

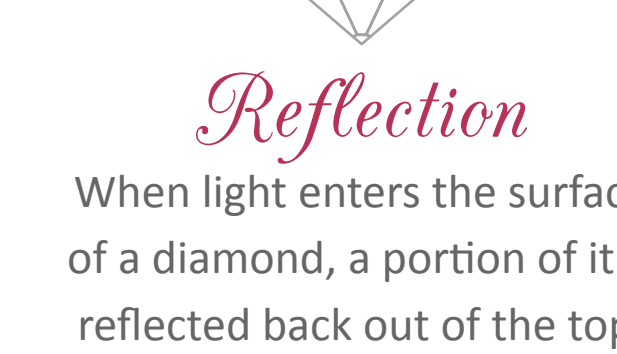


Diamonds 101

One of the most defining characteristics of a diamond is its cut. While high grades of color, clarity, and carat weight also contribute to a diamond's appeal, it's the cut that determines the symmetry of the stone's facets, its overall proportions, and its ability to reflect light

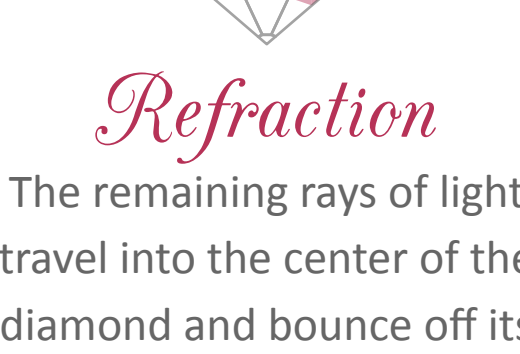
Light's Effect on a Diamond

There are many factors that determine a diamond's brilliance, the most important of which is its ability to reflect light. As a diamond is moved through a light source, tiny flashes will be visible within the stone. Commonly known as sparkle, this is also referred to as scintillation, an effect of the stone's reflection and refraction of light.



Reflection

When light enters the surface of a diamond, a portion of it is reflected back out of the top.



Refraction

The remaining rays of light travel into the center of the diamond and bounce off its internal walls, an effect known as refraction.



Dispersion

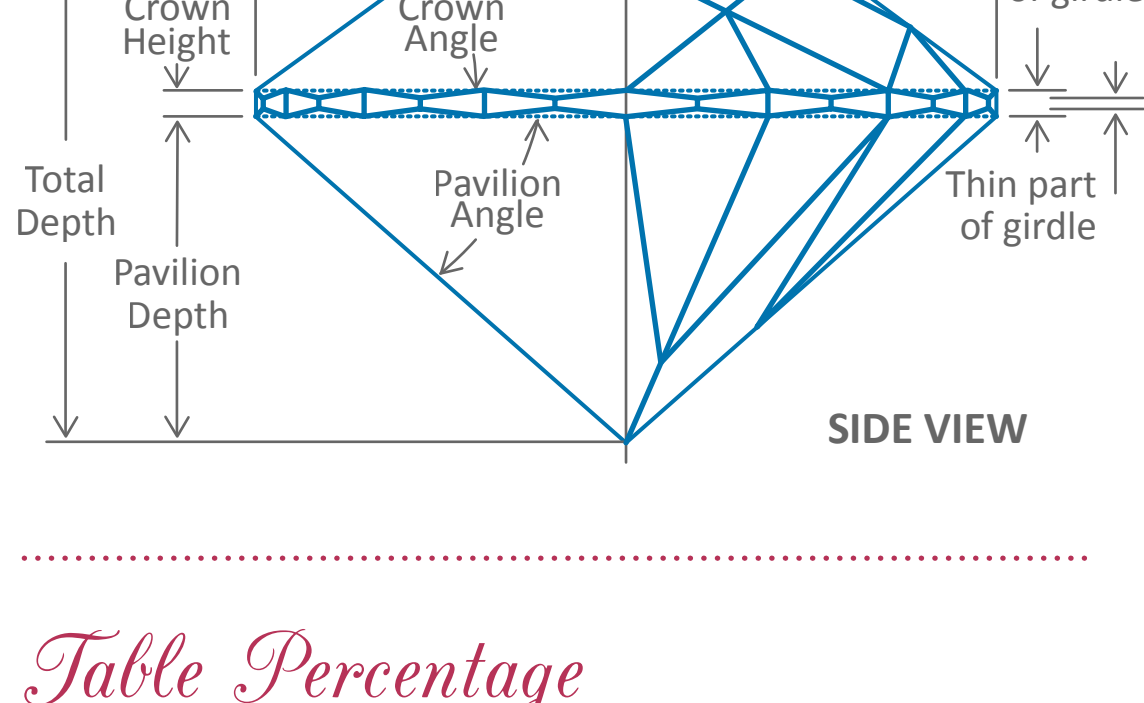
As light exits the diamond, dispersion causes the white light to be separated into multiple colors.

