

# Your ring, your choice.

DIAMOND ENGAGEMENT  
RING BUYING GUIDE



This is a huge moment. One you've replayed in your head hundreds of times. And it's a moment that should be uniquely yours. So, in the spirit of making things easy, we've gathered the essentials you'll need to know when choosing an engagement ring. No other relationship is like yours, and you both deserve a ring that celebrates that.

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## CONSULTANT ADVICE

Don't overthink it! It's a big step, and with that can come a lot of pressure to "do it right," but this means something different to everyone. I always like to say that the process of picking the ring and diamond in itself is a beautiful moment to share with one another. The surprise comes in the proposal, but the opportunity to do something so meaningful together is really special, and I think more people need to remember and take advantage of that.

*Jordan Broom-Hall, Store Director, Edmonton*

## HOW TO SHOP FOR YOUR RING

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When it comes to choosing a diamond engagement ring, there is no specific way to do it. It's about choosing the ring that feels right for you. We know this process can be overwhelming and many people don't know where to start. We have created this engagement ring guide to help you through each stage of the ring buying process.

If you find yourself getting stressed about buying a diamond engagement ring, remind yourself of the emotional significance of getting engaged and that this is meant to be a happy moment on your journey to getting married. Don't forget what this ring symbolizes – your love for one another.



### CONSULTANT ADVICE

Let the ring pick you! Don't come in with preconceived notions. Take the time to allow our certified Diamond Consultant to answer any questions you have to help guide you through this special time in your relationship.

*Scott Hendrickson, Store Director, Calgary*



## HOW TO SHOP FOR YOUR RING

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### BUDGET

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One of the most asked questions is how much one should spend on a diamond engagement ring. Traditional budgeting tips are often too broad and don't necessarily fit with what is best for you as a couple. We recommend that you:

- Have a budget range that you are comfortable with before you start shopping.
- If you have no idea how much you want to spend, try starting with a variety of 0.5 carat diamond ring styles to set a baseline.
- Go up or down from there to determine what you are comfortable spending.
- Remember, diamonds are the priciest part of the ring, not the band.

The meaning and emotional value of the ring is more important than the price. The last thing you want to do is overspend on the ring and end up resenting the purchase.

### SHOPPING

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- Before you begin shopping, have a conversation with your partner about whether you want to shop together as a couple or if they would prefer the ring to be a surprise.
- Because production time varies from ring to ring, be sure to allow plenty of time to research and shop before you plan to propose.
- We recommend starting the shopping process 4-6 weeks before you plan to propose. Some people start as early as 6 months.
- Shop around and find a store that has the right experience for you. However, it's extremely important to see the diamond in person as this is the only way to verify clarity and quality.



### CONSULTANT ADVICE

Always remember the emotional significance. There shouldn't be excessive amounts of stress tied to this process. You should enjoy the journey because you know what this will symbolize.

## HOW TO SHOP FOR YOUR RING

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### STYLE

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If you are planning on surprising your partner and you aren't sure which style diamond engagement ring they will like, you can look at a few places for clues.

1. Think about their current jewelry collection. You can take photos of current pieces they have and bring them shopping with you to reference.
2. Check social media to see if they're more traditional or trendy. (This usually helps narrow things down a lot.)
3. Think about their lifestyle. What activities do they do for fun? What kind of job do they have? What types of people do they surround themselves with?
4. Ask trusted people like friends and family.

Remember they are going to love whatever you give, but if changes are needed, we have options for that, too.

If you are shopping for the ring together, try on as many rings as possible. Various ring styles and diamond cuts look different on all fingers, so it's important to see the ring on the finger to know if it's the right style for you.

### SOME STYLE TIPS

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- An oval-shaped diamond makes the finger appear longer
- A halo makes a smaller center stone appear much larger
- A high basket can allow more light reflectivity
- An ultra-high colour grade should never be set in yellow or rose gold



# THE FIVE C'S

The Five Cs are: Carat, Cut, Clarity, Colour, and Created. Together, they make up a diamond's value. When considering the Five Cs, ask yourself what is most important to you.



## CARAT

Carat is the way we measure the weight of the diamond. The average diamond size purchased for engagement rings is 0.5 carat. Think of 0.5 carat as a starting point to help you discover which carat size you feel most comfortable purchasing.



## CUT

Cut is the most important C. It refers to the way a stone is faceted by the diamond cutter. To put it plainly, a diamond will not do what it is supposed to do if it is not properly cut. Even if you have a diamond with very high clarity and lack of colour, it won't matter if the cut is not correct. Getting the cut right takes talent, and it makes all the difference in the brilliance (sparkle factor) of your diamond.



### WELL CUT

The most brilliant

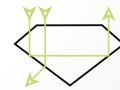
Perfectly proportioned, the maximum amount of light is refracted through the top of the diamond for ultimate sparkle.



### TOO DEEP

Poor brilliance

Light escapes from the side of the diamond, causing it to appear dull and lifeless while creating a black cover when viewed from above.



