

# Engagement Ring Guide

*For many men, the idea of choosing an engagement ring can be daunting, and it's hard to know where to begin. It's usually the only time you'll have to know about diamonds and other gemstones, and the terminology involved can be overwhelming. We take you back to the basics.*

## Budget

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There are a lot of engagement ring budgeting guidelines out there, such as two or three months' salary. Forget about this! You're likely heading into a part of your life with a lot of expenses. Proposals themselves can often cost a fair penny, and with engagements come weddings and honeymoons, not to mention everyday expenses. We suggest a starting point of \$3,000 for a custom designed ring. Work from there until you're comfortable. This should be exciting, not stressful! We require a minimum 75% deposit to begin – so bear that in mind.

## Timing

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Custom-designed rings require four weeks to perfect the design, source the diamond, and make the ring to the highest possible standards. Please keep this in mind while planning the proposal!

## Sizing

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If you don't know your partners ring size, don't worry – we can usually guess pretty close from the way you describe her. We offer a free resize on all our engagement rings anyway!

There are three main ways the modern man chooses a ring. The most popular is still the traditionalist way – Do it entirely yourself and surprise her completely. Planned it all out with her already? You can also both come in and choose the design together. The other great option is just choosing the centre diamond or gemstone – it gives you something to propose with, but also allows you to keep control on the major part of the expenses.

If you're choosing it all yourself and she hasn't dropped any hints, don't fear! Here are some things to look out for (we'll also run you through this at your consultation):

- Does your partner wear any jewellery currently? Is it white gold, or silver, yellow gold, rose or copper, or two tone?
- What do her hands look like? Small, wide, short fingers, long, slim fingers? Does she have large knuckles?
- What does she do for employment? Office job, nurse, physically demanding work? Will she have to take it off?
- What's her style? What does she wear? What are her interests? Is she sporty, executive, feminine, classic, quirky, modern?

You've got the basics. You know your budget, your time frame, and you've established her style. How does that translate into design?

## Six Claw

She's classic, modern, and a bit of a traditionalist. She might not wear any jewellery currently, and if she does, it's understated and timeless. The most traditional yet contemporary look is a solitaire (single stone). If you want a little extra sparkle, consider shoulder diamonds (smaller diamonds down the band).



## Four Claw

She's modern and loves simplicity. It creates the shape of a princess cut diamond (square) but has the sparkle of a round brilliant diamond (circular). This design isn't as well suited to the woman with a very active or physically demanding lifestyle, as four claws aren't as secure as six.



## Cluster or Halo

This refers to a centre diamond surrounded by smaller ones. These rings can have either a modern or very classic look, depending on how they are set. It is also a great way to get a larger look for a lower price. When combined with details such as millgrain or filigree, clusters can have a timeless "heirloom" appearance.



## Princess Cut

A princess cut diamond ring features a square diamond, which is the second most popular choice after a round brilliant. These diamonds are great for modern women who still want the traditional "engagement ring" look. They can be set in a number of ways and can be a solitaire, solitaire with shoulder diamonds, or form a part of a halo ring.



## Fancy Cut

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Fancy cut diamonds come in a plethora of shapes and are often the best choice for a more antique or "old-worldly" design. These diamonds are often less expensive than the round brilliant and princess cut as the demand is not so great. Make sure you explore the options available in fancy cut diamonds before you make a decision!



## Three-Row or Trilogy

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These rings feature three diamonds or gemstones in a row, either almost the same size, or with a much larger centre diamond and two smaller flanking stones. These can either be modern or classic, and are a good choice if you want to include other coloured diamonds or gemstones.



*There are many other details you may have to consider when designing a ring, but here are a few common ones you are likely to come across, including gem-setting techniques and jewellery design detailing.*



## Channel Set

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Modern, sleek, and great for more active women. The shoulder diamonds are set with two strips or channels of metal, for a continuous row of sparkle.



## Bead Set

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A classic, pretty way to set shoulder diamonds, each stone is set with small claws called "beads". When multiple rows are set closely, this is called "pavé" and has a fantastic sparkle. When the diamonds are really small, and have to be set with a microscope, this is called "micro-pavé".



## Bezel

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This is a very modern way of setting stones, with the metal entirely surrounding the stone. You can also have "semi-bezel" or "half-bezel". This technique is very secure.



## Tension

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Tension setting diamonds is a new technology, and comes with some risks. It's very contemporary and suited to someone who likes bolder, thicker bands. Our tension settings always have an "under bezel" (small ring of supportive metal under the stone) to prevent the diamond coming loose.



