

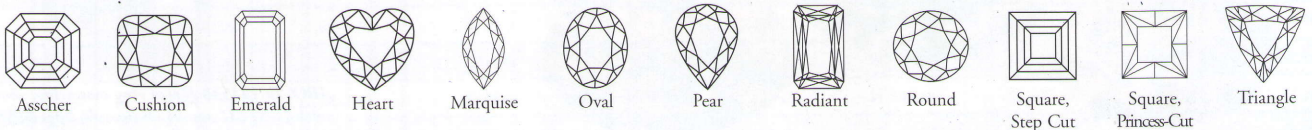
THE FOUR Cs

Fine diamonds are among the most coveted of all gems. Their value however, differs widely from one diamond to another. Experts evaluate every diamond for rarity and beauty, using four primary guidelines. These are called The Four Cs — Cut, Color, Clarity, and Carat Weight.

CUT

When you think of the cut, you probably think of the shape of the diamond. You are partially correct. While cut does refer to shape, it also refers to the proportions of how the diamond is actually cut.

Diamonds are cut into many different shapes, reflecting not only popular taste but the proportions and quality of the rough diamond. The most popular shapes include Round, Oval, Square, Princess, Emerald, Baguette and Marquise cuts. Many specialty shapes are also available.



A diamond's overall proportions, as well as the size and placement of its many reflective surfaces or facets play a large part in "cut." The consistency and balance of these can greatly affect how the stone captures light and reflects it back to the eye.

COLOR

With the exception of fancy colored diamonds, the most valuable diamonds are those with the least color. The color scale for transparent diamonds goes from D-F (colorless), G-J (near colorless), K-M (faint yellow), to Z (light yellow). Completely colorless diamonds are rare.

D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	Z+
Colorless			Near Colorless				Faint Yellow			Very Light Yellow				Light Yellow							Fancy		

When diamonds are formed with traces of other minerals, rare and beautiful colors can result. These "fancy" colors range from blue and brilliant yellow to red, brown, pale green, pink and violet. Because of their rarity, colored diamonds are highly desirable and may be quite valuable.

CLARITY

A diamond's clarity is measured by the existence, or absence, of visible flaws. Tiny surface blemishes or internal inclusions — even those seen only under magnification with a 10x jeweler's loupe — can alter the brilliance of the diamond and thus, affect its value. Clarity levels begin with Flawless (FL & IF) followed by Very Very Slight (VVS1 & 2), Very Slight (VS1 & 2), Slightly Included (SI1 & 2), and Included (I1, 2, & 3).

FL, IF DIAMONDS	Flawless: No internal or external flaws Internally Flawless: No internal flaws
VVS1, VVS2 DIAMONDS	Very, very slightly included: Very difficult to see inclusions under 10x magnification
VS1, VS2 DIAMONDS	Very slightly included: Inclusions are not typically visible to the unaided eye
SI1, SI2 DIAMONDS	Slightly included: Inclusions are visible under 10x magnification and may be visible with the unaided eye
I1, I2, I3 DIAMONDS	Included: Inclusions are visible with the unaided eye

CARAT WEIGHT

The size of a diamond is measured, not by its dimensions, but by weight. One carat, the traditional unit of measurement for diamonds, is equal to approximately 0.2 grams. You may also hear the weight of a diamond referred to in points. A point is equal to 1/100 of a carat; therefore, a 75-point diamond equals 0.75 carat. Diamonds of equal weight may appear slightly different in size, depending on their depth and proportions. Because they are quite rare, larger diamonds of gem quality are much more valuable.

RARITY & BEAUTY

All gem-quality diamonds are rare, taking billions of years for nature to form them. The journey from the mine to you is long and arduous. While the four Cs information helps you to identify the quality of the diamond you are purchasing, it is the combination of these four characteristics which determine a diamond's rarity and therefore its value. Remember — beauty is in the eye of the beholder. A diamond can only be truly perfect if you think it is beautifully perfect for you.