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iamonds unique personality. Completely colorless, icy-white diamonds are very rare and are priced accordingly.

White diamonds with a tinge of blue, known as "blue-white," are rarer still—perhaps one in many hundred thousands. The variations in color are often so slight expert under special lights.

The best way to see the true color of a diamond is to look at the stone through its side against a white background.

Clarity Most diamonds contain natural imperfections, spots, bubbles or lines included in the stone when it was crystallized from carbon millions of years ago.

Where such inclusions do not interfere materially with the passage of light through the stone, they do not affect its beauty. However, the fewer inclusions in a diamond, the more valuable it is.

A "flawless" diamond—one that shows no imperfections to a trained eye using 10-power magnification—is very rare. Many people believe that a diamond which is not flawless must have weaknesses. Inclusions are imperfections, but they are not necessarily weaknesses.

A diamond does not have to be flawless to be beautiful. In a sense, the inclusions in a dia-

mond are its fingerprints, and like fingerprints, no two are alike.

Cut refers both to the make of a diamond, the way its facets are arranged and to its shape.

Diamonds are cut according to an exact mathematical formula that places the facets (or surfaces) of the diamond in precise relations to each other. The standard diamond cut has 58 facets.

For a diamond to have a perfect make, the angles between any two facets must be accurate to within half a degree. This will produce the greatest fire and brilliance. Anything less reduces both the beauty and value of a diamond.

Cut also refers to the shape of the finished diamond. The round, or "brilliant," cut is the most popular of all the shapes. The oval is an elongated round. The marquise is an oval with points at both ends, and the pear-shape is round at one end and pointed at the other.

The heart-shape is a pear-shape with a notch in the round end. The emerald cut is rectangular with facets on the sides and ends and across the corners. And recently, a new shape has been developed, the star shape with either five or six points.

The more you know about a diamond, the more you will appreciate yours for each diamond is a work of art, nature's original.



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