## Hammer Set

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This is simply the method of "sinking" the diamonds into the metal, creating a neat and clean appearance. This is one of the oldest methods of stone setting.



## Scalloped

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This is a variation of bead set, when U shaped cuts are made into the metal to show off more of the diamond. This creates extra sparkle as more light reaches the stone.



## Double Claw

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This refers to the number of little "finger-like" metal claws holding that secure the centre diamond. Double or triple claws are more popular with fancy shaped diamonds, heirloom rings, or to add a romantic touch to a simple solitaire design. They also have the added bonus of increased security.



## Picture-Frame Claw

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These claws are used to set princess cut diamonds and other square or rectangular shaped stones. They are a more modern approach, and have a smooth finish that won't catch on hair or clothes.



## Split-Shank

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The shank is another term for the band of the ring. A split shank means the band flares out into two, and is a very antique and elegant design approach. This is also great for long fingers, as it creates extra spread on the hand.



## Millgrain & Filigree

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Millgrain is small beads of metal used for a decorate effect. It's common among antique and modern art deco designs. It's often paired with filigree, which refers to detailed metalwork forming patterns and shapes.

# Choosing the Diamond

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*You now should have a better idea of what look you want to achieve. But what to use as a centre stone? What does clarity, cut, colour, proportions, certification mean?*

There are hundreds of things to consider when selecting the perfect diamond, and thousands of diamonds to choose from. We do the hard work for you by sorting through all the variables to find the best stone for your budget. Here's a basic guide to diamonds so you're in the know-how.

## Shape

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The first thing you'll probably think about is the shape. This is simply the shape that a diamond is cut, the most popular being Round Brilliant Cut, followed by Princess Cut. There are a huge amount of options out there, and the best way to learn about them, is to see them!



*Round Brilliant Cut*



*Princess Cut*



*Pear Cut*



*Marquise Cut*



*Heart Cut*



*Cushion Cut*



*Asscher Cut*



*Oval Cut*



*Square Radiant*

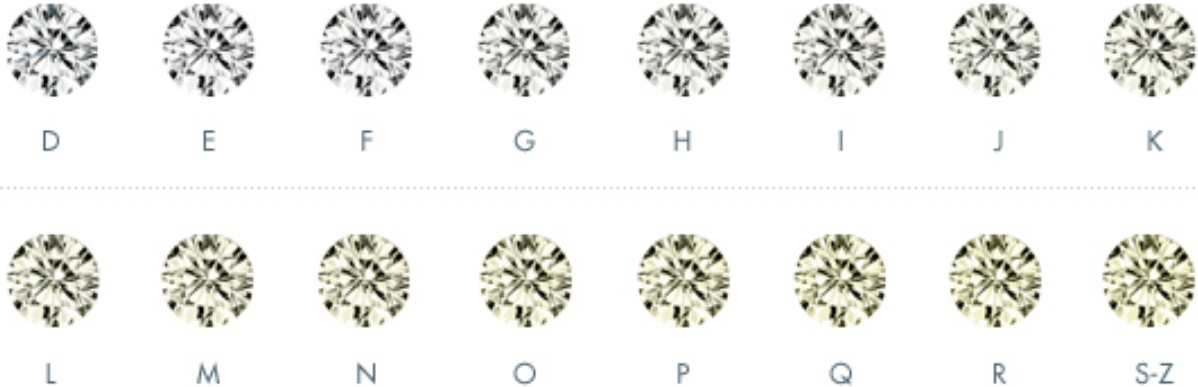


*Emerald Cut*



# Colour

Colour is the grading scale that describes a white diamonds colour quality. It starts from “D” which is the best and most expensive, and goes all the way to “Z”. We recommend starting at an “F” colour, as D, E and F diamonds are all in the top “colourless” scale and don’t have any hints of yellow or brown. You can consider G, H, and I colour diamonds if your budget is constrictive. Fancy coloured diamonds have a different scaling system altogether.



# Clarity

Clarity refers to the internal and external flaws and blemishes a diamond has. All diamonds have some sort of flaw, unless graded “Flawless” – which are extremely rare and thus expensive. The scale goes like this:

- Flawless (**FL**),
- Internally Flawless (**IF**, only surface or polish flaws),
- Very Very Slightly Included to the First Degree (**VVS1**),
- Very Very Slightly Included to the Second Degree (**VVS2**),
- Very Slightly Included to the First Degree (**VS1**),
- Very Slightly Included to the Second Degree (**VS2**),
- Slightly Included to the First Degree (**S11**),
- Slightly Included to the Second Degree (**S12**),
- Included to the First Degree (**I1**),
- Included to the Second Degree (**I2**)
- and Included to the Third Degree (**I3**).



