

Ross says cave people had no time for feelings. Then his own big “issue” walks in: his ex-wife Carol.
Ross cãi: người tiền sử lo chạy băng còn không kịp, làm gì có “vấn đề tình cảm”. Đúng lúc đó “vấn đề” to nhất đời Ross bước vào: vợ cũ Carol.

> **Marsha:** “Speaking of issues, isn't that your ex-wife?” — Then she leaves fast with a museum joke: “I'll catch up with you in the ice age.”

have issues **có khúc mắc tâm lý**	have emotional problems (informal) *“Well, she has issues.”* Very common today: He has trust issues.
mastodon **voi răng mấu (voi tiền sử, họ hàng voi ma-mút)**	a giant hairy elephant that lived long ago *“trying to get the mastodon smell out of the carpet”*
glacier **sông băng**	a huge river of ice that moves slowly *“Gee, that glacier's getting kinda close.”*
Speaking of ... **nhân tiện nói tới ...**	used to change topic with the word just said *“Speaking of issues, isn't that your ex-wife?”* Use it: Speaking of food, I'm hungry!

Check: What does Marsha mean by “she has issues”?

- **A.** She has many magazines.
- **B.** She has a lot of work.
- **C.** She has emotional problems.

3 “You look great. I hate that.” (2:01–2:55)

“Em trông đẹp lắm. Anh ghét điều đó.”

Carol, Ross's ex-wife, visits him at work. She left Ross for a woman, Susan. Ross is very nervous and says strange things. Carol — vợ cũ của Ross, đã bỏ anh để sống với một người phụ nữ tên Susan — tới chỗ làm thăm anh. Ross run quá nên nói toàn câu kỳ cục.

Ross is too honest. He says what he thinks, not what is polite.

“You look great. I hate that.”	=	**I want you to look sad without me**
“In here, anyone who stands erect…”	=	**in a museum of cave men, anyone looks good**
“Still… a lesbian?” — “You never know.”	=	**Ross still hopes she will come back**

Every time Carol is kind, Ross makes it awkward. Then she gives the big news.

Carol nói gì tử tế Ross cũng làm cho ngượng hơn. Rồi cô tung tin lớn.

> **Carol:** “I'm pregnant.” — The baby is Ross's. This is the big news of the whole episode.

stand erect **đứng thẳng (như người, không như vượn)**	stand up straight (like humans, not apes) *“in here, anyone who… stands erect…”* Ross jokes: next to the cave-men models, anyone who stands up looks good.
You never know. **biết đâu được**	maybe it can happen — nobody is sure *“Well… you never know.”* Ross hopes Carol is not a lesbian any more. That's the sad joke.

Check: Ross says “You look great. I hate that.” Why is it funny?

- **A.** He is too honest: he wanted her to look bad.
- **B.** He hates her new clothes.
- **C.** He thinks she is ill.

4 Monica's cleaning panic (2:56–4:03)

Monica dọn nhà cuống cuồng

Monica's parents are coming to dinner. She cleans everything again and again. Her friends make fun of her. Bố mẹ Monica sắp tới ăn tối. Cô dọn đi dọn lại mọi thứ, cả nhóm thì trêu cô.

Monica's parents always find something to criticise. So she fixes every tiny thing — even a pillow.

Joey: “the swallowing slowed me down”	=	**she takes his plate before he finishes**
Chandler: “now I wish I was dead”	=	**he copies Monica's crazy mood about a tiny paper ball**
Chandler: “how cruel… the flatness of a child's pillow”	=	**sarcasm: a flat pillow is nothing**

Everyone answers Monica's panic with fake drama. Phoebe finds a new word for her: “chaotic and twirly”.

Ai cũng đáp lại cơn hoảng của Monica bằng kiểu làm quá giả bộ. Phoebe còn chế chữ mới cho cô: “chaotic and twirly” (loạn xạ, xoay mòng mòng).

> **Phoebe:** “You're all chaotic and twirly, you know. And not in a good way.” — “Twirly” is not a normal word. Phoebe makes it up — that's very Phoebe.

fluff (a pillow) **vỗ cho gối phồng lên**	hit or shake a pillow so it gets soft and round *“She's already fluffed that pillow.”*
give someone ammunition **cho người ta thêm cớ để bắt bẻ**	give someone reasons to criticise you *“I just don't wanna give them any more ammunition than they already have.”* Ammunition = bullets. Here it means reasons to attack you.
chaotic and twirly **loạn xạ, xoay như chong chóng**	very messy and spinning around (twirly = Phoebe's own word) *“you're all chaotic and twirly, you know.”*
flatness **độ xẹp**	being flat (a pillow that is not soft and round) *“the flatness of a child's pillow”* Chandler uses a big, serious word for a silly problem. That's the sarcasm.
Three's Company **US culture**	a 1970s TV comedy. Every episode was about a misunderstanding — so Phoebe has “already seen this one”. phim hài Mỹ thập niên 70, tập nào cũng xoay quanh một vụ hiểu lầm — nên Phoebe nói “xem rồi”.

