

Special Note on AGS000 Diamond

THE 'AGS' - DIAMOND QUALITY DOCUMENT

The two most respected world famous gemological labs offering absolutely impartial lab reports on diamonds are the GIA (Gemological Institute of America) and the AGS (American Gem Society)

The AGS offers a complete, detailed grading report on a diamond and this is referred to as the 'Diamond Quality Document' or DQD. This document contains all the grading information as well as all the Cut Grade information. The 'Cut Grade Information' is divided into three sections: Polish, Symmetry, and Proportions.

The ABSOLUTE highest Cut Grade ratings that any diamond can get under the AGS system is what is referred to as an AGS 000 Ideal Cut. This simply means absolute and total PERFECTION. The diamond has an 'ideal polish', an ideal symmetry, and 'ideal' proportions. Less than 1% of the diamonds in the world today receive this grade.

The AGS 000 Ideal Cut diamond is rare and hard to come by. In the trade this rating is referred to as the AGS 000 Ideal Cut or a "Triple Ideal". On the AGS Diamond Quality Document that you receive the diamond would be specifically rated as an "AGS Ideal 0" as the overall cut grade.

Please understand that there are many very good cuts that come close to the AGS 000 and are still extremely beautiful and brilliant.

Please call 1 800 252-1476 to inquire about possible AGS 000 diamonds that may be available at wholesale prices.

A Special Note on Hearts & Arrows

"HEARTS & ARROWS" DIAMONDS

A "hearts & arrows" ideal cut diamond is the absolute finest cut diamond in the realm of 'ideal proportions'.

A "hearts & arrows" diamond is EXTREMELY RARE and is EXTREMELY DIFFICULT to locate. Less than 1/10th of 1 per cent of every million diamonds cut will display a true "hearts & arrows" pattern.

The "hearts & arrows" pattern is immediately recognizable when viewed under a refractive scope. A true "hearts & arrows" will have a very sharp image that will be immediately visible when viewed under the refractive scope.

'Symmetry' and not so much the 'Proportions' is the cause of the "hearts & arrows" effect. The "hearts & arrows" pattern is a result of extremely careful shaping and alignment of the facets. All of the diamond's facets (the bezel, star, upper and lower girdle, and pavilion mains) MUST be very precisely aligned 180 degrees opposite each other or else the "hearts & arrows" pattern will not be precise and sharp and will show distortion or partial distortion. A partial "hearts & arrows" pattern is referred to as a "trying to be hearts & arrows" and THAT DOES NOT COUNT AS A "hearts & arrows".

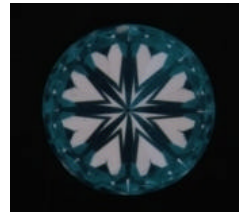
While it takes approximately 1 hour to cut the average round brilliant cut diamond once the girdle outline has been bruted, it will take approximately 96 times as long to cut the "hearts and arrows" diamond of the same size, clarity & color with a resulting greater loss of diamond rough.

A true "hearts & arrows" pattern is usually found in AGS000 ideal cut diamonds or AGS1 excellent proportions. Remember that the "hearts & arrow" pattern results from the absolute perfect symmetry of the diamond and not its proportions.

A "hearts & arrow" diamond will be extremely brilliant due to the fact they it will disperse more light. The photo on the left shows the pattern that is seen when the diamond is viewed from the table or top of the diamond and the photo on the right is the pattern that is seen when the diamond is viewed from the pavilion or bottom of the diamond.



Top View



Bottom View

An AGS000 ideal cut diamond with a "hearts & arrows" pattern REIGNS SUPREME as the ultimate, finest cut diamond on this planet. No wonder it is referred to as "THE KING OF DIAMONDS". Every "hearts & arrows" diamond is a result of very precisely cutting each facet at a very precise angle with definite proportions. As a result you have an amazing spectral show. "Hearts & Arrows" diamonds are characterized by a completely round shape, facets that are perfectly pointed, and the top and bottom facets that are perfectly aligned. "HEARTS & ARROWS" ARE CONSIDERED THE ABSOLUTE ULTIMATE DIAMOND. THE TRUE "KING OF DIAMONDS".

Free Refractive scope to allow you to see the "Hearts & Arrows" image sent with your purchase of a "Hearts & Arrows" diamond !!!

Special Notes on Standards for an Ideal Cut

THE IDEAL CUT

Certain modern round brilliant cut diamonds are cut to within certain tolerances that allow them to be referred to as 'ideal' cut.

Why is reference made to the ideal cut when judging the proportions of a round brilliant cut diamond? The reason is that it displays the most suitable balanced display of brilliancy and fire, and it is the styled of modern brilliant cutting that retains the least weight from the average rough diamond.

'Fire' refers to the flashes of the different spectrum colors seen in diamonds as a result of the diamond separating white light into the spectrum colors as the light leaves the angled crown facets after being totally internally reflected in the diamond.

'Brilliancy' in the diamond is the amount of light reaching the eye as a result of reflections from the internal surfaces of facets, called total internal reflections, and reflections from the external surfaces of the table and other facets of the diamond.

GIA STANDARDS FOR THE IDEAL CUT

For a diamond to be considered 'ideal' the GIA has set certain standards.

Depth: 58.3 to 62.9%

Table Size 53 to 60%

Girdle: Medium to slightly thick

Pavilion Depth: 43%

Polish: Good to Excellent

Symmetry: Good to Excellent

Culet: none to medium

The above cut guidelines apply for diamonds 0.50cts. and up. For smaller sizes slightly larger tables up to 62% are acceptable.

AGS STANDARDS FOR THE IDEAL CUT

The AGS considers the following proportion parameters when determining whether or not a diamond falls into the 'ideal proportions'.

Table diameter: 53% - 57.5%

Girdle: Thin, medium, slightly thick

Pavilion Depth: 42.5%-43.5%

Culet: Pointed, very small, small, medium

Both the GIA and the AGS have similar grading standards.

There are other cut classifications such as 'very good' or 'good' and the diamond HAS JUST AS MUCH BRILLIANCE as an ideal cut diamond.

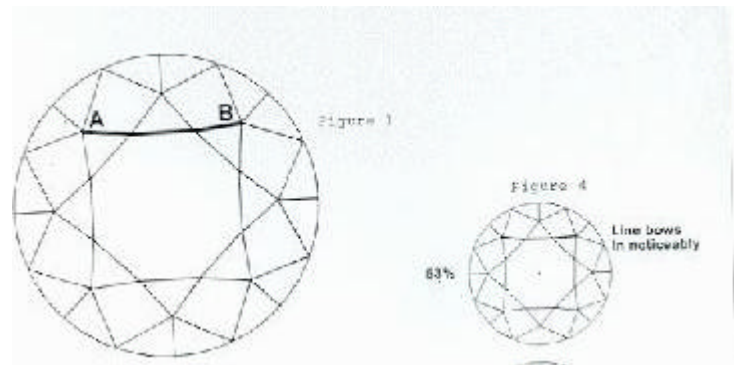
Call **1-800-252-1476** so I can obtain the best cut diamond at the absolute lowest wholesale price. I will not compromise on the cut at all.

Yes, there are certain distinguishing characteristics that IDEAL cuts have.

Firstly, on an 'ideal cut' if you look directly down and straight into the table of the diamond with a 10X loupe you will notice a certain phenomenon. Focus towards the bottom point of the diamond (the culet) and you should notice a small octagonal formation around the culet. This is the table reflection that is produced by the 'ideal cut'. It should cover about 1/3 of the table diameter. You will notice that effect in the following 2 ideal cut diamonds displayed below.



With ideal cuts, you will notice a bowing in of the facet lines as illustrated in the following sketch. If you look at the sketch and then compare to the actual photos you will then see the effect very clearly.



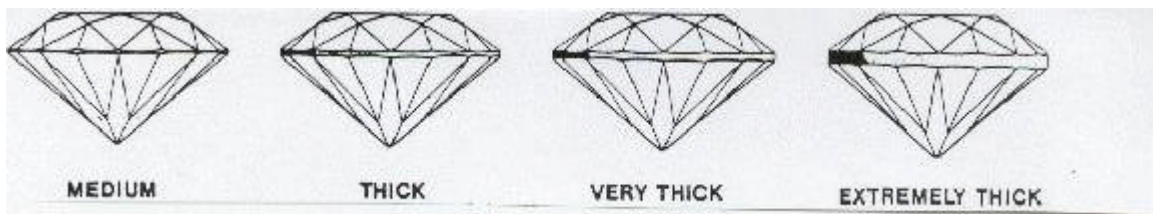
The Polish of an Ideal Cut Diamond

With an 'ideal' cut diamond the polish should be rated as good, very good or excellent on the GIA cert or have a '0' rating on the AGS cert.

