

Jewelry Terms

- **ANNIVERSARY BAND**--Typically given for wedding anniversaries, a ring set with one or more rows of gems, usually Diamonds. The diamonds may go completely, three quarters or half way around the finger. Any anniversary is appropriate for giving this ring, however, recently the Diamond anniversary band has been promoted in major advertising campaigns as the perfect gift for the tenth wedding anniversary. An anniversary band can be used in addition to, or instead of a traditional wedding ring.
- **BAGUETTE**--A small rectangular shaped gemstone. A term derived from the French, meaning long and thin as in baguette breads.
- **BEAD SETTING**--A method of setting stones even with the surface of a metal by raising beads from the metal itself. The beads act as prongs to secure the stones.
- **BELCHER**--A claw style ring mounting, common in rings for men. The mounting is one piece with the prongs being part of the shank.
- **BRILLIANT CUT**--A round shaped gemstone with 58 facets also known as a full cut.. A round, full cut Diamond is correctly called a Brilliant Cut. The term refers to the shape of the gemstone, not quality or actual brilliance.
- **BRIDAL JEWELRY**--A general term used to describe the category of wedding rings, engagement rings, gifts for the bride or groom and gifts for the best man, maid of honor, ushers, bridesmaids and others taking part in the wedding ceremony.
- **BUTTERCUP**--A six-prong setting, with tall prongs, resembling a flower. The setting is scalloped in design.
- **CARAT**--A very accurate unit of weight used for gemstones. The word Carat is derived from the Carob seed, which was used in the days of antiquity as counterweights on scales for small measurements because Carob seeds were extremely similar in weight.
- **CARBON**-- A Diamond is composed of pure Carbon. Carbon, when subjected to tremendous amounts of heat and pressure, crystallizes. Many Diamonds do not completely crystallize. As a Diamond crystal forms, some Carbon may not be crystallized resulting in birthmarks known as inclusions. Inclusions aid jewelers in identifying Diamonds and make every Diamond unique. The best way to identify your Diamond is know what its inclusions look like, unless of course you are fortunate enough to own a flawless Diamond which has perfect crystal structure and no inclusions.
- **CHANNEL SETTING**--The art of setting gemstones in a channel, which is two walls of metal between which a gem is set so it appears suspended in a groove. Channel setting is generally used for small stones of similar size, but graduated gemstones can also be channel set in this manner. A piece of jewelry with a groove for stones to be set in is also referred to as a channel setting.
- **CLARITY**--The amount or absence of inclusions or other imperfections within a gemstone determines its clarity. A Clarity grade can be assigned to a gemstone based on the amount of imperfections, their size, relief (contrast and appearance), and location within a gemstone. Clarity is one of the 4Cs used to grade Diamonds in the G.I.A. system of Diamond grading..
- **CLARITY GRADE**--A category used to describe the amount or absence of inclusions within a Diamond or other gemstone. The G.I.A. Diamond clarity grading scale consists of eleven clarity grades. [See Ring IQ.](#)
- **CLUSTER RING**--A ring set with many gemstones. The gemstones may be of similar or different colors or sizes.
- **COLLAR BAR**--A bar worn beneath a tie, attached to the collar of a shirt.
- **COLOR GRADE**--A category used to describe the amount or absence of color, typically yellow, within a Diamond or other gemstone.
- **COLORED STONES**--All gemstones other than Diamonds, or colored Diamonds.
- **CUBIC ZIRCONIA**--A man-made material usually faceted so it will be similar in appearance to a Diamond.

