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# Picking Diamonds

Laboratories use grading criteria to grade diamonds for certification. You need to understand four of these criteria before you buy a diamond. Known as the "Four C's" these criteria are: color, cut, clarity and carat.

The color is due to the composition of a diamond, so it doesn't change. When colors of a diamond are explained, it's with referral to the presence or absence of color in white diamonds. Because a diamond with no color allows maximum light to pass through, colorless diamonds are preferred for their sparkle.

The cut of a diamond refers to its reflective quality. Majority of diamond pieces have 58 facets. The brilliance of diamonds is heavily dependent on the cut. The different angles and the finish of a diamond determine its ability to reflect light and cause its brilliance and fire. The cut of a diamond can affect the stone's durability also. A diamond may become prone to breakage if there are some bad cuts. A too-thin diamond will also not be that sparkly because light will leak out of the back. You probably realize now that the cut of the diamond is most important. Diamonds may have inner flaws or inclusions during the formation process. The number and size of these inclusions determine what is referred to as the clarity of a diamond. Clearer diamonds are more brilliant, so they are more expensive. A flawless diamond, when viewed under 10 magnifications by a skilled diamond grader, will not have surface or internal imperfections.

Carat refers to the unit of weight by which diamonds are measured. One carat is equal to 200 milligrams. Points are segments by which carats are divided into, and 100 segments make up 1 carat. 150 points would equal one and a half carats.

When you go to buy a diamond, don't be shy. Don't be afraid to ask questions so you'll know more before you make a purchase. When you shop for certified diamonds, you'll be able to make an informed selection. You'll be able to make a wise purchase if you know about the 4 C's. But, before making a purchase, shop around and decide what shapes and styles really appeal to you. And enjoy your diamond for a long time!

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