To achieve maximum brilliancy in a diamond it is essential that the facets be flat, planar surfaces. Hasty and careless polishing can leave wheel marks that affect brilliancy and luster. These wheelmarks are seldom visible to the unaided eye. The wheel marks cause the surface to be very minutely grooved, and in turn these minute grooves caused diffusion of the light that is transmitted through and reflected from the diamond. A well polished diamond will show no evidence of wheel marks under 10X. Wheel marks can easily reduce the brilliancy of a diamond to below its optimum beauty.

The Girdle of the Diamond

The girdle of an ideal cut diamond can range from thin to slightly thick. This applies to both GIA and AGS certified diamonds. Avoid diamonds with extremely thin or thick girdles.

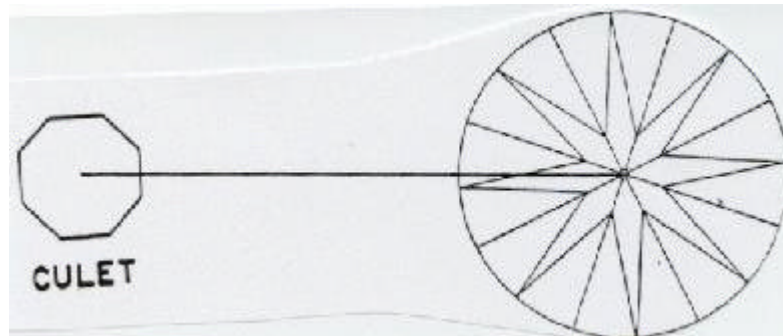


A well finished girdle surface is one that is so smooth that it is waxy rather than dull. If a diamond is rounded up too quickly in the fashioning process, the result will be a fuzzy appearing girdle that may be rough. A rough girdle may make a diamond appear greyer or darker when viewed face up. This would be caused by oil or dirt becoming embedded in the girdle surface.

A girdle may be faceted or polished and this has no effect on the value of the diamond.

The Culet of the Diamond

The culet should appear as a tiny polished facet at the tip of the pavilion. Should the culet be chipped or abraded, this will detract from the diamond's appearance. If the culet is rough or unpolished, it will appear as a frosty white dot. In an ideal cut diamond, the culet should be either pointed, very small, small or medium.



The symmetry of the diamond

Symmetry discrepancies should not be visible under 10X if a diamond is to be considered ideally cut. The table must conform to the ideal octagonal shape. The facets should all meet at a point and if they fail to do so they would be misshapen as a result. When a diamond is graded for symmetry, the following 9 features are taken into account.

1. Table or culet slightly off centre.
2. Unequal sizes of opposing facets.
3. Misshapen facets.
4. Table not octagonal
5. Girdle outline slightly out of round
6. Table not parallel to girdle.
7. Facets fail to point up.
8. Pavilion and crown main facets out of alignment.

A Special Note

Ideal cut diamonds have a very high degree of brilliance. However, the majority of modern round brilliant cut diamonds are not 'ideal' but still have overall 'good' cut grades. THESE 'GOOD' CUT DIAMONDS WILL STILL HAVE IN MANY CASES AN EQUAL BRILLIANCE TO THE IDEAL CUT DIAMOND. THEREFORE, UNDER NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES YOU WILL NOT BE SENT ANY CERTS ON ANY DIAMONDS WHERE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE NOT MET:

- A. The depth percentage WILL NOT exceed 63%. And will not be less than 58%
- B. The table will not exceed 63%.
- C. The girdle will be in the range from thin to thick.
- D. The polish and symmetry can never be lower than 'Good'.

Please call 1-800-252-1476 for immediate assistance in selecting the diamond that is perfect for you. Or, go to the cert search section and fill in the details in the chart pull down section or just email me below with all the details of what you have in mind:

A NOTE OF CAUTION REGARDING FLUORESCENT DIAMONDS

So what does it mean if the diamond supplier, or the certificate, or the jeweller tells you that the diamond has fluorescence?

If the diamond has strong fluorescence that means that upon exposure to ultraviolet light such as the sunlight, the diamond MAY turn a 'light blue' colour. This may bother some people.

If you are contemplating buying a diamond that has strong blue fluorescence, or for that matter, any fluorescence, I would strongly suggest viewing the diamond outdoors in direct sunlight in order to see the effect that the sunlight has on the diamond. Only after doing this would you consider purchasing the diamond. You must of course follow all the other advice as set forth in the guide.

You should also ask the diamond supplier or gemmologist to show you the diamond under ultraviolet light so that you may view the effect of fluorescence under ultraviolet light. Generally, strong fluorescence lowers diamond values by approx. 5 per cent. When ultraviolet light strikes a diamond it excites the electrons in their orbits around the nucleus of the carbon atom. The electrons jump to the next higher orbital level. When they move back to their original orbital level they do so with the release of energy in the form of the bluish light. It is not known why certain diamonds are fluorescent and why others are not.

THE PROPER PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN PURCHASING A DIAMOND

AN OVERVIEW OF THE ENTIRE PROCEDURE

Before setting out on your journey to purchase your diamond ring please read the entire guide to ensure that you will not miss out on any of the important steps.

The proper way to go about buying a diamond ring is to purchase the diamond *loose* so that you may have it independently appraised with the understanding that you may return the diamond for a full refund if you are not satisfied with the independent appraisal. At the time that you have it independently appraised you are in fact verifying the quality and value as stated by the jeweller and you are getting an independent professional opinion on the diamond. When seeing the independent gemmologist do not give him any information about the diamond at all. Do not tell him from whom you are purchasing the diamond. Let the gemmologist give you all the information and then after the complete appraisal is performed you may discuss with the gemmologist how the diamond was described to you by the jeweller. Any information you tell the gemmologist prior to the appraisal may bias and influence his judgment calls on the quality and value of the diamond.

The independent appraiser should not under any circumstance try to sell you a diamond. It is recommended taking your loose diamond to an independent gemmologist who is an authorized laser Gemprint dealer should there be one in your area. You may call 1-888-GEMPRINT for a list of authorized Gemprint dealers. The laser gemprint will protect your diamond and will help ensure that you will receive the same diamond back once the ring is made up. The laser gemprint will not harm or mark the diamond in any way. The laser is simply amplified light waves passing through the diamond. This fingerprint is considered absolute proof of ownership and is recognized by the courts, law enforcement agencies as well as insurance companies. Certain insurance companies will offer a 10% discount on premiums if the diamond is laser gemprinted. The list of insurance companies is listed on one of the supplementary pages at the back of this guide. Should you be located far from an authorized Gemprint dealer then you go to an independent gemmologist not engaged in the buying and selling of diamonds and follow the steps as outlined in this guide to ensure your protection at all times. Also, be sure that the gemmologist does an inclusion plot of the loose diamond. This is a map of the diamond illustrating all the inclusions that the diamond may have. This inclusion plot will always identify your stone and will help prevent diamond switching.

You are at the independent gemmologist's lab strictly to find out everything about the loose diamond that you may purchase. Once you are satisfied with the appraisal supplied by the independent gemmologist and you decide to purchase the diamond, you then return the diamond to the jeweller to properly settle your account with the diamond. You would then take the diamond to the place that you have chosen to purchase the mount or setting from. You may choose the jeweller who supplied you with the diamond or you may choose another jeweller or goldsmith to make up your setting. After the ring is fully completed you would then return to your independent appraiser to do the final appraisal. Your independent appraiser would of course verify that the same diamond is in the ring that you originally brought to him to appraise and he would also check to make sure that there was no damage done to the diamond while it was set. This final appraisal is the one that you would submit to your insurance agent. Also, take the original appraisal with the photo attached with you when you travel in order not to have any problems with customs at border crossings.

It would be easier for you to have the jeweller who sells you the diamond to also sell you the mount, but you must be 100% satisfied with a mount that he has to show you or one that he may custom make for you. Otherwise, do not hesitate to shop around for mounts from other stores or goldsmiths. Be careful not to overpay on a mount that you are purchasing just because you did not buy the diamond from the same place. However, do expect to pay more for a mount if you are purchasing it from a jeweller who did not sell you the diamond in the first place. Remember that the jeweller or goldsmith supplying the mount will have to carefully look after and safeguard your diamond while in his possession and also, he will have to be very cautious when setting the diamond so as not to do any damage to it. The jeweller who sold you the diamond had profited from the sale of the diamond and may give you special concessions on the price of the mount. However, the bottom line is that you have to be 100% satisfied with the mount even if it means purchasing it from a different jeweller or goldsmith and perhaps paying a little more. Remember though not to pay an excessively higher price just because the jeweller did not sell you the diamond.

