

**What are diamonds?** Diamonds are basically lumps of carbon and before your diamond is cut and polished it looks just like a bit of rock, because it is, a very old one, created at least 1 *billion* years ago in the earth's mantle!

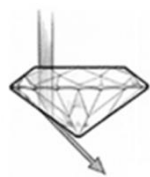
**What affects their prices?** Finished diamonds can vary hugely in appearance with the most beautiful, sparkly stones being the rarest and most expensive. To help you differentiate from one bit of rock to another we'd like to try to help you understand how its main physical characteristics affect its quality and value:

**CUT, COLOUR (including FLOURENCE), CLARITY & CARAT WEIGHT.**

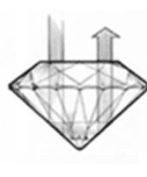
**Petra's view:** Go for quality over size!

## 1. CUT

**What it is:** The most important characteristic; what creates the maximum sparkle: the cut grade refers to the quality of the diamond's proportions and its finish. A well-cut diamond optimises how the light is reflected back out of the top of the stone.



Too shallow, loss of light



Optimum cut, no light loss



Too deep, loss of light

**How it affects price:** The skill, expertise and experience in cutting stones is what you pay for along with the time to do the work. Diamonds with an **EXCELLENT** cut grade fetch a premium as they are hard to get hold of. The more diamonds you look at the easier you will be able to see how a well cut stone is nicer than a dull, lifeless one.

**Petra's View:** We don't bother with anything scores lower than **EXCELLENT** or **VERY GOOD** as they really do sparkle more. Cut grades of **GOOD** and lower will appear to have less 'fire' and 'brilliance'. We have examples in the shop as it can really help seeing the stones and we encourage you to shop around; well cut stones sell themselves!

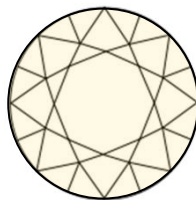
## 2. COLOUR

**What it is:** Diamonds range in colour from colourless to yellow. The grading scale is from the top grade; totally colourless 'D' colour down to a definite yellow colour 'Z' (used in industry, not jewellery).

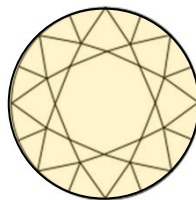
Colourless  
**D-E-F**



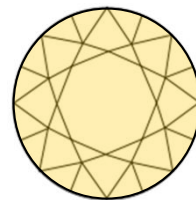
Near colourless  
**G-H-I**



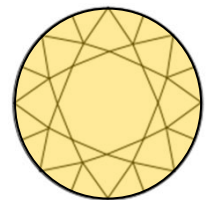
Faint yellow  
**J,K,L**



Very light yellow  
**M,N,O**



Light - strong yellow  
**P,Q,R...Z**



**How it affects price:** A colourless diamond is the rarest and most expensive. As the stones become a more yellow/ grey in colour they are more common. Mass produced jewellery often has J/K colour diamonds and they have a definite yellow hue to them!

**Petra's View:** We'd rate **COLOUR** as the next most significant characteristic for you choosing your stone over another as you can see the difference. We would aim to get you colour **D-G** depending on your budget because anything lower is too obviously yellow. We often will select a few stones for you to look at so you have a comparison.

**Fluorescence:**

**What is it:** Under UV light your rock could look blue or purple; this is due to a quality called fluorescence. The lower fluorescence grades (**MEDIUM, STRONG**) can make your stones look hazy and affect the colour slightly even in normal light.

**How it affects price:** Your stone might score highly in everything else but if it has fluorescence it will lower its value.

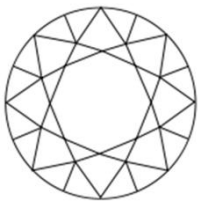
**Petra's view:** Avoid anything with more fluorescence than '**NIL**' or '**FAINT**' as it can have a detrimental effect on your diamond's appearance.

**3. CLARITY**

**What it is:** Most diamonds have some imperfections in them. The clarity grade describes how visible these impurities are when you look at the stone with x10 magnification. A high clarity grade of '**VVS**' means these inclusions are very, very difficult to see at x10 magnification. '**VS**' clarity down to a '**SI**' clarity is still probably impossible for you to see anything with a naked eye but will significantly lower your stone's value.

**How it affects price:** The cleaner the stone the rarer it is and therefore the higher in value.

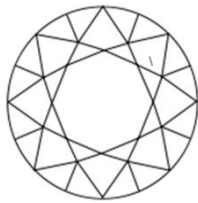
**Petra's View:** We'd say that this has the least impact on the appearance of your stone and it would be difficult for you to differentiate between different clarity grades yourself but still aim for at least a good '**SI**' clarity and ideally '**VS+**' if you want a decent quality stone.



**F – IF**

Flawless Internally flawless

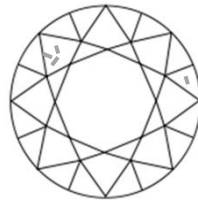
Pure, can't see anything at x10



**VVS**

Very, very slightly included

Very, very difficult to see anything at x10



**VS**

Very slightly included

Very difficult to see anything at x10



**SI**

Slightly included

Easy to see things at x10



**I**

Included

You won't need an eye glass!

**4. CARAT WEIGHT**

**What it is.** The carat weight is the measure of the size of your diamond.

**How it affects price.** Two diamonds of equal size can have very different values depending on their quality; their colour, cut and clarity. The size of your stone has nothing to do with quality but large, good quality stones are extremely hard to find so as soon as you get near to 0.50ct there is a large price jump and again at 1.00ct.

**Petra's View:** As we said at the beginning, if you want your diamond to sparkle; go for quality over size; you won't regret it!