



DIAMOND CLEANING

Cleanliness heavily affects a diamond's beauty. A clean diamond is more brilliant and fiery than the same diamond when it is "dirty". Dirt or grease on the top of a diamond reduces its luster. Water, dirt, or grease on the bottom of a diamond interferes with the diamond's brilliance and fire. Even a thin film absorbs some light that could have been reflected to the person looking at the diamond.

Colored dye or smudges can affect the perceived color of a diamond. Historically, some jewelers' stones were misgraded because of smudges on the girdle, or dye on the culet. Current practice is to clean a diamond thoroughly before grading its color. Maintaining a clean diamond can sometimes be difficult as jewelry settings can obstruct cleaning efforts and oils, grease, and other hydrophobic materials adhere well to a diamond's surface. Many jewelers use steam cleaners. Some jewelers provide their customers with ammonia-based cleaning kits; ultrasonic cleaners are also popular.

The name diamond derives from the ancient Greek adamas. They have been treasured as gemstones since their use as religious icons in ancient India and usage in engraving tools also dates to early human history. Popularity of diamonds has risen since the 19th century because of increased supply, improved cutting and polishing techniques, growth in the world economy, and innovative and successful advertising campaigns. They are commonly judged by the "four Cs": carat, clarity, color, and cut.

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