Some light will escape out the bottom and sides, and some will reflect out of the top of the stone.

The light that is reflected is referred to as the 'fire' of the diamond.

Cut Definitions

A diamond's cut is an integral factor in determining its brilliance and fire. Even a flawless diamond will appear dull and muted if the cut is poor. When evaluating the cut of a diamond, there are some core characteristics that should be considered:



Proportions

A diamond's proportions, a measure of the number and size of facets and its overall length and width, are integral in determining the quality of its cut. When a diamond is cut with the ideal proportions for its shape, it will reflect more light out of the top, resulting in higher levels of fire and brilliance. A poorly cut diamond with incongruous proportions will allow light to escape out the bottom and sides, resulting in a dull, dark appearance.

Table Percentage

A diamond's table is the largest facet of the stone, comprising the flat surface on the top. The table percentage is the ratio of the width of the diamond's top facet in relation to the width of the entire stone. The right ratio results in a large amount of fire and brilliance. To learn about the ideal table percentage for each diamond shape, visit our Diamond Shape page.

Depth & Depth Percentage

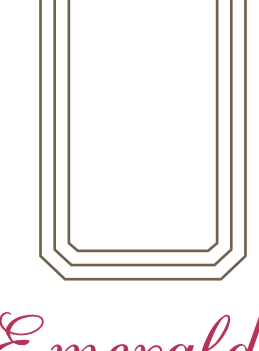
A diamond's depth can be determined by measuring the entire stone's height from the table to the culet and is described in millimeters. The depth percentage measures the ratio of the stone's depth (from the table to the culet) to the diamond's total diameter. To learn about the ideal depth percentage for each diamond shape, visit our Diamond Shape page.

Measurements

Measured in millimeters, the measurements of a diamond's length, width, and height are used to evaluate the symmetry and quality of its cut.

Shapes

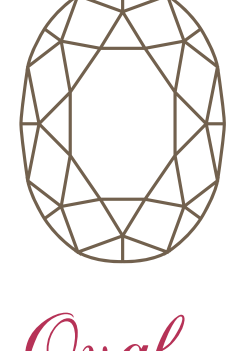
When selecting a diamond, shape is one of the most important factors to consider. The contours and outlines of a diamond have a significant impact on its appearance.