Poor SI1  
(visible dark flaws in crown and table)

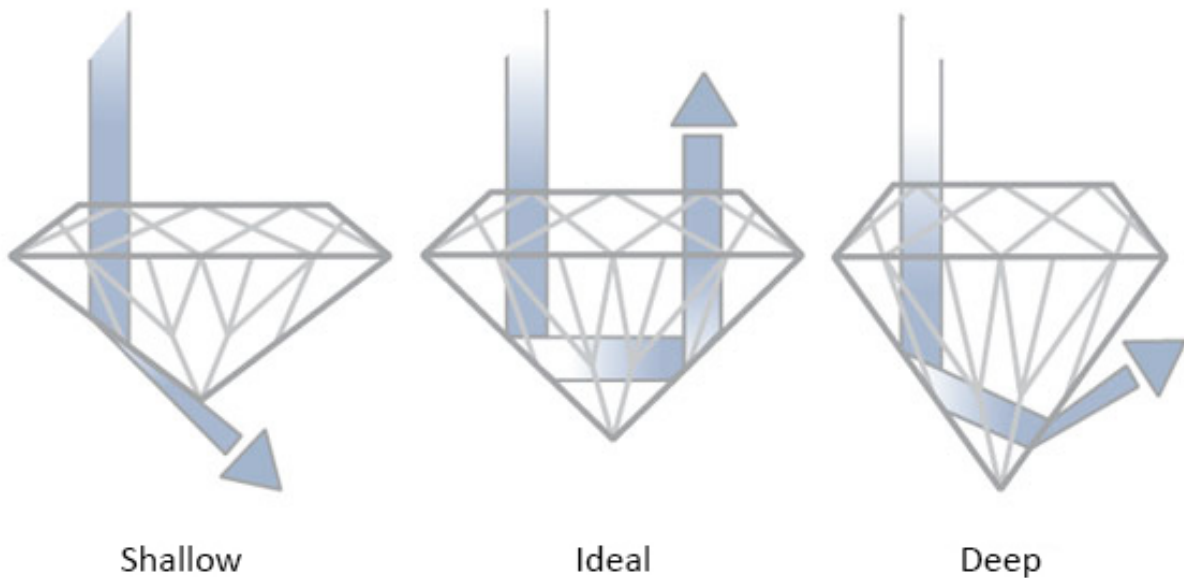


Perfectly eye-clean SI1  
(white/colorless flaws hidden by facets)

We recommend SI1 as a starting point, as we can source 100% eye-clean diamonds (no inclusions or flaws visible to the naked eye). We offer 100% money back guarantee that our GIA certified SI1 diamonds will be eye-clean. Only a trained gemmologist with a loupe will be able to spot the difference.

# Cut

Cut is the grading that refers to how well the diamond is cut into its shape: The evenness and proper alignment, angle and size of facets, the absence or presence of extra facets, and the percentage each section of the diamond makes up of the whole. Some gemmology laboratories grade "Ideal" as the best, many only use "Excellent". Most laboratories only grade Round Brilliant Cut Diamonds on their cut, as fancy shapes have many variations and modifications. The best cut diamonds have the most light return - simply put, more sparkle, shine and scintillation.

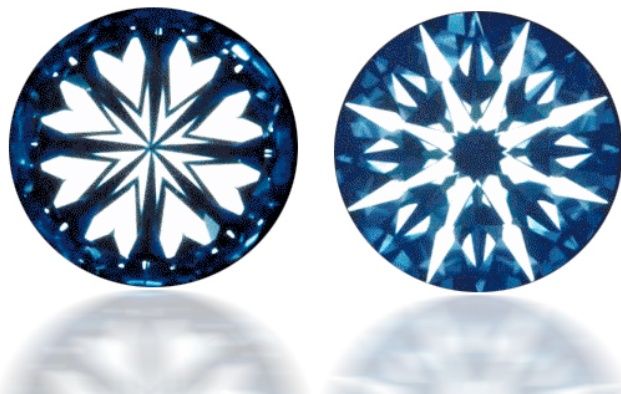


# Hearts & Arrows

This cut displays the visual phenomenon that appears in the world's finest, ideal, round brilliant cut diamonds. A Hearts & Arrows Ideal Cut Diamond is the ultimate, most magnificent cut diamond man can produce; it accounts for less than 1% of all diamonds cut.