DETAILED STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL PURCHASE OF YOUR DIAMOND RING

Section one

Please be sure to read the entire guide and take the guide with you at all times. Fill in the special chart sheet provided in order to simplify your shopping experience. Be sure to read the sections on clarity, colour, and cut before shopping. A sound knowledge on diamonds will give you a feeling of confidence and a feeling of being in command. You'll immediately spot out those salespeople who really don't know the true facts relating to diamonds. If you are purchasing a fancy cut diamond such as a marquise, pear, oval, heart, emerald, princess, or other fancy cut please pay particular attention to the facts presented in this guide concerning those fancy cut diamonds.

The round brilliant cut diamonds most often display the highest brilliance due their being totally round and symmetrical. The fancy cut diamonds do not adhere as closely to the stricter standards imposed by the round brilliant cut diamonds and therefore on average are not quite as brilliant. I believe that the fancy cut diamonds are just as beautiful and spectacular. There are very important topics discussed with the fancy cut diamonds that you must learn about before attempting to purchase one. For example, with pear-shaped diamonds in particular you must learn about "high shoulders" and for marquise diamonds you must learn about "the bow-tie" effect.

AN IMPORTANT BRIEF NOTE RELATING TO CLARITY, COLOUR & CUT

Should you wish to "get the biggest bang for your buck" when purchasing a diamond but yet still not sacrifice quality then I would recommend purchasing an SI clarity diamond with an H or higher colour with at least a medium cutting grade or higher. For example, if you take a 1 carat SI-1 diamond and set it next to another similarly cut VS-1 clarity diamond they are going to look almost identical and I doubt very much whether you would be able to tell them apart. However, what you will notice are changes in colour or the amount of whiteness that the diamond has. So why not purchase a one carat diamond with a SI clarity and put the money that you save from not buying a VS-1 clarity into a higher, whiter colour which in fact is something that can be noticed by the eye? You probably cannot tell the difference between a VS-1 and an SI-1 clarity diamond but you could notice the difference in whiteness between an H-I colour and an F-G colour. The price of a VS-1 clarity H colour diamond is almost the same as a SI-1 clarity E colour diamond providing both have the same cut. You can't tell the difference from VS-1 to SI-1 however you will be able to tell the difference from E to H in colour so why not spend your dollars on something that you can notice the difference on. However, should you be particularly concerned with clarity and the 'purity' within the diamond then there is nothing wrong with that either and by all means purchase a VS-1 clarity diamond.

If you go too low in clarity, for example down to the I-1 or lower clarity grades, then the larger presence of inclusions may tend to block the passage of light through the diamond and thus reduce the overall brilliancy of the diamond. Also, the large amount of inclusions in I clarity diamonds could possibly weaken the structure of the diamond. Be careful of cleavage inclusions close to or reaching the edge of the diamond as that could make the diamond susceptible to damage resulting from a hard knock or blow during normal wear.

Should you wish to buy an I clarity grade diamond because you want to end up with an overall larger diamond that is fine but be sure to ask the gemmologist when you get the loose diamond independently appraised whether the inclusions present are of such a nature and in such a position that they may pose a significant danger of being easily damaged while being normally worn. Also, ask the gemmologist in particular if he notices a significant decrease in brilliance due to large inclusions blocking the light traveling through the diamond. If you are really interested in overall size and want the diamond to be as large as possible but you have to carefully watch the dollars as well, then buy an I clarity diamond with as high a colour as possible and at least a medium cut but when you have the diamond independently appraised ask the gemologist about the nature of the inclusions in regards to susceptibility to damage and also make sure that you are not purchasing a diamond with significant reduced brilliancy due to larger inclusions that block the light.

I'll state again that my recommendation for overall best value is purchasing an SI clarity diamond with as high a colour as possible and with as good a cut as possible but not lower than medium cut and still maintaining the price within your budget.

Within the last few years there was introduced a new clarity grade known as SI-3. Basically this is a clarity grade lower than SI-2 but yet not quite as low as I-1. It would be somewhere in between SI-2 and I-1. Most labs are starting to accept this diamond grade. I feel it should definitely be accepted as there is a considerable void between SI-2 and I-1 and a grade such as SI-3 would fill that void.

Buying an SI-3 clarity diamond is fine providing you ask the gemologist at the time of your appraisal the questions as outlined in the previous paragraph. Buying an SI-3 will allow you to purchase an overall larger diamond, or an overall whiter diamond, or a combination of a larger and whiter diamond that you would not have been able to had you purchased a VS-1 clarity diamond and had you wanted to stay within the same price range. However, remember that as you go lower in clarity there may be differences to the normal eye that you have to be aware of. I don't believe a person could tell the difference between a VS-1 and an SI-1 however that person may be able to note a difference between a VS-1 and an SI-3.

In regards to colour, any colour that is H or higher means that the diamond has an overall white colour. However, certain individuals may have a preference for

a tinted white diamond (I-J-K) colour or a yellowish colour (L or lower). I recommend viewing all the clarity, colour and cut grades and then deciding what appeals best to you. Clarity, colour, and cut will be discussed in more detail later in the guide.

Make a list of all your important questions concerning your diamond and bring them up with your independent gemmologist at the time you have your diamond appraised. Your independent gemmologist is in the best position to answer all your questions!

Section Two

Determine the budget you wish to spend on a diamond. Comparison shop at various stores. There are numerous different types of places where you may purchase your diamond. Here is a detailed list of the different types of places available in most large cities. *Regardless of where you purchase the diamond it is still imperative to follow all the steps as outlined in the guide.*

1. In most large cities there are jewellery exchange centres where you have a large number of jewellers in very close quarters and competition under one roof. The deals on diamonds tend to be quite good in these exchanges especially where the competition is so keen. Remember that these exchanges have relatively few employees and lower rents to pay than a store.

2. Many respectable jewellery stores today open up in office buildings in the suburbs where they have lower rents to pay than on main floor locations. Check these locations out for good deals on diamonds.

3. In most large cities the downtown area usually has an office building dedicated to the jewellery trade. This office building would house numerous jewellery trade specialists. You may find diamond merchants, colored stone dealers, goldsmiths, custom ring manufacturers etc. etc. all under one roof. The people in these buildings usually deal directly with the jewellery stores and the security in these buildings is usually quite tight for understandable reasons. By dealing directly with the people in these buildings you would be perhaps entering an ideal situation. I don't recommend barging into these buildings but look at the building directory and take note of the diamond merchants and perhaps you can prearrange a visit by phone first. The disadvantage however is that these specialized trades people and wholesalers are committed to dealing usually directly with stores and oftentimes do not have the patience to deal with the public on a one-to-one basis. I have just mentioned this idea as a possibility. There are clients I know for whom this method has worked extremely well in the purchase of their diamond and for other people a store or establishment that could spend more time with them would suit them much better.

4. Check out the jewellery stores in malls and on ground floor locations in buildings and streets. Be aware that these locations have higher rent expenses, however, don't rule out any store for that reason. You may find a store in a mall or at street level willing to bend over backwards to satisfy your needs and to give you an excellent price. Remember that regardless of where you purchase the diamond ring you are going to follow the steps as outlined in this guide.

5. Be careful of the very high prices you may pay at very high upscale jewellery stores. You will certainly get high quality no doubt however you will be paying for the high quality and for the name. The whole idea of this guide is that you get a good quality diamond at the most reasonable price possible.

6. Sometimes the best person to sell you a diamond is a graduate gemmologist with an appraisal lab. Who is there better than a gemmologist to demonstrate, point out and prove to you everything about the diamond. The gemmologist's expenses are pretty low and he could probably give you a very good price on a diamond. Most gemmologists tend to be quite accurate in their grading of diamonds as they are in the best position of any to know precisely what the clarity, colour and cutting grades are to be and yet their prices tend to be very reasonable. *The quality and value of the diamond can always be checked out and verified by a second reputable independent gemmologist.* The gemmologist from whom you purchase the diamond could probably supply you with a mount or connect you with a custom goldsmith who could custom handmake a mount for you.

7. There is always the possibility of buying a loose diamond or diamond ring from the classified advertising sections of the newspaper. Sometimes you may find an individual who is in the process of getting divorced or who has received a divorce and is understandably quite anxious to get rid of a diamond ring even at a sacrificial giveaway price.