Round



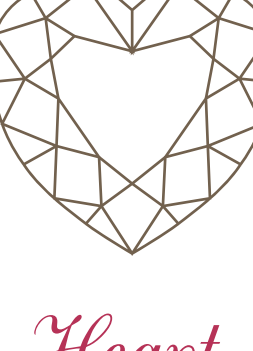
Princess



Asscher



Radiant



Cushion



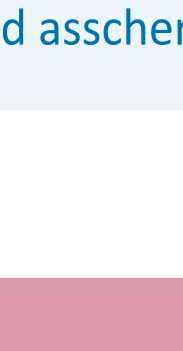
Emerald



Marquise



Oval



Pear

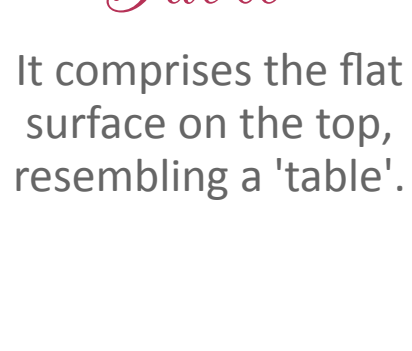
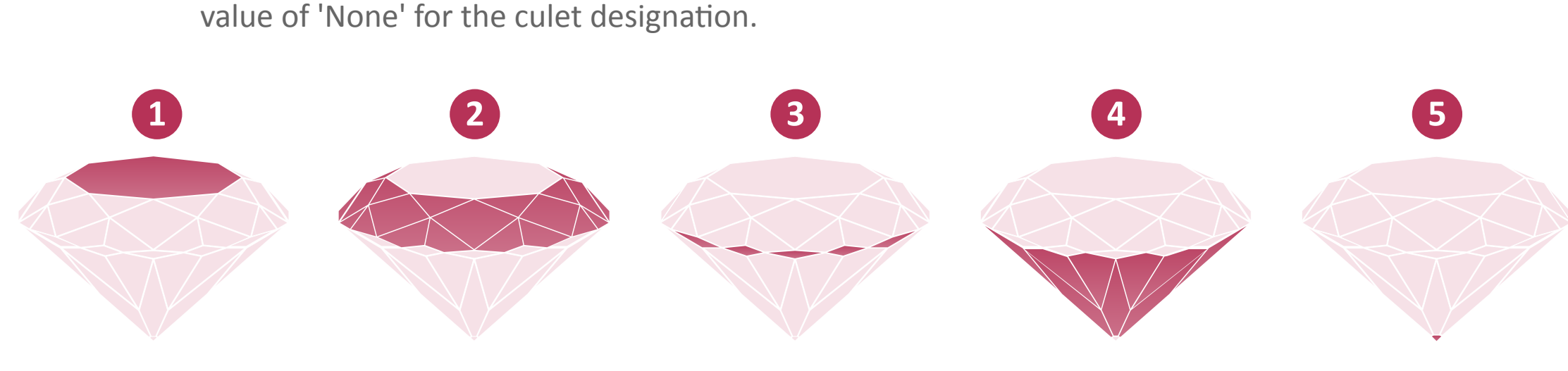


Heart

Round diamonds have long been the most popular, although many modern consumers prefer alternative shapes, including emerald, princess, radiant, and asscher, among others.

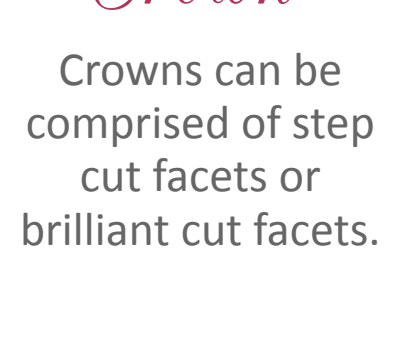
Diamond Components

A diamond is comprised of the following main components:



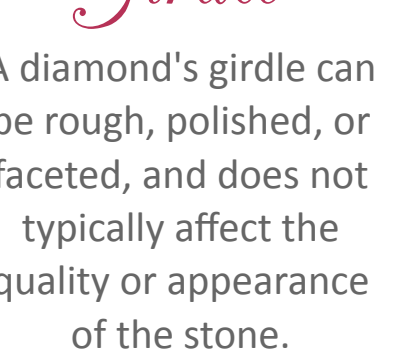
Table

It comprises the flat surface on the top, resembling a 'table'.