The phenomenon of the Hearts & Arrows Ideal Cut may be viewed easily by anybody that possesses a proportion or fire scope. Hearts & Arrows is a visual phenomenon and not a brand or trademarked cut. Most diamond grading laboratories won't specify the presence of Hearts & Arrows, and it is something that should be verified not only by the correct proportions, ratios and angles, which typically cause the effect, but visually at the source also.

Choosing a Hearts & Arrows brilliant cut diamond means that your diamond will have almost 100% light return for the brightest diamond possible.



# Carat

Carat is a *weight* measurement used exclusively for diamonds and gemstones. Don't confuse this with Carat or Karat used for *gold purity*. Prices go up exponentially with carat weight. 100 points = 1 carat. Half a carat = 0.50ct or 50 points, and so on.

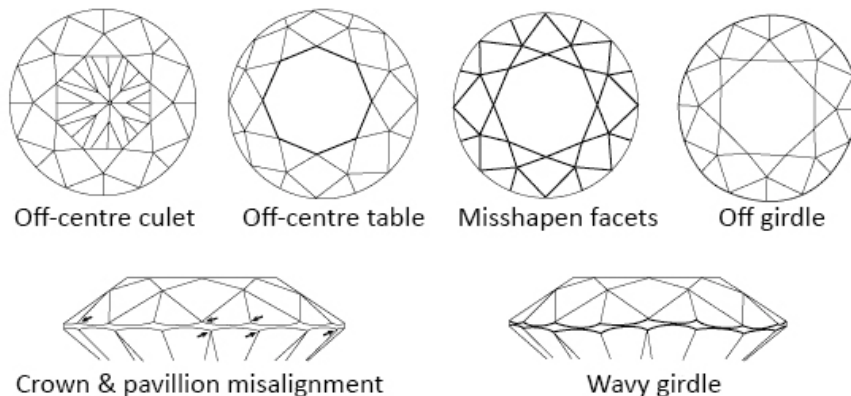
Different shaped diamonds will appear smaller or larger next to each other as some shapes by their nature, hold more weight in their depth. For example, a 1.00ct Cushion Cut Diamond (with a square ratio) averages around 5.4mm - 6.2mm long. In contrast, a 1.00ct Marquise Cut Diamond has an approximate length of between 8.97mm - 12.2mm, which is a dramatic visual difference.



# Symmetry & Polish

The **symmetry** of a diamond refers to the symmetrical alignment of facets, and plays an important role in the cut grading. Like cut, some gemmology labs start at Ideal, others Excellent. Fancy shaped diamonds have a symmetry grading.

**Polish** influences how well light is able to pass through a diamond and is very important to a diamond's brilliance. It is necessary to select a diamond that is laboratory certified with good, very good or excellent polish (some labs also grade "Ideal"). Diamonds that have poor to extremely poor polish are less brilliant because they have microscopic polish lines that blur the surface of the diamond. These polish lines reduce the amount of light that enters or exits a diamond.