It is very risky purchasing a diamond from a strange individual. Once again follow the basic procedures as outlined in the guide. Over the phone discuss all aspects of the diamond ring and have the individual fax you any appraisals performed on the ring. Visit the person and carefully view the ring but *do not purchase the ring or commit yourself to purchasing the ring or loose diamond.*

If everything seems just right and the price seems extremely reasonable then the next step would be for you to arrange a meeting at an independent gemmologist. Only proceed to this step if you really feel that the individual selling the ring or loose diamond has something special to offer since you are going to have to pay for the cost of the appraisal by the independent gemmologist. By meeting at the gemmologist's lab, the gemmologist can verify the quality and value before you actually make the purchase. It is often a good idea to ask the individual selling the ring or loose diamond to wait in the gemmologist's waiting room after the appraisal is done so that you may privately consult with the gemmologist and ask him his opinion on the selling price of the diamond. You can complete the transaction privately after the appraisal is done in the gemmologist's waiting room. This method of purchasing a diamond may prove to be very lucrative.

Just as the private individual met you at the independent gemmologist's lab the same way a jeweller selling you a loose diamond or a diamond ring could also meet you at the gemmologists's lab. However, in many smaller cities the gemmologist may immediately recognize the jeweller which may in turn influence his appraisal. I believe it's better if the individual came into the gemmologist's office without the gemmologist seeing the jeweller. The less the gemmologist knows about anything concerning the diamond purchase the better. Never go to a gemmologist that the jeweller picked out for you. You pick your own independent gemmologist without the jeweller having any

knowledge of which gemmologist you are going to. In this way there is no chance of there being any communication between the jeweller and the gemmologist, that can in turn influence the gemmologist.

8. One other method of purchasing a loose diamond or a diamond ring at a very good price is through an auction house. Auction houses though are usually not flexible in regards to allowing you to have the item independently appraised and then being able to return the ring or diamond if you are not satisfied with your independent appraisal. The other disadvantage is that you get carried away with the bidding on a particularly attractive ring and end up overpaying for it. There are also many hidden costs involved with auctions. If you really see a ring that you are attracted to at an auction it may be worth your while to bring an independent gemmologist to a previewing session and let him examine the diamond ring as carefully as possible and let him give you all the advice he can based on his examination prior to the auction. Let him advise you on the maximum amount that you should bid. Let him check the diamond thoroughly in regards to damage to the diamond as well as the kind of cut. Many older diamond rings found at auctions have old-European cut and transitional cut diamonds that are worth less.

9. Diamond shopping on the internet may prove to be lucrative. Check out all the web sites and pay special attention to the testimonials. **YOU MUST HAVE IT IN WRITING THAT IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH YOUR OWN INDEPENDENT APPRAISAL YOU MAY RETURN THE DIAMOND FOR A FULL REFUND.** Have the loose diamond you receive independently appraised as per the guide lines set out in this guide. Using the internet may be worthwhile for someone who is at a great distance from any significant diamond source. Be very careful when using this method. You could end up with an exceptionally good deal.

Section Three

HOW TO SHOP FOR A DIAMOND

While shopping around for a diamond at any store or diamond dealer be sure to ask each dealer for a 10X loupe so that you may properly examine the interior of the diamond under magnification. It may be in your best interest to purchase a 10X eye loupe directly from a jewellery supply house if you are going to buy the diamond privately. The ideal best quality loupe to purchase is by Bausch & Lomb and it is called the Hastings 10X Triplet that is corrected for chromatic aberration. The absolute best way to view clarity of a diamond is with a stereoscopic binocular microscope with dark field illumination. There are such microscopes manufactured specifically for observing diamonds and gemstones. Any store that features such a microscope is obviously in tune with the scientific clarity grading aspect of diamonds and is likely to be quite specific and detailed with all other aspects of diamond grading.

Should a diamond for example be clarity graded as SI-2 have the jeweller explain to you precisely why it is SI-2. Know the nature and location of the inclusions present in the diamond. Be sure to view the inclusions yourself under the loupe or preferably in the microscope. Diamonds are assigned a clarity grade under a power of 10X. *When observing a diamond with a loupe bring the loupe right up to your eye and then slowly bring the diamond in the tweezers to a short distance beneath the loupe till the diamond comes into focus. Always look through the top of the diamond or the table of the diamond to view inclusions. Pick up the diamond in the tweezers by putting the diamond table down and firmly position the diamond within each side of the tweezer. After carefully observing the diamond through the table, observe the side of the diamond so that you can view the girdle of the diamond. The girdle is the border separating the crown or top section of the diamond from the pavilion or bottom section of the girdle. The girdle should not be too thick. Please read the girdle sections to be found in the supplementary section of the guide.*

Be sure to ask the jeweller to allow you to view the colour of the diamond against a master comparison set. The jeweller will position the diamond against another diamond of known colour and you may compare the diamond to another diamond of known colour. It is in this way that colour is determined in diamonds. This master set would have been originally colour graded by the Gemological Institute of America. Ideally the observation of colour should be done under specific fluorescent lighting conditions in a Diamond Lite machine and wearing a 4X optivisor. The GIA Diamond Lite machine houses all the official comparison diamonds on a special tray that fits into the machine. The diamonds are set in order of colour within an angled slot so that you may observe the colour of these diamonds by looking through the body of the diamonds. The diamond in question is positioned on the angled slot next to the comparison diamond and in this way a direct comparison can be made with all the comparison diamonds in order to ascertain the correct colour of the diamond in question. The diamond in question is shifted from one position to another within the angled slot so that it is between two different stones with each shift. A qualified jeweller or gemmologist with this equipment should be able to demonstrate this to you.

Also, while looking at a diamond that you may be considering purchasing have the jeweller explain the cutting grade to you. It is important to ask the jeweller for the following measurements in a round brilliant cut diamond: the maximum diameter, the minimum diameter, the depth, and the table measurement. With these measurements you can determine the table and depth percentage. Once you have read this guide in its entirety you will know exactly how to calculate these measurements and you will know how to interpret the results in order to arrive at a cutting grade. *When focusing on the cut of the diamond make sure that the girdle is not too thick. Be sure to read the section on girdles to be found further on in the supplementary section of the guide.* The ideal situation is for the jeweller to have a machine called a GIA Proportionscope. With this machine the silhouette of the diamond is positioned against the ideal cut on a frosted screen in a darkened room and you can see exactly how the diamond is proportioned and cut in relation to the

perfect ideal cut. Very simply put, the better the outline of the diamond in question matches up to the ideal cut the better the cut of the diamond would be. This machine however, can be quite confusing to you and it is still no substitute for getting the proportion measurements especially the depth percentage measurement.

Be sure to read the supplementary guide sections on clarity, colour and cut following this outline step-by-step guide section. Read all supplementary sheets contained within the guide so that when you observe the diamonds you will ask the right questions. DON'T LET AN INFERIOR QUALITY DIAMOND PASS INTO YOUR HANDS. READ THIS ENTIRE GUIDE CAREFULLY AND FOLLOW ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS CONTAINED WITHIN THE GUIDE.

After you have shopped around review the summary sheets you have filled out and determine which diamond excites you the most keeping value and price in mind.

Always bear in mind that your number one priority is keeping your fiancée happy. This is where you have to become an expert judge of matters. If she gets annoyed with all the technical jargon involved with diamonds then perhaps you may want to independently discuss all these finer technical scientific grading facts alone with the jeweller at another time. Remember her happiness is your prime concern!

Section Four

When you have come out with your choice for your number one diamond you then make sure that the jeweller or individual selling you the diamond specifies the following on the bill of sale.

1. Weight of the diamond.
2. Dimensions of the diamond.
3. Clarity, Colour & Cut of diamond.
4. Return agreement.

The return agreement should be specifically written on the receipt by the jeweller or individual selling you the diamond or diamond ring. The following notation or something similar to it should be specifically noted on the bill of sale:

I have the opportunity to take the diamond or diamond ring to my own independent gemmologist for an appraisal. I may return the diamond or diamond ring for a full refund should I not be satisfied with the independent appraisal.

Specify a time limit so that the jeweller or person selling you the diamond or diamond ring knows where he stands. I would recommend doing the independent appraisal the same or following day. Before you pick up the ring from the jewellery store make arrangements with an independent gemmologist to bring the diamond to him after you pick it up from the store.

The jewellery store may tell you that they are supplying you with an independent appraisal anyway. However, the fact that the jewellery store is supplying you with the appraisal means that it is no longer independent. You MUST obtain YOUR OWN independent appraisal from your own independent gemmologist. Furthermore, the jeweller is NOT TO KNOW who will be doing the appraisal.

When you go to the gemmologist and present the ring to him, just give hand him the ring BUT NOT the ring in the store box. If you present the ring in the box and the box has the store name then the gemmologist will know which store you bought it from and this could bias his appraisal.