Check: “I don't want to give them any more ammunition.” Monica means:

- **A.** She doesn't want to give her parents guns.
- **B.** She doesn't want to give her parents more reasons to criticise her.
- **C.** She doesn't want to cook for her parents.

5 Prince Ross & the Ugly Naked Guy (4:03–4:24)

Hoàng tử Ross & Ông Trần Truồng Xấu Xí

Monica explains why her parents love Ross more. Then Chandler sees something terrible out of the window. Monica giải thích vì sao bố mẹ cưng Ross hơn. Rồi Chandler thấy một cảnh kinh khủng ngoài cửa sổ.

In her parents' eyes, Ross is perfect. Monica says it like Ross is a real royal prince.

“Ross can do no wrong”	=	**everything Ross does is good**
“some big ceremony before I was born”	=	**like a royal crowning — she missed it**
Ugly Naked Guy	=	**a neighbour across the street who is always naked**

Monica's sad family story is cut by something gross: the naked neighbour now has an exercise machine for his thighs.

Chuyện gia đình buồn của Monica bị cắt ngang bởi một cảnh ghê: ông hàng xóm trần truồng vừa sắm máy tập đùi.

> **Chandler:** “Ugly naked guy got a Thighmaster.” — Imagine a naked man squeezing that machine between his legs. Everyone: “Ew!”

can do no wrong **làm gì cũng đúng (con cưng)**	someone thinks you are perfect, always *“Ross can do no wrong.”* Use it: In my mother's eyes, my brother can do no wrong.
Thighmaster **dụng cụ kẹp tập đùi (rất nổi thập niên 90)**	a 1990s exercise machine: you squeeze it between your thighs *“Ugly naked guy got a Thighmaster.”*
Ew! **Eo ơi! / Ghê quá!**	the sound you make when something is disgusting *“Ew, ew, ew!”*
Ugly Naked Guy **US culture**	a neighbour the friends watch through the window. We never see his face. He is a running joke in the series. ông hàng xóm bên kia đường hay ở trần, cả nhóm nhìn qua cửa sổ; không bao giờ lộ mặt — miếng hài lặp lại suốt phim.

Check: Why does everyone say “Ew!” at the end?

- **A.** They imagine the naked man using the thigh machine.
- **B.** They don't like Monica's food.
- **C.** Ross walks in.

6 The ring in the lasagna (4:25–5:53)

Chiếc nhẫn trong khay lasagna

Rachel must give her engagement ring back to Barry tomorrow. Now she can't find it. She was in the kitchen, helping Monica make lasagna... Mai Rachel phải trả nhẫn đính hôn cho Barry, giờ lại tìm không thấy. Lúc nãy cô ở trong bếp phụ Monica làm lasagna...

Monica gave Rachel one easy job in the kitchen. The ring fell into the food for her parents.

"Has anybody seen my ring?" — Phoebe: "Yeah, it's beautiful."	=	**Phoebe thinks Rachel is showing it off**
"Doy!"	=	**an old silly word for "that's obvious!"**
"...in the kitchen with —" "Dinah?"	=	**Chandler finishes an old children's song**

Monica is furious. Rachel tries to save herself with a tiny compliment about the noodles.

Monica điên lên. Rachel cố gỡ bằng một lời khen bé tí về mấy sợi mì.

> **Rachel:** "Oh, but look how straight those noodles are." — Answer to "I gave you one job!" — a very small good thing to cover a big mistake.

dread (something) **sợ, ngán (việc sắp tới)**	feel very worried about something that is coming *"like I wasn't dreading tomorrow enough"*
stomp on someone's heart **giẫm nát trái tim ai**	hurt someone's feelings very badly *"I'm the girl in the veil who stomped on your heart in front of your entire family!"* Veil = the white cloth a bride wears on her head.
I gave you one job! **giao có đúng một việc!**	you had one simple task and you failed *"I gave you one job!"* People still say this today, often as a joke.
Doy! **Hiển nhiên rồi! (tiếng lóng cũ)**	old slang for "Obviously!" / "Duh!" *"Doy! Probably right before she lost it."* Chandler: you don't hear "doy" much these days.
Dinah **US culture**	an old American song: "Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah". Rachel says "in the kitchen with...", so Chandler sings the next word. bài hát thiếu nhi Mỹ "Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah" — Rachel nói tới "in the kitchen with..." thì Chandler nối luôn chữ "Dinah?".