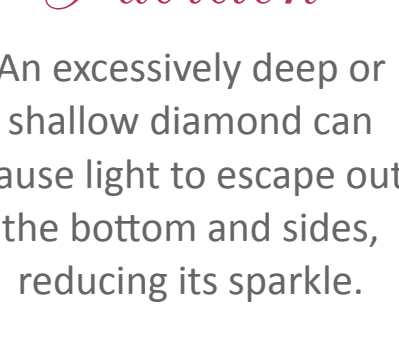
Crown

Crowns can be comprised of step cut facets or brilliant cut facets.



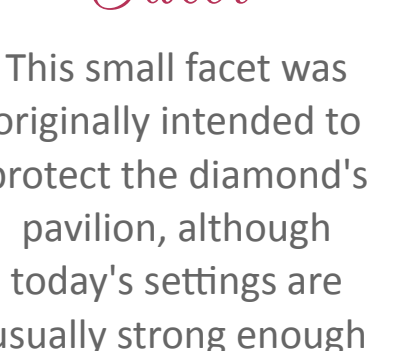
Girdle

A diamond's girdle can be rough, polished, or faceted, and does not typically affect the quality or appearance of the stone.



Pavilion

An excessively deep or shallow diamond can cause light to escape out the bottom and sides, reducing its sparkle.



Culet

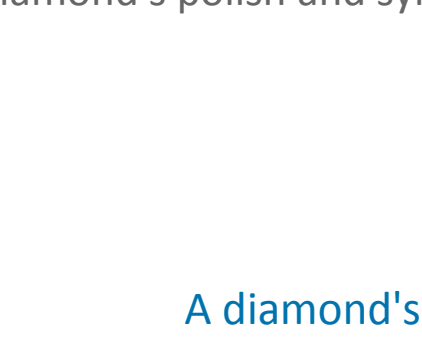
This small facet was originally intended to protect the diamond's pavilion, although today's settings are usually strong enough to render it unnecessary.

Facet/Faceting

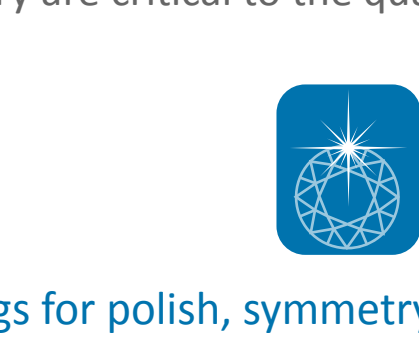
With modern diamond-cutting techniques, there are two common methods of cutting facets, each with its own unique light reflection properties:

Step-cut faceting:

In this approach, the facets are elongated and placed in rows to simulate a mirrored staircase.



Crown View



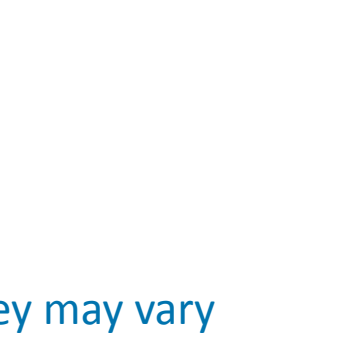
Pavillion View

Brilliant-cut faceting:

This technique creates triangular-shaped facets that face outwards from the center of the diamond.



Crown View



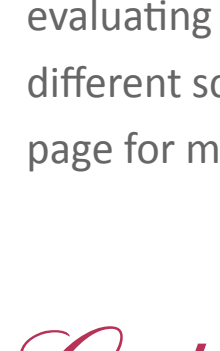
Pavillion View

Other variables

A diamond's polish and symmetry are critical to the quality of its cut.

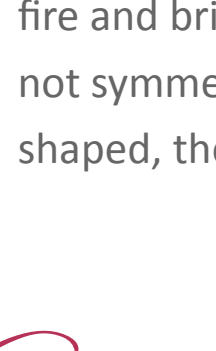


A diamond's ratings for polish, symmetry and cut grade affect its value and they may vary based on which Gemological Laboratory is evaluating it, as each agency uses a different scale.