IF YOU ARE PRESENTING THE GEMMOLOGIST WITH THE LOOSE DIAMOND THEN JUST HAND HIM THE LOOSE DIAMOND AND NOT THE WRAPPING PAPER THAT IT IS IN. THE DIAMOND WRAPPING SLEEVE USUALLY HAS ALL THE STORE'S INFORMATION ABOUT THE DIAMOND ON IT SPECIFICALLY THE CLARITY, COLOUR AND CUT. YOU DO NOT WANT THE GEMMOLOGIST TO READ ALL THIS INFORMATION. THIS COULD BIAS HIS APPRAISAL. JUST REMEMBER TO HAND THE GEMMOLOGIST THE LOOSE DIAMOND.

BEFORE LEAVING WITH THE DIAMOND OR THE RING TO GET IT INDEPENDENTLY APPRAISED BE FAMILIAR WITH THE DIAMOND. KNOW EXACTLY WHERE THE INCLUSIONS ARE AND MAKE SURE THAT THE DIAMOND IS NOT CHIPPED OR DAMAGED. HAVE THE JEWELLER DO HIS OWN INCLUSION PLOT AND HAVE HIM INITIAL THE WORK AND THEN YOU CHECK HIS WORK. YOU WANT TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM BEING ACCUSED OF RETURNING WITH A DIFFERENT DIAMOND. THIS RARELY EVER HAPPENS BUT IT'S CERTAINLY WORTH YOUR WHILE TO TAKE THESE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS. Refer to the supplementary section showing exactly what a diamond inclusion plot is and have the person selling you the diamond do one. Then, check his work afterwards.

Section Five

Once you have the loose diamond exercise caution. Keep it in the original package given to you by the jeweller except of course when you hand the loose diamond to the independent gemmologist since you do not want him to see the information written on the diamond sleeve or wrapper. Put the original package in a larger envelope so that it does not get lost or misplaced. Know where it is at all times.

Take the loose diamond to a graduate gemmologist who will not be trying to sell you a diamond. You want a fair and honest evaluation of the diamond without the appraiser trying to sell a diamond to you. The gemmologist *must* have one or more of the following recognized gemmological degrees.

1. GG (Graduate Gemologist) This designation is awarded by the Gemological Institute of America.
2. CG (Certified Gemologist) This designation is awarded by the American Gem Society in Los Angeles, California.
3. FGA (Fellow of the Gemmological Association) This designation is awarded by the Gemmological Association of Great Britain.
4. FGAA (Fellow of the Gemmological Association of Australia) This designation is for a course of study equivalent to and very similar to the FGA.
5. FCGmA (Fellow of the Canadian Gemmological Association). This designation is awarded by the Canadian Gemmological Association. The course content is very similar to the FGA.
6. CGA (American Gem Society Certified Gemologist Appraiser)

Any one of these degrees are highly professional well respected gemmological degrees that entitle the gemmologist to competently do an appraisal for you.

It is best to set up an appointment with an independent gemmologist who is authorized to do laser gemprinting. You may call 1-888-GEMPRINT for your nearest authorized Gemprint dealer. There are numerous authorized Gemprint gemmologists in the United States, Canada and throughout the world.

Should there not be an authorized Gemprint gemmologist near you then at least make sure that the gemmologist can perform the diamond inclusion plot. This plot will help ensure that you get the same diamond back once it's left for setting. This diamond inclusion plot will also serve as proof of ownership whenever the diamond is left anywhere for any reason whatsoever in the future. However, the laser gemprint together with the diamond inclusion plot is the ideal situation. The Gemprint is recognized by courts of law, law enforcement agencies as well as insurance companies. Without marking or harming the diamond you have the actual laser reflection fingerprint of the diamond and this means 'absolute proof of ownership'.

Only have the loose diamond or diamond ring laser gemprinted and diamond inclusion plotted by the independent gemmologist if you decide to purchase the diamond from the jeweller.

There is no point paying for these extra charges if you are not happy with the appraisal report and you decide not to keep the diamond or diamond ring.

One of the first items that the gemmologist must do is weigh the diamond. You may want to watch him as he does this. He will either use a high precision digital scale or a high precision diamond balance. Check with the gemmologist that the scale is properly 'zeroed in' just to make sure that you get a highly accurate weight reading.

The gemmologist will then most likely gauge the diamond using an electronic gauge for close to exact measurements. Once again the electronic measuring gauge must be 'zeroed in'.

Ensure that the gemmologist takes the following measurements:

- 1. Maximum diameter and minimum diameter.**
- 2. Depth of the diamond.**
- 3. The table measurement is optional according to the gemmologist. Without the table measurement you cannot determine the table percentage.**

No round brilliant cut diamond is perfectly round and that is why the gemmologist will end up with a maximum and minimum diameter reading for a loose diamond. The average of the two will be the average diameter and it is this measurement that will be used to determine the depth percentage. The greater the difference between the maximum and minimum readings the more off-round the diamond will be. Watch out for extreme differences since this will indicate an off-round diamond.

With fancy cut diamonds you want to get the length, width and depth measurements.

If you bring the diamond ring to the gemmologist the way that he determines the approximate weight is by taking the measurements and plugging them into a standard formula for each one of the cuts. Or, he may enter the measurements into a computer programme that has been preprogrammed to calculate the weights based on the measurements.

Should your diamond be a VS-1 clarity grade or higher ask the gemmologist to do a heat conductance test to indeed confirm that it is a diamond! One of the ways that a gemmologist immediately recognizes a diamond is by the presence of diamond inclusions. In a VS-1 or higher clarity grade due to the fact that there are very few inclusions there is no harm having the gemmologist perform this test just for your own protection. Diamonds are very good conductors of heat and by applying a heat probe to the diamond the instant result can be seen on a meter reading or a flashing light, or the result can be heard by a speeding up of a beeping noise etc. etc.

Just a note of interest here. About 5% of diamonds fluoresce in ultraviolet light. This means that upon exposure to ultraviolet light the diamonds will turn bluish in colour. This fluorescence does not harm or add to the value of the diamond but it is an interesting feature for the diamond to have. The jeweller will often not know if it fluoresces. Most gemmologists are equipped with ultraviolet testing equipment. Should you decide to keep the diamond or the diamond ring ask the gemmologist to test your diamond to see if it fluoresces. The fluorescence is caused by the electrons in the carbon atoms that compose the diamond jumping to higher orbital levels when being excited by the ultraviolet light. The electrons then emit energy in the form of blue light when returning to the original lower orbital level.

AFTER THE APPRAISAL IS COMPLETE DISCUSS IT IN FULL DETAIL WITH YOUR INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST. TELL HIM WHAT YOU ARE PAYING FOR THE DIAMOND AND GET HIS PROFESSIONAL OPINION.

Section Six

COMPARING THE JEWELLERS APPRAISAL TO YOUR OWN INDEPENDENT APPRAISAL

Remember the following:

1. No two appraisals are going to be identical due to the subjective nature of appraising, however, they should be similar. You should allow for minor variations.

2. For colour I would allow a variation of one-half a grade difference. If a jeweller marks down that it is a G colour then the independent gemmologist should not state anything lower than G-H.

Remember that diamonds in a setting are not as accurately colour graded as loose diamonds and that is why I stress in this handguide the importance of bringing the loose diamond to the independent gemmologist. It is sometimes very difficult for a gemmologist to accurately colour grade a diamond set in yellow gold claws or a diamond bezel or channel set. Should you have a diamond set in a ring where the jeweller's appraisal states for example a F colour grade and the gemmologist states an H colour grade, then the only way of resolving the matter is to have the ORIGINAL JEWELLER WHO SOLD YOU THE RING remove the diamond. Then take it back to the independent gemmologist as a loose diamond. At that time, the gemmologist can also exactly weigh the diamond.

3. Clarity should also be within half a grade. If a jeweller states that a diamond is VS-1 then the independent gemmologist should not state anything lower than VS-1/VS-2 as the clarity grade. If the jeweller, for example, states the clarity grade as SI-2 then the gemmologist should not state anything lower than SI-2/I-1 or SI-3.

If the gemmologist states the clarity as higher than what the jeweller said then you have absolutely nothing to worry about.

4. Also, the cutting grade given by the independent gemmologist should not be more than half a grade apart. If a jeweller states the cut to be good then the independent gemmologist should not state the cut to be anything lower than medium-good.

5. ONCE YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE APPRAISAL FROM THE INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST ANALYZE THE APPRAISAL. IF ALL THE ITEMS FOR CLARITY, COLOUR, & CUT ARE CONSISTENTLY LOWER YOU MAY HAVE A PROBLEM AND YOU MAY WANT TO RETURN THE DIAMOND TO THE JEWELLER FOR A REFUND. YOU MAY WANT TO HAVE A

SECOND INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST CONFIRM THE FINDINGS OF THE FIRST GEMMOLOGIST.