Check: Rachel asks "Has anybody seen my engagement ring?" Phoebe says "Yeah, it's beautiful." Why is it funny?

- **A.** Phoebe has the ring.
- **B.** Phoebe hates the ring.
- **C.** Phoebe thinks Rachel is showing off the ring.

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7 That puts the pillow in perspective (6:00–7:15)

Thế thì chuyện cái gối có là gì

Ross comes home in shock. He tells everyone that Carol is pregnant. Carol says Ross can choose how much to be in the baby's life. Ross về nhà, còn choáng. Anh báo cả nhóm Carol có bầu. Carol nói Ross được tự chọn tham gia nuôi con nhiều hay ít.

Monica was crazy about a flat pillow all day. Now there is REAL big news.

Monica: “That is not a happy hi.”	=	**she hears trouble in one word**
Phoebe: “Ooh! I found it!”	=	**the ring — at the worst moment**
“puts the pillow thing in perspective”	=	**next to a baby, a pillow is nothing**

Joey asks what “involved” means. Chandler answers: the biggest part of the father's job is already done — he means making the baby.

Joey hỏi “tham gia” là sao. Chandler đáp: phần việc lớn nhất của ông bố đã xong rồi — ý là chuyện “tạo ra” em bé.

> **Chandler:** “Presumably the biggest part of your job is done.” — Chandler jokes about sex, very politely. Ross is not laughing.

put something in perspective **làm thấy rõ chuyện đó lớn hay nhỏ**	show how big or small a problem really is *“Kinda puts that whole pillow thing in perspective, huh, Mon?”*
It's up to me. **Tuỳ tôi quyết định.**	It's my decision. *“Basically it's totally up to me.”*
presumably **chắc là, có lẽ**	probably; I think this is true *“presumably the biggest part of your job is done.”*
sonogram **siêu âm thai**	a picture of the baby inside the mother (ultrasound) *“they want me to go down to this sonogram thing with them tomorrow.”*

Check: Ross says: “I don't have to be involved.” This means:

- **A.** He is not allowed to help.
- **B.** He can choose — it isn't necessary.
- **C.** He must help every day.

4 Today's words — quick list to review

opening act	the short show before the main show	tiết mục mở màn
sit through (something)	stay until the end of something boring	ráng ngồi cho hết
word of advice	let me tell you something useful (often a warning)	khuyên thật một câu
have issues	have emotional problems (informal)	có khúc mắc tâm lý
mastodon	a giant hairy elephant that lived long ago	voi răng mấu (voi tiền sử, họ hàng voi ma-mút)
glacier	a huge river of ice that moves slowly	sông băng
Speaking of ...	used to change topic with the word just said	nhân tiện nói tới ...
stand erect	stand up straight (like humans, not apes)	đứng thẳng (như người, không như vượn)
You never know.	maybe it can happen — nobody is sure	biết đâu được
fluff (a pillow)	hit or shake a pillow so it gets soft and round	vỗ cho gối phồng lên
give someone ammunition	give someone reasons to criticise you	cho người ta thêm cớ để bắt bẻ
chaotic and twirly	very messy and spinning around (twirly = Phoebe's own word)	loạn xạ, xoay như chong chóng
flatness	being flat (a pillow that is not soft and round)	độ xẹp
can do no wrong	someone thinks you are perfect, always	làm gì cũng đúng (con cưng)
Thighmaster	a 1990s exercise machine: you squeeze it between your thighs	dụng cụ kẹp tập đùi (rất nổi thập niên 90)
Ew!	the sound you make when something is disgusting	Eo ơi! / Ghê quá!
dread (something)	feel very worried about something that is coming	sợ, ngán (việc sắp tới)
stomp on someone's heart	hurt someone's feelings very badly	giẫm nát trái tim ai
I gave you one job!	you had one simple task and you failed	giao có đúng một việc!
Doy!	old slang for “Obviously!” / “Duh!”	Hiển nhiên rồi! (tiếng lóng cũ)
put something in perspective	show how big or small a problem really is	làm thấy rõ chuyện đó lớn hay nhỏ
It's up to me.	It's my decision.	Tuỳ tôi quyết định.
presumably	probably; I think this is true	chắc là, có lẽ

sonogram	a picture of the baby inside the mother (ultrasound)	siêu âm thai

6 Grammar Spotlight

have to / don't have to — duty and choice

Use have to when something is necessary. Use don't have to when it is NOT necessary: you can choose. In fast speech, 'gonna have to' means 'will have to'. Careful: don't have to is not the same as mustn't. Mustn't means it is not allowed.

