

THE FOUR C's

What to know when shopping for diamond jewelry.

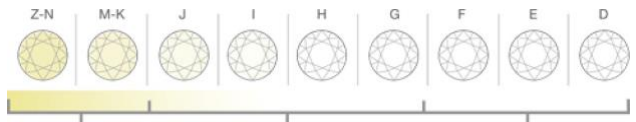
CUT

A diamond's cut has the greatest influence on its overall beauty. As the only element of the 4Cs determined by artistry rather than nature, a skilled diamond cutter unlocks a stone's brilliance with expertly created angles and proportions.



COLOR

Although diamonds may appear colorless to the untrained eye, most show subtle shade differences ranging from brilliant white to light yellow. The highest quality (and most rare) stone is grade D, or colorless.



CLARITY

Diamonds may have microscopic imperfections called inclusions, and surface blemishes, that naturally occur during the formation process. The fewer and less visible the inclusions, the higher the clarity grade.

CARAT WEIGHT

A carat is a unit of measurement for a diamond's weight. While more carats are generally associated with a larger stone, the shape and cut impacts its visual size.



1-1/2 2 3 4 5 U.S. penny

* FL (Flawless): No inclusions or visible blemishes under 1 OX magnification

IF (Internally Flawless): No inclusions. Minute blemishes are allowable (surface graining or details of polish) but barely visible to a skilled grader using IOX magnification

VVSI & VVS2 (Very, Very Slightly Included): Inclusions are extremely hard to detect using 10X magnification

VS 1 & VS2 (Very Slightly Included): Inclusions are fairly hard to detect using IOX magnification but generally do not impact the visual beauty of the diamond

S11 & S12 (Slightly Included): Inclusions are easily noticeable using IOX magnification and are sometimes visible to the naked eye

I1 (Included): Inclusions are obvious using 1 OX magnification and may be seen by the

naked eye I2 (Included): Inclusions are very obvious using IOX magnification and will be seen by the naked eye

I3 (Included): Inclusions are extremely obvious using IOX magnification, can easily be seen by the naked eye and can affect the diamond's transparency and brilliance