6. LOOK AT THE WHOLE PICTURE. EVEN THOUGH THE INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST APPRAISES THE QUALITY A LITTLE LOWER, THE OVERALL VALUE AND THE PRICE THAT YOU PAID ON THE DIAMOND RING MAY BE ABSOLUTELY TERRIFIC. ALSO, EVEN THOUGH THE INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST GAVE IT A MEDIUM CUT RATING OR LOWER, THE DIAMOND MAY HAVE AN OVERALL HIGH BRILLIANCE.....AND TAKING EVERYTHING INTO CONSIDERATION YOU MAY FEEL THAT IT'S WORTH KEEPING ANYWAYS ALTHOUGH THERE WERE MINOR DISCREPANCIES. MAJOR DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THE JEWELLER'S APPRAISAL AND THE INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST'S APPRAISAL MUST BE RESOLVED WITH THE ORIGINAL JEWELLER. ALSO, THE INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST SHOULD ALSO BE VERY HELPFUL IN TRYING TO RESOLVE DISCREPANCIES WITH THE ORIGINAL JEWELLER. REMEMBER TOO THAT THE INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST SHOULD AT NO TIME BE INTERESTED IN SELLING YOU A DIAMOND. IF AT ANY TIME HE HINTS ABOUT WHAT 'HE' CAN DO FOR YOU THEN YOU ARE NO LONGER GETTING INDEPENDENT UNBIASED INFORMATION.

Section Seven

MORE DETAILED INFORMATION YOU MAY WANT TO PURSUE WITH THE GEMMOLOGIST

The following special items are worth asking the independent gemmologist about at the time of your appraisal.

1. For a modern round brilliant cut diamond ask the independent gemmologist what the depth percentage of the diamond is. I would not recommend a diamond with a depth percentage of approx. 58% or lower, or more than approx. 64%. A depth percentage less than approx. 58% means that the diamond is too shallow and

as a result will tend to look glassy and have a loss of brilliance. A diamond that is too shallow is referred to as a 'fisheye' and a 'fisheye' diamond will show the circular reflection of the girdle around the edge of the table giving rise to what actually looks like a fisheye. *However, sometimes you have a depth percentage hovering around 58% YET there is still high brilliance and yet the diamond does not look shallow by looking through the table i.e. the reflection of the girdle or the beginning of the reflection of the girdle does not appear in the table. SHOULD SUCH A SITUATION OCCUR WHAT YOU IN EFFECT END UP WITH IS A GOOD QUALITY DIAMOND THAT LOOKS LARGER THAN IT ACTUALLY IS . IT'S A LITTLE SHALLOW WITHOUT BRILLIANCE LOSS AND THE DIAMETER IS THEN PERHAPS A TOUCH LARGER THAN IT IDEALLY SHOULD BE FOR THE DEPTH OF DIAMOND THAT YOU HAVE , AND VISUALLY YOU HAVE A DIAMOND THAT LOOKS LARGER.*

THE REVERSE HAPPENS IF THE DIAMOND IS CUT TOO DEEP. HOWEVER, THEN IT DOES NOT WORK TO YOUR ADVANTAGE. THEN YOU HAVE A DIAMOND THAT WEIGHS MORE BUT LOOKS SMALLER.. DIAMONDS CUT TOO DEEP TEND TO LOOK DARK WHEN LOOKING AT THE TABLE. A DIAMOND CUT VERY DEEP WILL LOOK EVEN BLACKISH WHEN LOOKING AT THE TABLE. AVOID DIAMONDS WITH A DEPTH PERCENTAGE OF APPROX. 64% OR HIGHER.

READ THE PRECAUTIONARY SUPPLEMENTARY SECTIONS FOR FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING SHALLOW AND DEEP CUT DIAMONDS. WHEN YOU HAVE DEPTH PERCENTAGES NEAR THE BORDERS SUCH AS AT 58% FOR TOO SHALLOW AND 64% TOO DEEP IT IS THEN PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR THE GEMMOLOGIST TO MAKE SURE FOR YOUR BENEFIT THAT NO MAJOR VISIBLE EFFECTS ARE THERE AS A RESULT OF THE DEPTH PERCENTAGE. READ THE SUPPLEMENTARY SECTIONS.

I would consider the ideal depth percentage to be from around 59.3% to around 62%.

2. Ask the gemmologist about the girdle of the diamond. The girdle is the frosted or smooth wavy line separating the crown or top facet section of the diamond from the pavilion or bottom cone shaped sloping section of the crown. PLEASE READ THE SUPPLEMENTARY SECTION ON GIRDLES. YOU DON'T WANT A THICK GIRDLE because a thick girdle ends up making a diamond look smaller than it actually is since excess weight is concentrated in the girdle area as opposed to being spread throughout the stone. I WOULD NOT RECOMMEND A DIAMOND WITH A GIRDLE THICKNESS FACTOR OF MORE THAN 4%. FROM 1% TO 3% ON THE GIRDLE IS BEST. YOU ARE STRIVING FOR A MEDIUM GIRDLE. ON THE OTHER HAND YOU DON'T WANT A GIRDLE TOO THIN OR WHAT THEY CALL KNIFE-EDGED SINCE THAT TYPE OF GIRDLE CAN BE DAMAGED EASILY BY CLAWS AND BY KNOCKING IT HARD.

3. Ask the independent gemmologist to make sure that the bottom tip or culet (pronounced Q-let) comes to a point just the way it should. I would not accept the diamond if it comes to an excessively large point called a 'well'. Your independent gemmologist will know if the culet is too large to be acceptable.

4. Ask the independent gemmologist to make sure *THAT THE TABLE IS NOT EXCESSIVELY SPREAD AND THAT THE CROWN OF THE DIAMOND IS NOT TOO THIN*. Most of the diamonds cut today have slightly spread tables and thinner crowns than they did years ago and that's fine, but you don't want to have an excessively thin crown or excessively spread table. Generally, the table percentage will be between 58% to 65%. In the American Ideal cut the table percentage is 53% however very few diamonds are cut today with that table percentage. **I WOULD NOT ACCEPT ANY DIAMOND WITH A TABLE PERCENTAGE OVER 65%. ASK YOUR INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST WHETHER THE TABLE ON YOUR DIAMOND IS TOO SPREAD.**

MAKE SURE THAT THE CROWN OF THE DIAMOND IS NOT EXCESSIVELY THIN AND THEREFORE WOULD HAVE A VERY LOW HEIGHT PERCENTAGE. I DON'T WANT TO BURDEN YOU WITH HEIGHT PERCENTAGE FIGURES AT THIS POINT HOWEVER LET YOUR INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST CHECK ON THE CROWN HEIGHT PERCENTAGE.

THE ABOVE 4 FACTORS RELATE TO THE CUTTING GRADE OF THE DIAMOND. SUCH FACTORS AS THE SYMMETRY OF THE DIAMOND, THE POLISH OF THE DIAMOND, THE FACET ALIGNMENT OF THE DIAMOND ALSO PLAY A PART IN THE OVERALL CUT DETERMINATION. THESE ARE ITEMS TO ASK YOUR GEMMOLOGIST ABOUT.

I WOULD NOT ACCEPT A DIAMOND WHERE THE CUTTING GRADE IS NOT AT LEAST MEDIUM. THE BETTER THE CUTTING GRADE THEN THE BETTER THE PROPORTIONS WILL BE AND THE MORE LIGHT WILL BE TOTALLY INTERNALLY REFLECTED WITHIN THE DIAMOND. THE BETTER THE CUT THE MORE LIGHT THAT WILL BE ABLE TO ESCAPE THE CROWN SECTION OF THE DIAMOND GIVING RISE TO AN OVERALL HIGHER BRILLIANCE. I WOULD RECOMMEND STRIVING TO OBTAIN A 'MEDIUM-GOOD' TO 'GOOD' CUTTING GRADE. AVOID THE 'FAIR' AND 'POOR' CUTTING GRADES. READ THE SUPPLEMENTARY SECTIONS ON CUTTING GRADES.