- **CUFF LINK**--A piece of jewelry usually designed with a post and hinge that goes through the two button holes on a shirt (French cuffs - without buttons) and the hinge opens to create a "T" that secures the shirt cuff.
- **CUSTOM DESIGN**--Any jewelry made to order.
- **DIAMOND CUT**--Small scallop like bright cuts in metal created with a diamond cutting tool that create the illusion of Diamonds being set into the metal..
- **DIAMOND GRADE**--A value used in a Diamond grading system to categorize the color or clarity of a Diamond.
- **EMERALD CUT**--A rectangular shaped gemstone. A style of faceting that creates a rectangular gemstone, usually with cut corners to prevent chipping.
- **ENGRAVING**--A process of etching a design, initials, family crest or anything else into the surface of metal. The traditional method of hand-engraving is becoming less common as it is replaced by sophisticated computerized techniques. An experienced and skillful hand engraver is difficult to find these days.
- **FACETING**-- The process of applying facets, or flat polished surfaces to a gemstone. The goal of a gem cutter, who creates the facet arrangement on a gemstone, is to create the most brilliance and best appearance possible for the gem in hand. When faceting colored gemstones particular attention must be given to how light reflection will affect the gemstones apparent color.
- **FANCY COLOR DIAMOND**--A Diamond that exhibits a strong color, such as yellow, as opposed to an off colored white Diamond. Fancy colored Diamonds can be very expensive and are often highly prized by collectors. Fancy colored Diamonds have been found in many colors of the spectrum.
- **FANCY CUT**--A gemstone cut into a shape other than round. Fancy cuts include princess, pear, marquise, oval, baguette, emerald, heart and less common but very unique shapes such as stars.
- **FILIGREE**--An openwork, pierced design, generally delicate in nature and fine in construction.
- **FOUR C's**--An abbreviation used to describe the Color, Clarity, Carat and Cut of a gemstone as defined by the G.I.A. which created a Diamond grading system using the 4Cs.
- **G.I.A. "The Gemological Institute of America"**-- G.I.A. is a highly respected, not for profit organization, devoted to the promotion of education and ethics within the jewelry industry. G.I.A. also has a laboratory used to grade and identify gemstones.
- **GOLD**-- An element, whose symbol is AU on the atomic charts and has characteristics that make it highly suitable for use in jewelry construction. Gold is very malleable, meaning it can be hammered, bent, drawn, shaped or formed with relative ease compared to other metals. Gold is usually mixed with other metals called alloys to give it rigidity or change its color.
- **GOLD FILLED**-- An item made of a base metal such as brass or copper, to which a sheet of gold is bonded by pressure or other means. To qualify as gold filled, an article of jewelry must have a layer of gold at least 1/20th, or 5% of the weight of the entire article.
- **GOLD OVERLAY**--Has the same meaning as "gold filled".
- **GOLD PLATED**--A thin layer of electroplated gold on base metal. All gold plated items are not plated with fine gold, some are only plated gold in color.
- **HAND MADE**-- Created completely by hand. Not assembled from parts or made in a die or mold.
- **ILLUSION SETTING**--A setting used to make Diamonds appear larger than they are.
- **INLAY**-- The process of setting stones into a channel or cut out so that they are flush with the surface of the metal. A stone is said to be inlaid when it is set in this manner
- **INVISIBLE SETTING**-- Gemstones set next to each other, usually in multiple rows, with no metal between them, giving the appearance that they are set invisibly (without prongs, beads or channels). The stones actually have tiny grooves sawn on the bottom of them so they interlock or are held in place with wires like a puzzle.
- **KARAT**--A unit of measure of gold content. Pure gold is 24 karat and one karat is equal to 1/24 part pure gold in an alloy. (14kt. gold is 14 parts gold and 10 parts other metal.)
- **MARQUISE**--A gemstone shape pointed at both ends and oval shaped in the center.
- **MOUNTING**-- The process of setting or attaching a gemstone. Also, a piece of jewelry, into which gemstones can be set.
- **OVAL CUT**--A gemstone in the shape of an oval, faceted similar to a round brilliant cut.

- **PALLADIUM**--A member of the Platinum group. Palladium is lighter and less expensive than platinum and is mixed with yellow gold to create white gold.
- **PEAR SHAPE**--A gemstone shape rounded at one end and pointed at the other. The facet arrangements are similar to those of the round brilliant cut.
- **PENDANT**--A charm or other item worn on a chain that swings freely.
- **PLATINUM**--The noblest of the noble metals, Platinum is a white, hard and very dense metal.
- **PLUMB GOLD**--A term used to describe gold jewelry that contains the precise amount of gold in the alloy that the Karat mark indicates. In the past an item marked 14Kt could legally have been 13.5 karat and still considered 14K. Today an item marked 14k must be at least 14 of 24 parts fine gold and is considered plumb gold.
- **POINT**--A unit of weight equal to 1/100th of a carat. One hundred points equal one carat, fifty points equal a half carat and so on. A point is an extremely accurate unit of measure used to weigh gemstones. One point is equal to about 1/14,000 of an ounce.
- **PRECIOUS METALS**--Gold, Silver, Platinum and the other members of the Platinum group.
- **PRE-ENGAGEMENT RING**-- An engagement style ring set with a very small diamond, given in lieu of an engagement ring or as a prelude to an engagement ring. Also called a promise ring.
- **PRINCESS CUT**-- A square cut, which is faceted similar to an Emerald Cut above the girdle and faceted like a Round Brilliant Cut below the girdle.
- **PROMISE RING**-- A pre-engagement ring offered with the promise of ones heart. Typically similar to an engagement ring with a very small diamond, maybe 5 points in size.
- **SEMI-PRECIOUS**--A term that formerly was used to describe colored gemstones other than Ruby, Sapphire and Emerald. In fact many of the gemstones called semi-precious could be quite valuable, costing several thousands of dollars and more. For this reason the term is really not appropriate and its use has been discontinued by most people in the jewelry industry.
- **SOLITAIRE**--Typically used to describe a ring or pendant set with a single gemstone.
- **STUD EARRINGS**--Also called studs, small post style pierced earrings, sometimes set with gemstones. Diamond studs are probably the most popular type of Diamond earrings.
- **STUDS**--Worn on men's tuxedo shirts instead of buttons.
- **SYNTHETIC**--A man-made material.
- **TAPERED BAGUETTE**--A baguette in which the two short edges are unequal in length causing the longer sides to taper in towards the short edge. Tapered baguettes are very popular as accents in the settings of engagement rings.
- **TIE BAR**--A clip worn on a tie as an accessory, secured by an alligator clip or spring tension in the metal. Sometimes referred to as a tie clip.
- **TIFFANY SETTING**--A solitaire style setting, usually a ring, with a four or six prong head or setting.
- **TOTAL WEIGHT**--The sum of the carat weight of all of the gemstones in a piece of jewelry.
- **WEDDING SET**--A woman's wedding and engagement ring designed to be worn together. Sometimes the wedding ring is shaped so that it fits around the solitaire engagement ring, making the set look like a single piece.
- **WEDDING TRIO**-- A three piece wedding ring set consisting of his and her matching wedding rings and a matching engagement ring
- **WHITE GOLD**--An alloy of gold made by mixing yellow gold with a combination of nickel, zinc, or palladium.