Form: have to / has to + V · don't / doesn't have to + V · gonna have to + V

• *Now I'm gonna have to return the ring without the ring. (Rachel: a duty she cannot avoid.)*

• *If I'm not comfortable with it, I don't have to be involved. (Ross: not necessary, his choice.)*

• *It's the stand-up comedian you have to sit through before Pink Floyd comes out. (Chandler: no choice.)*

Compare:

• You don't have to touch that. ↔ You mustn't touch that. (Not necessary (you may if you want) versus not allowed.)

Watch out: Do not write 'must to' or 'have to returned'. After have to / must, use the base verb: have to return.

Learn more: English Grammar in Use — have to / must / mustn't / don't have to

7 Practice — circle / match / fill in; answers on the last page

Vocabulary in context

1. Which word means: facts or reasons you can use to attack someone?

- **A.** glacier
- **B.** ammunition
- **C.** veil

2. Ross says: “In here, anyone who stands erect…” Why does he say this at the museum?

- **A.** Next to cave-men models, anyone standing up straight looks good.
- **B.** He wants Carol to stand up.
- **C.** The museum has no chairs.

Phrases in use

3. 'As far as my parents are concerned, Ross can do no wrong.' This means:

- **A.** In their eyes, Ross is perfect.
- **B.** Ross never does anything.
- **C.** Ross is not allowed to make mistakes.

4. Basically it's totally _____ me.

(on to · up to · off to)

Grammar in use

5. Which sentence means 'it is NOT necessary, but you can if you want'?

- **A.** You mustn't come tomorrow.
- **B.** You have to come tomorrow.
- **C.** You don't have to come tomorrow.

6. Now I'm gonna _____ return the ring without the ring.

(have to · must to · having to)

7. Phoebe says 'Don't touch that!' Which sentence has the same meaning?

- **A.** You don't have to touch that.
- **B.** You mustn't touch that.
- **C.** You have to touch that.

Listening detail

8. Which line do you hear?

- **A.** I'm going to return the ring.
- **B.** I've already returned the ring.
- **C.** I'm gonna have to return the ring.

Meaning and tone

9. Why does Chandler say the news 'puts that whole pillow thing in perspective'?

- **A.** Next to Ross's news, a flat pillow is a tiny problem.
- **B.** Monica's pillow is really important.
- **C.** Ross wants a new pillow.

8 Final listen — NO subtitles — prove what you remember

Subtitles are OFF. Listen for today's language, not plot trivia.

Catch the line

- ☐ Word of advice. Bring back the comedian.
- ☐ Ross can do no wrong.
- ☐ I'm gonna have to return the ring
- ☐ I don't have to be involved.
- ☐ Basically it's totally up to me.

What did they say?

1. What does Phoebe shout right after Ross says 'Carol's pregnant'?

- **A.** Ooh! I lost it!
- **B.** Ooh! I found it!
- **C.** Ooh! I want it!

2. Which sentence does Ross say?

- **A.** It's totally down to them.
- **B.** It's totally on me.
- **C.** It's totally up to me.

Put the lines in order

____ Basically it's totally up to me.

____ Carol's pregnant.

____ No matter what I do, I'm still gonna be a father.

____ Kinda puts that whole pillow thing in perspective.

Answer Key — check yourself after finishing

Gist: A

Bit by bit — checks: 1-B, 2-C, 3-A, 4-B, 5-A, 6-C, 7-B

Vocabulary in context: 1-B · 2-A

Phrases in use: 3-A · 4-up to

Grammar in use: 5-C · 6-have to · 7-B

Listening detail: 8-C

Meaning and tone: 9-A

Final — said what: 1-B · 2-C

Final — order: 1 → 3 → 0 → 2

1: Ammunition = bullets; here, reasons to criticise. Monica's parents always find some.

2: Erect = standing up straight. Ross makes a joke about himself to answer her compliment.

3: If someone can do no wrong, the other person always sees them as perfect.

4: It's up to me = it is my decision.

5: Don't have to = not necessary. Mustn't = not allowed. Have to = necessary.

6: Gonna (going to) + have to + base verb. 'Must to' is always wrong.

7: Mustn't = it is not allowed. Don't have to only means it is not necessary.

8: Rachel says 'gonna have to' very fast: /ˈgʌnə hæftə/.

9: Put in perspective = show how small or big a problem really is.