



DIAMOND
DIARIES

Episode 01 – Companion

Understand which qualities will maximise
the sparkle of your engagement ring

Introduction

In this **Diamond Diaries Companion**, our experts will help you understand which qualities will maximise the sparkle of your engagement ring.

Buying an engagement ring is undoubtedly a special and poignant moment in life, therefore it's important you're confident you've made the right choice. An understanding of the influential variables of a Diamond will help you acquire the right stone for you.

Maximise sparkle for your budget

We have selected three engagement ring options which have been tailored to maximize sparkle for the budget of £2,500.

Each one incorporates a round brilliant cut diamond in the centre, the diamond cut known for producing the highest level of lustre.

All options use Clarity Enhanced diamonds, with varying colours, clarities and cut. Clarity Enhancement is an excellent choice, giving maximum diamond weight for your budget.



Option 01

If **carat size** is the priority then this classic single solitaire design is the choice for you. This option is used to highlight the impact on sparkle if carat size takes precedence. At 1.25ct this diamond is the largest stone of the three engagement rings presented.

The majority of the £2,500 budget goes towards the weight of the Diamond itself, therefore some compromises have to be made regarding sparkle.

The Cut of this Diamond is Very Good. This cut offers exceptional brilliance and fire. A large majority of the entering light reflects through the diamond's table. To the naked eye, Very Good diamonds provide similar sparkle to those of excellent grade.

Colour wise the grading of this round brilliant cut diamond is M. To put this in perspective, the scale begins with the letter D, representing colourless, and continues with increasing presence of colour to the letter Z (light yellow or brown).

M colour graded diamonds contain noticeable colour, visible to the naked eye. Even with the presence of colour (hints of yellow) these diamonds can still emit fire and beauty. Compared to the other two options the colour here is sacrificed somewhat in order to obtain the largest Diamond possible for the price.

In terms of clarity this Diamond is graded SI1 (after clarity enhancement). This means the inclusions are not visible to the naked eye, however, under a 10x magnification loupe they will be noticed immediately. When assessing this Diamond overall, it represents good value, however, with regards to sparkle, it doesn't have quite the same optical performance as the other two options.



Option 02

For the second option the carat weight of the single solitaire is decreased to 0.75ct of a carat. This reduction in size allows for the diamond to be of **better quality**.

The Diamond is graded 'Excellent' in Cut, the best possible. The quality of a diamond's cut determines how well it disperses its light. With a clarity of VS2 (very slightly included) flaws are harder to distinguish under the loupe, ranking higher in clarity than **Option 01**.

Pairing this clarity and a colour grading of F this is a very attractive, eye catching stone. This diamond is whiter, cleaner and brighter than the previous stone, thus producing a greater lustre.



Option 03

This Halo Design offers an alternative option to the classic single stone solitaire. The design features a brilliant round cut diamond with a carat weight of 0.65ct. The centre stone is graded G for colour and SI1 for clarity and is white and clear to look at.

The central stone is then encircled by smaller accent diamonds for added brilliance. Coupled with diamonds set in the shoulders too, the elements of this ring work together to create that extra sparkle for your budget.

Such halo designs are becoming increasingly sought after, perhaps due to their romantic vintage-inspired look, or because of the way a halo of accent diamonds makes a centre diamond appear larger. These accent diamonds also emit light, drawing the attention back to the main stone. **A perfect compliment!**



What's the most important thing I should consider if I want my diamond to sparkle?

When it comes to determining what is the most important aspect when purchasing a diamond, many consumers will look to Colour or Clarity.

Whilst these are generally important characteristics, the Cut of the diamond will ultimately give you the most sparkle.

Most diamond shoppers will have awareness of Cut, as it is one of the traditional four C's — Cut, Clarity, Colour and Carat.

Cut refers to the diamond's particular ability to reflect and refract light back up through the top of the diamond, where it emits light through the facet lines in the diamond's crown.

Several aspects are vital to making this happen for optimum sparkle, and all are considered when a Diamond Grader makes the final assessment on the quality of the cut of the particular Diamond.

Cut is comprised of the Symmetry, Proportions and Polish of the diamond.

Symmetry refers to the symmetrical arrangement of the facets. How well they are aligned will affect how light travels through the Diamond. Simply put, if your diamond is asymmetrical, it won't have that quintessential sparkle.

Proportions refers to how well the size of each area of the Diamond relate to each other and their ability to return light back to the viewer's eye. If the diamond is not proportional, you may have misdirected light meaning reduced brilliance. (e.g. if the Diamond is cut too deep, it will lose light out of the sides).

Polish refers to the smoothness of each facet and how the diamond has been cut from the rough form. It focuses on the diamond exterior and how well the diamond has been polished. A well-polished diamond can produce crisp reflections whilst a poorly polished diamond can appear dull to the eye.

Each of these factors are graded from Very Poor to Excellent.

Overall, Cut is the most important factor to consider because ultimately, this has the greatest influence on the appearance of the stone.

How important is colour when it comes to sparkle?

Colour is usually one of the four C's that diamond shoppers wish to prioritise. However, when it comes to sparkle, colour doesn't impact it that significantly.

Ideally, starting from a G upwards in colour will allow you to have a stone which should be visibly white to the naked eye.