SO, REMEMBER TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU CHECK WITH YOUR GEMMOLOGIST TO MAKE SURE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ***YOU AVOID A DIAMOND THAT IS TOO SHALLOW OR TOO DEEP. A TOO SHALLOW DIAMOND WILL HAVE THAT 'FISHEYE' LOOK AND A TOO DEEP DIAMOND WILL APPEAR DARK LOOKING.***
- ***AVOID A DIAMOND WITH AN EXCESSIVELY SPREAD OUT TABLE AND A TOO THIN CROWN.***
- ***AVOID A DIAMOND WITH A TOO THICK GIRDLE FACTOR.***
- ***AVOID A DIAMOND WITH A LARGE CULET OR BOTTOM. THE BOTTOM SHOULD COME TO A NICE POINT AND NOT TO A LARGE DARK AREA REFERRED TO AS A WELL.***
- ***AVOID A DIAMOND THAT IS NOTICEABLY OUT-OF-ROUND IN SHAPE.***
- ***MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE IN FACT GETTING THE RIGHT CUT OF DIAMOND REFERRING TO THE FACT THAT IT IS A MODERN ROUND BRILLIANT CUT DIAMOND. ROUND FACETED DIAMONDS CUT IN THE EARLY 1900'S ARE REFERRED TO AS OLD-EUROPEAN CUT DIAMONDS. THEY ARE PRICED MUCH LOWER THAN ROUND BRILLIANT CUT DIAMONDS. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE SHOULD YOU BE SOLD ONE OF THESE DIAMONDS AND BE TOLD THAT IT IS A ROUND BRILLIANT CUT DIAMOND.***
DIAMONDS CUT CIRCA 1925 TO 1948 ARE REFERRED TO AS TRANSITION CUT DIAMONDS. THEY ARE VERY BEAUTIFUL DIAMONDS AND I WOULD CERTAINLY RECOMMEND THEM HOWEVER BEAR IN MIND THAT THEY ARE PRICED APPROX. 15% LOWER THAN MODERN ROUND BRILLIANT CUT DIAMONDS AND THEY ARE CHARACTERIZED BY LARGER CULETS, THICKER CROWNS, AND SMALLER TABLES. YOUR INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST WILL BE ABLE TO SPOT ONE OF THESE DIAMONDS. JUST MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVEN'T PURCHASED ONE OF THESE DIAMONDS AND WAS TOLD THAT IT WAS A MODERN ROUND BRILLIANT CUT DIAMOND. BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR THIS.
- ***ASK THE GEMMOLOGIST IF THERE ARE ANY OTHER FACTORS THAT YOU SHOULD BE CONCERNED WITH.***

BUYING A DIAMOND IS A COMPLICATED PROCESS AND YOU NEED TO HAVE YOUR INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST TO ASSIST YOU. A DIAMOND MAY HAVE A NEGATIVE FACTOR SUCH AS A HIGH DEPTH PERCENTAGE OR A THICK GIRDLE, HOWEVER, THAT DIAMOND MAY ULTIMATELY STILL LOOK VERY BEAUTIFUL AND HAVE AN OVERALL HIGH BRILLIANCE.

THE BOTTOM LINE IS THIS:

ASK YOUR INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST HIS OPINION AS TO WHETHER OR NOT THE MONEY YOU ARE PAYING THE JEWELLER IS A GOOD BUY FOR THE QUALITY OF DIAMOND YOU ARE RECEIVING. ASK THE GEMMOLOGIST IF ANY OF THE NEGATIVE FACTORS THAT YOU NOW KNOW ABOUT IN DIAMONDS SHOULD PREVENT YOU FROM PURCHASING THAT PARTICULAR DIAMOND.

IT'S HARD TO FIND THE PERFECT DIAMOND AND OFTENTIMES YOU HAVE TO MAKE COMPROMISES AND LET YOUR INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST ADVISE YOU ON THIS. EVEN THOUGH THE COLOUR MAY BE A LITTLE LOWER, OR THE CLARITY MAY BE A LITTLE LOWER, OR THE CUTTING GRADE MAY BE LOWER THAN WHAT YOU ORIGINALLY EXPECTED YOU MAY STILL HAVE A BEAUTIFUL BRILLIANT DIAMOND THAT YOU ARE GETTING AT AN EXTREMELY REASONABLE PRICE!!!!

CHOOSING THE SETTING

Once you have decided that you will be purchasing the diamond the next step of course is to have the diamond mounted in a setting. The setting for the diamond is very important. It should be strong and durable for everyday wear. The setting or mount should protect the diamond as well. 14kt. yellow or white gold is a hard, durable gold that is sufficient for everyday wear. 14kt. gold means that 14/24 or 58.5% or 585 parts per 1000 of the metal is pure gold and the other parts of the metal are alloys. In yellow gold the two main alloys are copper and silver. The more copper the more pinkish the gold is and the less copper the more yellowish the gold is. White gold contains nickel and silver as alloys. Not only does the nickel harden the gold but it also gives the gold the white colour. *I recommend making up the ring with white gold claws to hold the diamond as the white gold claws are harder than yellow gold claws and also, the light reflecting off the white gold claws and going back into the diamond will not darken or turn the diamond more yellowish as the yellow claws would.*

18kt. gold or 18/24 or 75% or 750 parts per 1000 gold is also a recommended gold to use. 18kt. gold comes in either white or yellow gold again depending upon the alloys used to make the gold. Since 18kt. is more of a pure gold it is heavier and a bit softer, however, for a ring it is fine. Please understand that 18kt. gold *is softer and will dent easier and the edges seem to round out or smoothen down quicker, however, it is sufficiently hard enough for a ring. 18kt. yellow gold seems to have a deeper, richer lustre that blends in very nicely with diamonds. In countries such as Italy, France and Switzerland most of the fine quality jewellery is in 18kt. gold.* I personally prefer 18kt. gold and would pay the extra amount involved to have an 18kt. gold mount. Remember, though that the 14kt. gold is harder and more durable. The choice is yours and with either using 14kt. or 18kt. you can't go wrong.

There are six platinum metals referred to as the platinum group. The three platinum metals of interest are platinum, palladium and rhodium. Platinum is a possibility for your ring. Platinum, hardened by iridium and ruthenium, is very strong and highly ductile and thus makes a very safe setting for diamonds. With platinum it is possible to make smaller claws and beads and therefore a more dainty, delicate and lighter ring can be made than can be with white gold. A platinum mount can be two to three times as expensive as an 18kt. white gold mount.

Platinum only comes in the white colour.

I recommend that you keep the actual setting very simple and make sure that the setting does not take away from the main diamond. I believe that the setting should highlight and enhance the main diamond and not detract from it. As well,

shoulder diamonds should not take away from the main diamond but should nicely frame and add to the main diamond.

The shoulder diamonds should match the main diamond in quality. Keep the colour and clarity of all the shoulder diamonds the same or higher than the main diamond. It is usually best for the jeweller or goldsmith making up the mount to supply the shoulder diamonds as he knows the exact measurements to supply. Baguette diamonds chip easily when set so have the gemmologist check for this in your final appraisal of the ring.

Most solitaire engagement rings are cast made by casting gold in plaster molds. The plaster mold is placed in a centrifuge and as it whirls about in a fine arc the molten precious metal is transferred into the cavity of the plaster mold. The molten gold or platinum is thrown with great pressure into every detailed crevice of the mold. Due to the fine texture of rubber and plaster molds no texture distortion occurs in the casting which results in accuracy of fine detail. The plaster mold can only be used once while the rubber mold can be used to make hundreds of wax models. The final result is an extremely accurate reproduction of the original metal master model.

The cost on a cast engagement ring could vary from as low as approx. \$150 CDN to approx. \$500 CDN for a very fine quality cast ring in 14kt. yellow gold. The price to a large extent depends on the weight of the ring.

Custom designed handmade rings are the most expensive and can easily run from around \$400 CDN to approx. \$1200 CDN. You may want to commission a custom goldsmith to design and create a uniquely styled custom designed ring that no one else has. Be sure to get some recommendations and speak to previous clients who had their rings made by a particular goldsmith. Make sure to view some of the rings that the goldsmith made in the past. *If a goldsmith custom designs a ring especially for you make sure that once you have your ring the goldsmith will not produce the same ring for other clients. You don't want to see your friends wearing the ring that you or your goldsmith custom designed for yourself. You should have some type of agreement with the goldsmith or jeweller.*

The diamond must be securely set in the setting. A bezel setting completely surrounds the edge or border of the diamond with gold and thus makes the diamond very secure. One disadvantage though, of a bezel setting, is that the yellow gold surrounding the diamond will tend to make the diamond appear more yellow. Also, bezel set diamonds are harder to clean. Also, a bezel set diamond will tend to look a little smaller while in the setting.

Most claw settings are quite secure. The claws should be in white gold. A 4-claw white gold will show more of the diamond than a circular 6-claw white gold setting. A diamond set in a claw setting could always fall out if one of the claws

were bent backwards or became disengaged or became snagged. That's why an all risk type of insurance policy for a diamond ring is so important!

When leaving the diamond with a jeweller or goldsmith, especially with someone different than the jeweller from whom you purchased the diamond, it is a good idea to have the goldsmith or jeweller acknowledge by way of a signature that it matches the diamond inclusion plot on the original appraisal. He could also acknowledge the fact that it has been laser gemprinted.