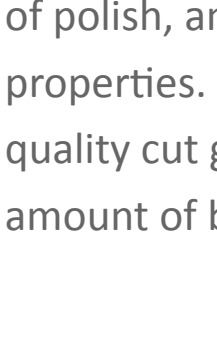
Polish

A diamond's ratings for symmetry, polish, and cut grade may vary based on which Gemological Laboratory is evaluating it, as each agency uses a different scale. View our Certification page for more details.



Symmetry

A symmetrical diamond will have well-balanced, properly aligned facets, resulting in a high level of fire and brilliance. If the facets are not symmetrical or not optimally shaped, they'll display less sparkle.



Cut grade

A gemologist assigns a cut grade as a means of measuring a diamond's proportions, craftsmanship, quality of polish, and light reflecting properties. A diamond with a high quality cut grade will exude a large amount of brilliance and fire.

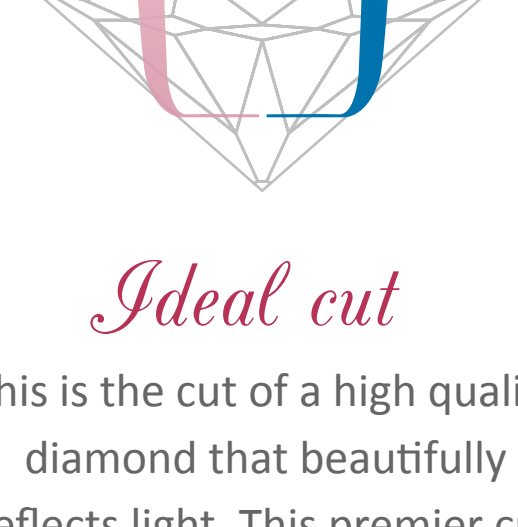
Cut & Value

The quality of a diamond's cut has a significant impact on its value.



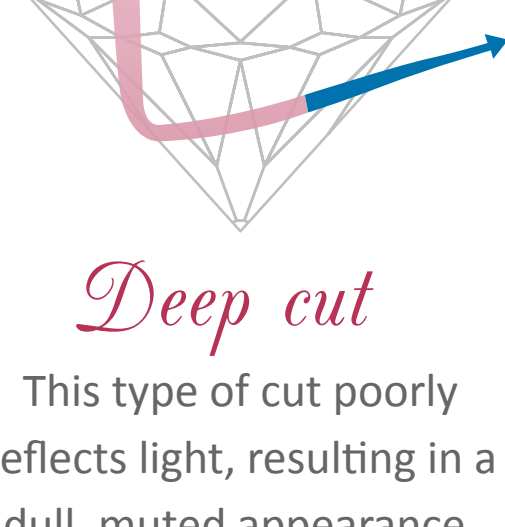
Shallow cut

Although a shallow cut diamond will create the illusion of a larger stone, it allows light to escape out the sides instead of reflecting off the top, creating a lack of brilliance and sparkle.



Ideal cut

This is the cut of a high quality diamond that beautifully reflects light. This premier cut style is well-proportioned and carefully angled to achieve a luminous appearance.

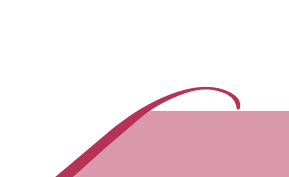


Deep cut

This type of cut poorly reflects light, resulting in a dull, muted appearance.

Certification

A diamond certificate, also known as a diamond grading report, is an easily understood document prepared by an expert gemologist that describes the key characteristics of a diamond.



GIA Diamonds



AGS Diamonds



EGL Diamonds



IGI Diamonds



HRD Diamonds

At Brilliance, we rely on highly regarded, internationally acclaimed gemological laboratories to certify every loose diamond we offer. These laboratories use universally recognized standards for grading diamonds.

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