### TOO SHALLOW

Poor brilliance

Light passes through the bottom before it can be reflected, which creates an opaque, glassy look.



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# THE FIVE C'S



## CLARITY

Diamonds are created organically under extreme heat and pressure. Like most things created in nature, they contain imperfections. Clarity has to do with the number, size and position of inclusions (microscopic crystals) within the diamond. Think of these inclusions as birthmarks that make each diamond unique. Clarity is based on a scale from FL (Flawless) to I3 (many inclusions, much less expensive) and can only be detected with magnification.



VVS1, VVS2

Very Very Slightly Included



VS1, VS2

Very Slightly Included



S11, S12

Slightly Included



I1, I2, I3

Included



## COLOUR

Think of colour on a scale of colourless to light in colour. The more colourless a diamond is, the more valuable. The degree of a diamond's colour is graded on a scale from D (colourless) to Z (light yellow) and you can see the subtle differences in colour using a Diamondlite. Keep in mind that there are certain coloured diamonds that are on a completely different scale of rarity and are graded based on their intensity and enticing depth of colour, like blue, or pink diamonds.



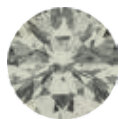
DEF

Colourless



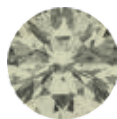
GHIJ

Near Colourless



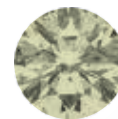
KLM

Faint Yellow



NOPQR

Very Light Yellow



STUVWXYZ

Light Yellow



FANCY

Yellow



## CONSULTANT ADVICE

For a significantly larger diamond that is equally as beautiful, Artisan Created Diamonds are the best choice. Since they are physically and chemically identical to mined diamonds—not to mention socially and environmentally responsible—the real question is why wouldn't you choose an Artisan Created Diamond?

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spence

EXCLUSIVE

### CREATED

We know that choice matters to you, that's why we offer our exclusive Artisan Created Diamonds™ alongside our mined diamonds. With an Artisan Created Diamond you can get a diamond that is 25% larger and 2 clarity grades higher for the same budget. Plus, Artisan Created Diamonds are made using breakthrough technology that replicates the environment in which a natural diamond grows but is much more ethically and environmentally sustainable compared to a mined diamond.



### NOTE:

Simulants like moissanite and cubic zirconium are not diamonds. Only mined and lab grown diamonds like Artisan Created Diamonds are classified as actual diamonds and certified by IGI.



## CONSULTANT ADVICE

The Five Cs still have a different meaning to everyone. One of the biggest things for me personally, outside of the cut quality, would be colour. Everyone sees colour differently and can be drawn to different diamonds for different reasons; often to do with the colour. My rule of thumb is to choose the diamond that "speaks to you." What I mean by this is that it is okay to ask your consultant to see diamonds side by side. One diamond will always jump out as "the one." I like a crisp white look that the I Colour Artisans or H Coloured Earth Mined diamonds bring. But that's just my personal opinion. Look at a variety and find your own favorite.

Jordan Broom-Hall, Store Director, Edmonton



## SHAPES & CUTS

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A diamond's shape says a lot about your personality and style. Choose a shape that represents you. We have listed these shapes in order of popularity.



**ROUND**  
Timeless Style

Incredible sparkle, most versatile, clean and modern in a simple setting



**PRINCESS**  
Traditional

Additional facets increase the diamond's inherent sparkle



**OVAL**  
Opulence

Most popular as a solitaire, the oval has remarkable brilliance



**PEAR**  
Pretty

Like a twinkling teardrop, unique and balanced, a perfect stand-alone stone



**CUSHION**  
For Romance

A pillow-cut rectangle with rounded corners and large facets for brilliance



**EMERALD**  
Elegance

Rectangular with long, lean facets to show off clarity



**ASSCHER**  
Vintage

Clipped corners and stepped sides create a striking presentation



**MARQUIS**  
Unique

A uniquely tapered cut, the marquise is distinctive and dramatic



**RADIANT**  
Exceptional

A rare, sparkly square with trimmed corners



## CONSULTANT ADVICE

Make your engagement ring shopping as memorable as your proposal by working with a qualified and trusted jeweler that is truly honored to be a part of your monumental occasion.

## METAL TYPES

There are obviously many different metals you can choose from for your engagement ring. Here are the four most popular metal types to help you decide which one is best for you.



### PLATINUM

Platinum has a hardness, rarity and naturally white sheen that will never fade or change colour. It's also a top choice for its weight and strength, and it is naturally hypoallergenic. Platinum is an excellent metal choice for a ring that will last you a lifetime.

### WHITE GOLD / MOST POPULAR

White gold uses pure gold alloyed with other white metals such as palladium and silver to produce a beautiful polish and shine. White metals provide an excellent backdrop for diamonds. As a standard, white gold rings are plated with rhodium to give it its brilliant white luster, but also because it's hypoallergenic and helps to protect the gold. White gold is typically available in 14k, 18k and 19k.