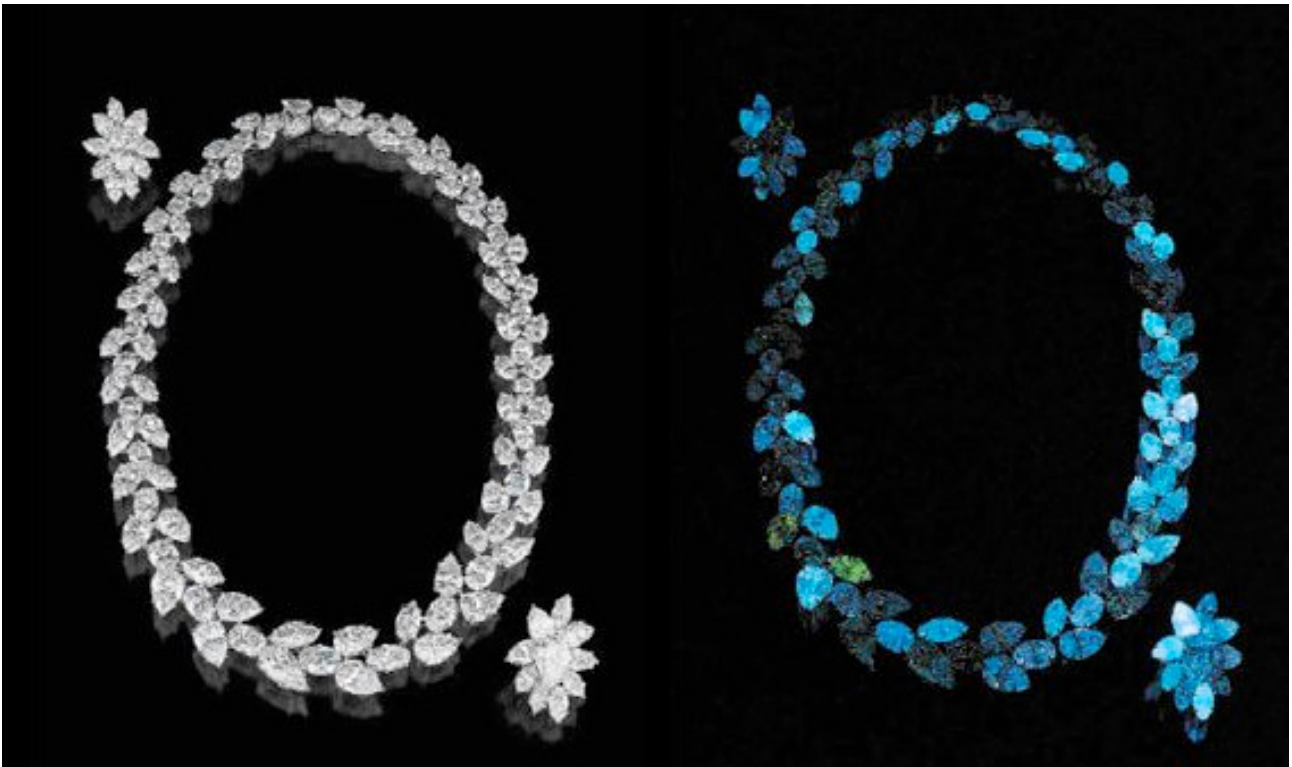


# Fluorescence

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An intriguing phenomenon of some diamonds is that they appear to glow blue, and less often green, yellow, orange, or a combination of these colours when exposed to invisible ultraviolet rays. This glow is called fluorescence, and lasts only as long as the diamond is exposed to the ultraviolet rays.

In most cases, fluorescence is caused by the presence of nitrogen as a trace element impurity in diamond. In addition to colour, fluorescence also varies by strength - from none, faint, medium, strong, and very strong (the most common terms in grading reports). Studies have shown that the strength of fluorescence has no widely noticeable effect on a colourless or near-colourless diamond's appearance. In fact, many prefer the appearance of diamonds that have medium to strong fluorescence. In very rare cases, some diamonds with fluorescence may appear hazy, milky or oily.



## The Setting Metal

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### White Gold

White gold is a very popular choice for jewellery. Jason Withers 18K White Gold is alloyed with Palladium, which unlike nickel and zinc (still used by most retailers) is a very rare, precious metal in the Platinum family that does not tarnish or discolour. This ensures a longer life and a whiter, brighter finish.

Our White Gold is finished with a final plating of Rhodium, one of the rarest metals on Earth. This enhances the shiny, bright white finish that attracts so many people to White Gold. When buying a wedding band and engagement ring set, it is imperative that both rings be made of the same metal. If one is Platinum and the other White Gold, the Platinum will rapidly deteriorate the White Gold because of their different densities and durability.

## Yellow Gold

Gold is graded not by weight, but by purity called Karats. Pure Gold is 24K, but is too soft for use in jewellery. The best purity of gold for jewellery is 18K, or 75% pure gold and 25% alloy. This is what we always use at Jason Withers Original Diamonds, as it ensures excellent wearability and a fabulous colour.

## Rose Gold

Rose gold is yellow gold alloyed with copper to create a pretty, pinkish hue. It's great for antique style rings, or to enhance coloured fancy diamonds or other reddish or pink gemstones.

## Platinum

Platinum is a silvery-white, precious metal which when alloyed to correct standards is more expensive than gold, due to its rarity and manufacturing difficulties. Unlike the best gold, which with constant wear has a lifespan of about fifty years; platinum is much harder and more durable and lasts for three lifetimes. Jason Withers only uses the best, with 95% platinum and 5% Ruthenium alloy, a precious metal in the same family. Platinum of this grade is stamped with "PLAT" or "950".

# Insurance

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We strongly recommend getting your ring insured, whether through your home and contents provider, or in a separate, standalone policy.

Jason Withers Original Diamonds are Q Report certified jewellers, meaning we can provide specialised policies on all items of jewellery purchased through us over \$3,000.

Q Report protects you against accidental theft, loss and damage - worldwide. The premium is based on the amount you paid, not the retail valuation we provide, which is often 150-200% more.

This means that you pay less, and are also guaranteed to return to us as your jeweller should anything happen. As we keep your custom design and diamond details on file, we can remake the ring exactly.

You should now be ready to take the plunge! Have a look at the choices available to you, determine your budget, and *book an appointment with us today.*

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