A diamond that has a slight yellowish tinge (perhaps an M on the scale, like our example) may appear to exude a slightly less white sparkle, but this again is very difficult to detect and not always the case.

So, with regards to sparkle, a whiter Diamond will "complete the look" compared to a stone with a yellow tinge, however, colour actually has little to do with a diamond's ability to sparkle.

Will the diamonds clarity help with sparkle?

Clarity refers to the absence of any internal flaws called inclusions or blemishes on the surface. Diamonds are formed under extreme heat and pressure within the earth. As the diamond forms, each one will have different characteristics that may include internal flaws called inclusions and external marks called blemishes.

The number, size and positioning of these flaws and blemishes can affect the value of the diamond, but not necessarily its sparkle. Clarity is graded on a scale starting at FL (Flawless) / IF (Internally Flawless) down to I3 (Included).

A diamond with an I3 grading will have inclusions that are detectable to the naked eye and may even affect brilliance. An I3 grading can also mean the stone has durability issues which is not what you would want when purchasing a diamond.

An S11 grading (Slightly Included), means there are inclusions present within the diamond however, you should not be able to detect these to the naked eye. This is an ideal clarity to consider when purchasing a diamond as you will not detect the inclusions to the naked eye, and as it is not at the top end of the scale, it allows you to spend more on the cut.

In conclusion, clarity and sparkle of a diamond are not necessarily related. You can have great sparkle factor on a diamond which has lower clarity. Here the determining factor is the type of imperfections that the diamond has.

In some cases, certain types of imperfections can impact the sparkle of a diamond but overall if they are well sourced, they will not affect the sparkle and life of the diamond.

Can the style or design of the ring increase sparkle?

The amount of sparkle is determined by how much light is able to interact with the diamonds cut. As you or the diamond moves, an effect called scintillation occurs — visible as alternating flashes of white and spectral-coloured light and the contrast of dark and light that moves around the diamond. This contrast is dynamic and causes ‘sparkle’.

Design alone cannot improve the quality of a diamond, however there are many design features that can accentuate the overall sparkle of it.

A bigger diamond is not necessarily better. You may think: the larger the diamond, the more sparkle. But in reality, diamonds with identical proportions, colour and clarity have the same amount of sparkle regardless of size.

Visually however, you might perceive a difference when comparing two diamonds that are dramatically different in size.

The more diamonds, the more sparkle. Additional diamonds whether big or small, will add extra sparkle to your engagement ring. This is one reason why diamonds situated in the shoulders and halo designs are increasingly popular.

The right setting can also accentuate the sparkle of a diamond. If you’re looking for a bigger visual display, a 4 claw setting is far more superior at allowing light to enter the diamond than a rub over setting for example.

Are there any other diamond shapes that can offer more sparkle for the same budget?

The round brilliant cut diamond is regarded as the cut that delivers the most sparkle. This diamond cut has 58 facets, the most of any of its brilliant counterparts. The more facets a diamond has, the more reflective surfaces there are to bounce and scatter light.

If you have your heart set on another shape other than round, you can still get the sparkle if you look for diamond shapes cut in the brilliant faceting style. These include princess, radiant, oval, pear, heart and marquise.

So, what would you pick for maximum sparkle?

To some degree it depends on your style and design preference. Using our example of the £2,500 budget, we would suggest the following:

01 Invest in quality not size; using our three examples here, you are looking in the range of a 0.70ct to 0.75ct in carat weight, depending on the quality of the diamond's overall characteristics.

02 Colour is where you could compromise slightly without affecting sparkle. Aiming for a G or above will allow you to have a white diamond whilst still being able to spend more on other factors.

03 As suggested, a clarity of SI1 is a good place to start to ensure you don't detect any inclusions to the naked eye.

04 One important factor is to view the diamond with your own eyes before you purchase. Whilst grading is important and can guide you to the beautiful stones, there will always be that one diamond that catches your eye. Since diamond sparkle is all about how well the stone interacts with light, the environment in which you view the diamond and the diamond's cut quality are also critical.

Servicing and cleaning

One of the most important and affordable tips we can give you, is to keep the diamond clean. When the diamond is clean, you are allowing the light to pass through easily which will give you the sparkle. If there is dirt residue under your diamond, the light cannot pass through meaning your stone may start to appear dull.

We recommend an annual service on your jewellery to keep your piece looking it's best whilst also allowing our trained goldsmiths to thoroughly check the piece. Diamond Centre Wales provides a complimentary service the 1st year after receiving your ring. After the complimentary service, any additional start from £40.

We advise the following to care for your jewellery, in between such servicing:

- When taking your ring off your finger or placing it back on, please try to remove it at the band rather than the stones. When you remove it by the stone(s), you are applying pressure which could lead to the stone becoming loose within the setting.
- Avoid wearing your ring when doing any activities that puts the stone in danger of getting knocked or caught. E.g. Physical activity including sports and/or the gym, gardening, heavy lifting and household cleaning.
- Take your jewellery off at night.
- Take your jewellery off before you shower/bathe. In addition, it is best to avoid wearing your jewellery when applying makeup, perfume or hair products. Using such products can leave a dull residue on your jewellery.



Diamond Centre Wales

Merchants, Dealers & Manufacturers

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