### ROSE GOLD / TRENDY

Also known as pink gold or red gold, rose gold adds a touch of romance to your ring. If you are looking for something unique, rose gold is a great metal to choose. It's often used in bi-coloured rings to offset the more traditional white or yellow gold and is typically available in 14k and 18k.

### YELLOW GOLD / TRADITIONAL

Yellow gold is a traditional choice for engagement rings. A mixture of pure gold, copper and silver gives yellow gold its signature warmth. Yellow gold is a striking contrast to a brilliant diamond and is typically available in 14k and 18k.

14K

58.5%  
PURE GOLD

18K

75%  
PURE GOLD

19K

79.2%  
PURE GOLD

### NOTE:

The purity of gold is measured in karats which is measured out of a total of 24 parts; pure gold is 24 karats. However, 24k gold is extremely soft and unsuitable for jewelry as it will bend and dent very easily. The solution for this is to mix gold with other metals in a process called alloying.

## RING STYLES

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Choosing a ring style can be overwhelming because there are thousands of them out there. Keep an open mind with different styles because you never know what will end up looking good. As a starting point, here are some of the most popular ring styles.



### SOLITAIRE

This elegant ring style features a single diamond and is the most popular engagement ring style. The diamond is centered on the ring and the prongs allow the diamond to catch light. The most common settings for a solitaire ring are four prongs and six prongs. The solitaire ring is well suited for people with a timeless style.



### HALO

The halo-style ring features a center diamond surrounded by small claw set diamonds. The small claw set diamonds catch light and sparkle around the center diamond, making it look bigger. Halo rings are dramatic and are a good fit for stylish and outgoing personalities.



### THREE STONE

This ring style features three diamonds: one for the past, one for the present, and one for the future. Often, there is one larger diamond that sits in the center of the ring and two smaller diamonds on either side.



### MULTI STONE

This ring style features three or more diamonds that can be configured in various ways. Multi-stone rings are truly unique and are a great fit for one-of-a-kind personalities.



### VINTAGE

Vintage rings draw on the aesthetics of the Art Deco, Art Nouveau, Victorian, Edwardian and Georgian time periods. This style is a great match for romantic personalities who appreciate the unique qualities of vintage rings.

**YOUR RING**  
**ANATOMY**

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An engagement ring is much more than the sum of its parts, but you do need to know the general makeup of a ring. Every ring, no matter the style, has roughly the same basic parts. Here is the anatomy of the ring showing the basics plus some elements you can add on.

The Basics.



**CENTER STONE**

The center stone is the main diamond and focus of the ring.

**PRONG**

A prong is a small, slender piece of metal used to secure a diamond. The tips of the prong hold the diamond in place. A traditional setting will have 4 or 6 prongs depending on the cut or shape of the diamond.

**SHOULDER**

The shoulder is the part of the ring that connects the head and shank.

**HEAD / SETTING**

The head or setting is the elevated part of the ring that extends from the shank. It is specifically designed to secure the center stone.

**SHANK**

The shank is the hooped part of a ring that encircles the finger. This is the band of the ring and what holds the ring on your finger. Some shanks are solid metal and others have diamond embellishments.

The Add Ons.



**HALO**

A halo enhances the center diamond by encircling it with small claw set diamonds. The small claw set diamonds catch light and sparkle around the center diamond making it look bigger.



**SIDE STONES**

Side stones are large diamonds on either side of the center diamond along the shank. The side stones are usually smaller than the center diamond. It is common to have one or two diamonds on either side of the center diamond.



**HIDDEN ACCENTS**

A peekaboo diamond is an accent diamond placed under the head/setting.



**ACCENT STONES**

Accent stones are small diamonds along the shank on either side of the center diamond.



## NEXT STEPS

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Now that you know about the Five Cs, the various diamond shapes and different ring styles to choose from, you are ready to start shopping! There are many options when it comes to buying a diamond engagement ring, and it's important to find the right store experience for you.

Our friendly and knowledgeable Diamond Consultants are there to help you find the diamond and ring style that is uniquely you. They will educate you on your diamond and even show you the true colour, cut and clarity using gemscopes and other specialty tools. At Spence, we will show you Artisan Created Diamonds right alongside mined diamonds so that you can make an informed decision and choose the right diamond for you. The Spence experience is backed by 40 years of understanding what people want when shopping for a diamond engagement ring. Our in-store experience is pressure-free, easy and fun. Make selecting your engagement ring as memorable as your proposal by visiting Spence Diamonds.

We have **8** store locations in Canada. To learn more about the Spence experience or to book an appointment visit [SpenceDiamonds.com](https://www.SpenceDiamonds.com).

### THE SPENCE EXPERIENCE

1. We have open cases so you can reach right in and try on as many rings as you like.
2. Spence Diamonds has over 2,500 customizable styles with clearly marked pricing.
3. Every single ring is handcrafted after you place an order, guaranteeing that your ring will have never touched another hand.

