

Diamonds

Diamonds are quality rated by using the 4 C's:

Cut: When a diamond is cut to good proportions the light will then reflect from one facet to another and disperse through the top of the stone resulting in a display of brilliance and fire. A round brilliant cut has 57 or 58 facets.






Colour: The best colour for a diamond to allow light to pass through and transform into the colours of a rainbow is no colour at all. The closer to colourless the rarer and more valuable the stone is.

Clarity: The clarity of a diamond is determined as to how free the diamond is from natural inclusions that occur, these are sometimes called "nature's fingerprints". The type, colour, size and position of any internal flaws affects a diamonds value. However most flaws in diamonds are not visible to the naked eye and need magnification to see them. The fewer inclusions in a stone the rarer the stone.

Carat: The size of a diamond is measured in carats. A carat is divided into 100 points i.e. a diamond of 50 points weighs .50 carats - half a carat. The word carat is taken from the Italian word of "carato" and also the Greek word "keration" meaning the fruit of the carob tree, the seeds of which were once used to measure the weight of gemstones in oriental bazaars. One carat is one fifth of a gram.

Diamond is the hardest substance known to man formed billions of years ago and is made of carbon. Approximately 250 tons of ore has to be mined to produce a one carat diamond. The seven most popular shapes of a diamond are the round brilliant, marquise (long oval), pear shaped, emerald (rectangular), oval, heart shaped and the princess cut square shaped.

Hardness of Gemstones:			
Diamond	10	Garnet	7 - 7 ½
Sapphire	9	Jade	7
Ruby	9	Amethyst/Citrine	7
Chrysoberyl	8 ½	Zircon	6 ½ - 7 ½
Cubic Zirconia	8	Peridot	6 ½ - 7
Topaz	8	Tanzanite	6 ½
Andalusite	7 ½	Opal	5 ½ - 6 ½
Aquamarine	7 ½	Turquoise	5 ½ - 6
Emerald	7 ½	Pearl	3 ½ - 4 ½
Tourmaline	7 ½	Coral	3 ½
Birthstones:			
January	Garnet	July	Ruby
February	Amethyst	August	Peridot
March	Aquamarine	September	Sapphire
April	Diamond	October	Opal
May	Emerald	November	Topaz
June	Pearl	December	Turquoise

Diamond Colour Scale:		Purity Scale Grade:	
Exceptional White +	D	Flawless	FL
Exceptional White	E	Internally Flawless	IF
Rare White +	F	Very Very Small Inclusions	V V S 1 & 2
Rare White	G	Very Small Inclusions	VS 1 & 2
White	H	Slight Inclusions	SI 1 & 2
Slightly Tinted White	I & J	Inclusions – visible to the naked eye	I1 I2 I3 PI PII PIII
Tinted White	K & L		
Tinted Colour	M-Z		
Fancy Diamonds (coloured)	Z	also known as P1, 2 & 3 and Pique 1, 2 & 3	
British Assay Office Marks: London Birmingham Sheffield Edinburgh			Platinum
   			 950
22ct Gold:	18ct Gold:	14ct Gold:	9ct Gold:
916	750	585	375

Pearls

Pearls are formed when an "intruder" i.e. a tiny piece of grit, sand, parasite or particle makes its way into either a marine or freshwater mollusc - oyster or mussel. A defence mechanism then reacts and coats the "intruder" with layers of nacre - mother of pearl - which then produces the pearl. Nacre - Mother of Pearl - being a blend of minerals secreted by an oyster or other mollusc and deposited within their shells by the process of coating and protecting their bodies from any foreign parasites.

Natural Pearls are formed when a piece of grit or particle naturally makes its way into the oyster or mollusc.

Cultured Pearls are formed by way of human intervention in that a tiny bead is actually put into the oyster or mollusc.

Freshwater Pearls both natural and cultured are grown inside freshwater molluscs in rivers or lakes.

Baroque pearls are pearls that are irregular in shape.

Simulated Pearls are made by coating a bead with a substance made from fish scales.

Pearls are porous and will absorb sprays and perfumes therefore pearls should be the last item you put on. To clean pearls use a soft dry polishing cloth (no grains within) or a slightly water-damp cloth. If really necessary a mild solution of soap and water may be used to wipe clean the pearls then let them air-dry before storing them away. Pearls are known to symbolise purity and a happy marriage.