*Be careful once you leave the diamond with another goldsmith or jeweller other than the original one who sold you the diamond. Clarify with the jeweller or goldsmith who is making up the ring for you what would happen in the event that the diamond were stolen or damaged while left on his premises or in his possession. **TRY AND GET THE MAXIMUM PROTECTION FOR YOURSELF. YOU MAY WANT TO CONSULT WITH YOUR INSURANCE AGENT AND A LAWYER IN REGARDS TO THESE MATTERS.***

Section Nine

RETURNING TO THE INDEPENDENT GEMMOLOGIST FOR YOUR FINAL APPRAISAL

If you had bought the diamond loose and then returned to the jeweller or another goldsmith to have the mount made up, then once this is done the complete ring must now be brought back to the same independent gemmologist who appraised the diamond loose for another appraisal of the entire ring.

The first thing that the independent gemmologist will do is check to see if in fact you have the same diamond that he originally appraised. He can easily do this by referring to the inclusion plot that he took. If there is any problem or doubt with the inclusion plot then the next step would be for the gemmologist to go back and take a second Gemprint and then determine whether the second Gemprint matches the first. If there is no match, then this is considered proof that they are different diamonds.

The laser Gemprint is especially important for diamonds VS-1 clarity or higher since there is so little that can actually be put on the diamond inclusion plot. For diamonds that are VVS-2 or higher in clarity you would be prudent to definitely travel to your nearest authorized Gemprint dealer even if it means making a longer trip.

Ask the independent gemmologist now doing the final appraisal to check to make sure that there was no damage done to the diamond during the setting of the diamond. The gemmologist should check the main diamond plus all shoulder diamonds to make sure that they are all properly set and none of the shoulder diamonds twirl or move in their settings. Ask the gemmologist to comment on the quality of workmanship that went into the setting. After properly consulting with the gemmologist at the time of the final appraisal you may want to then take the ring back

to the jeweller or goldsmith who made up the ring to have some minor adjustments done such as stone tightening and polishing etc. etc.

The final appraisal of the ring should have the ring adequately described. The carat gold of the ring should be marked on the appraisal. The weight of the diamond on the final appraisal should be specified as being exact since the gemmologist weighed the loose diamond at the time of the first appraisal. The second appraisal which the gemmologist is now doing should have all the same information about the diamond that the first appraisal had. The weight of the entire ring in grams or pennyweights should be specified on the appraisal.

Keep your first appraisal of the loose diamond as that will have the inclusion plot attached to it. Keep your laser Gemprint certificate as well. Keep a file of all your paper work in a safe place at home. I recommend keeping copies at a bank safety deposit box as well. Make sure that the gemmologist keeps records at his lab as well.

The final appraisal that you are now doing MUST HAVE a colour photograph or a digital computerized photograph on it.. This would be absolutely necessary for any insurance claim as well as for police recovery work and for police identification reports. The photo should be permanently riveted or attached to the appraisal. You should also receive a second copy of the appraisal to forward to your insurance agent.

It is a good idea for a gemmologist to send you an update notice every three years so that you may have the diamond ring updated at least every three years. Insurance companies usually require that appraisals be updated every three years. Also, be sure that the appraisal has your name and address on it as well.

If you have any doubts about the karat gold used even though the jeweller stamped the karat, then ask the gemmologist to test what carat gold it is or whether or not it is platinum. The gemmologist can easily do this by using modern electrical resistance testing equipment or by using the old-fashioned, conventional and reliable acid tests.

ONCE YOU HAVE THE FINAL APPRAISAL COMPLETED THEN BE SURE TO HAVE THE RING INSURED IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY DONE SO. INSURANCE AGENTS IN CANADA CHARGE ABOUT 2% OF THE APPRAISAL VALUES FOR INSURANCE PREMIUMS. A LARGE NUMBER OF INSURANCE COMPANIES OFFER 10% OFF THE PREMIUMS SINCE THE DIAMOND HAS BEEN LASER GEMPRINTED. SEE THE SHEET ENCLOSED IN THIS GUIDE WITH THE LIST OF COMPANIES THAT OFFER THE DISCOUNT.

ONCE YOU HAVE THE RING TO WEAR REVIEW THE IMPORTANT SHEET IN THIS GUIDE TO BE FOUND IN THE FOLLOWING SECTION THAT HAS THE FOLLOWING HEADING: IMPORTANT TIPS FOR THE PROPER CARE OF YOUR DIAMOND RING

Section Ten

IMPORTANT TIPS FOR THE PROPER CARE OF YOUR DIAMOND RING

- 1. Never wear your diamond ring while swimming, especially in lakes. Rings easily come off wet fingers.*
- 2. Never allow one diamond to touch another diamond as diamonds scratch diamonds. Separate all your jewellery with small plastic zip lock bags.*
- 3. Make sure that you have a separate all risk policy for your diamond ring. Remember that homeowner's policies only cover a ring usually if they are specifically stolen from the home and you usually have limited coverage. Diamond rings left at home should be kept in a secure preferably underground vault. Your home must be properly alarmed. Ask your insurance agent for more details. Use discretion when wearing your diamond ring and other fine jewellery in public.*
- 4. Check your diamond in the setting on a regular basis to make sure that it is secure in the setting. If the diamond turns or twirls in the setting immediately return it to your jeweller for tightening. If the claws are worn down have them retipped. Your jeweller or preferably your independent gemmologist can check this for you. Preventable measures such as these will help prevent your diamond from being lost.*
- 5. Take your diamond ring off while doing rough work. Diamonds are hard and resist scratching, however, they are not tough, and they will cleave or split easily if hit in a certain direction. Emeralds are quite fragile and have to be handled with extreme care. Do not dip emeralds in cleaning solutions.*
- 6. Have your diamond ring laser gemprinted for proof of ownership, security, possible insurance discounts, and for 'peace of mind'. At the same time that the diamond is laser gemprinted have it inclusion plotted. The inclusion plot is proof to the insurance company that should any damage to the diamond occur that this diamond took place after the time of the appraisal. Laser gemprinting helps prevent diamond switching.*

7. *Take the appraisal with you when traveling to other countries for customs purposes*
8. *Keep your appraisals updated. Appraisals should be updated once every three years. Most insurance companies require that appraisals be updated once every three years. Appraisals more than three years old are considered outdated.*
9. *Keep your diamond clean all the time so that it will always appear highly brilliant. Do not use soap as a cleaner as this leaves a film layer which will reduce the overall brilliancy. The film layer changes the critical angle at which light is totally internally reflected within the diamond. Proper ammonia based cleaners are available from the IGS Inc. lab and will be shipped anywhere in the US and Canada. Call the lab for further details.*

Section Eleven

THE PRICES OF DIAMONDS

What constitutes a good price?

It's very simple. The closer you can get your diamond to the wholesale price the better the 'deal' that you are getting. However, this only holds true providing that when you buy the diamond it is the quality that you are told it is. That is the whole reason for following the steps as outlined in this guide and seeing an independent gemmologist to verify quality. Once the quality has been ascertained or verified then compare what you are paying against the wholesale value. If you feel you are paying too much then perhaps there is room to negotiate with the jeweller.

Generally speaking, if you pay in the range of approximately 35% off the appraisal value then I feel that you are doing very well for yourself. Of course, the closer to wholesale you can get the better off you are providing it is the quality that you are told it is.

Please remember too that the jeweller is entitled to a certain amount of profit just as the diamond wholesaler receives a certain profit when he sells the diamonds to the jeweller. If you follow the guidelines in this IGS Diamond Buyer's Handguide you will be assured of getting a good quality diamond for a good price. However, you have to be the judge of when you are overpaying and not allow that to happen. Should you be happy with a diamond but feel that you are overpaying then try to negotiate a better deal or try to find a similar diamond elsewhere but for a better price. Remember to ask your independent gemmologist what he thinks of the price that you are paying for the loose diamond.

Remember as well that when you purchased the loose diamond I instructed you to have the jeweller mark on the receipt that the diamond may be returned for a full refund if you are not satisfied with the independent appraisal. Part of the appraisal is the value that the gemmologist determines the diamond is worth. So bear in

mind that if after the appraisal you find that you significantly overpaid for the diamond then you may want to return it for a full refund or for a better price.

Please note that the prices quoted in this guide are for diamonds with a good cut. Diamonds with a very good cut may be up to 15% higher and diamonds with a fair cut may be up to 15% lower. Generally, the wholesale per carat prices of diamonds with a medium-good cut is 5% lower, and the wholesale per carat prices of diamonds with a medium cut is 10% lower.