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## ENGAGEMENT RING GUIDE

Buying an engagement ring can be a daunting prospect. Whether buying an engagement ring as a surprise, or choosing a ring together, you will be making an important decision and hopefully buying a piece of jewellery which will be full of meaning for you, and will last forever.



Rings can range from an incredibly simple and classic solitaire ring, to a very ornate pavé setting with multiple stones. Diamonds themselves are also a vast and complex subject which can take many years to fully understand.



This guide will help you to decide what type of ring is best for you, and with the aid of our online design programme and augmented reality app, we will make designing your own unique ring into a thoroughly enjoyable process.





OST



When shopping for engagement rings, it won't be long before an opportunistic jeweller tells you that 'traditionally' you ought to spend approximately two month's salary on an engagement ring. This is nonsense and stems from a clever marketing campaign by DeBeers back in the 1940s.

In reality, you don't want the purchase of an engagement ring to be tarnished with the bitter taste of having overstretched yourself. Engagement rings, and good quality diamonds in particular, are not cheap, but with Beloved Bespoke you should be able to design a truly unique engagement ring without breaking the bank.

We would recommend designing a ring you really love, and then adjusting the diamond to fit your budget, since the vast majority of the cost of an engagement ring lies in the cost of the diamond.



TYLES &  
TONES



Although the range of potential styles of engagement ring may seem vast, they generally fall into three core groups, which we describe below. Incidentally, although the vast majority of engagement rings are made with diamonds, there is no reason why you cannot use other precious stones such as sapphires, rubies or emeralds.

Diamonds are a great choice because of their combination of brilliant sparkle and hardness (meaning they won't get damaged), but especially in a trilogy ring, a diamond can be set next to two coloured stones to spectacular effect.

Each of these styles can be combined with different elements within our ring designer, such as different widths of shank, channel or prong-set diamonds in the shank, or different coloured side stones, in order to create a truly bespoke and unique design.

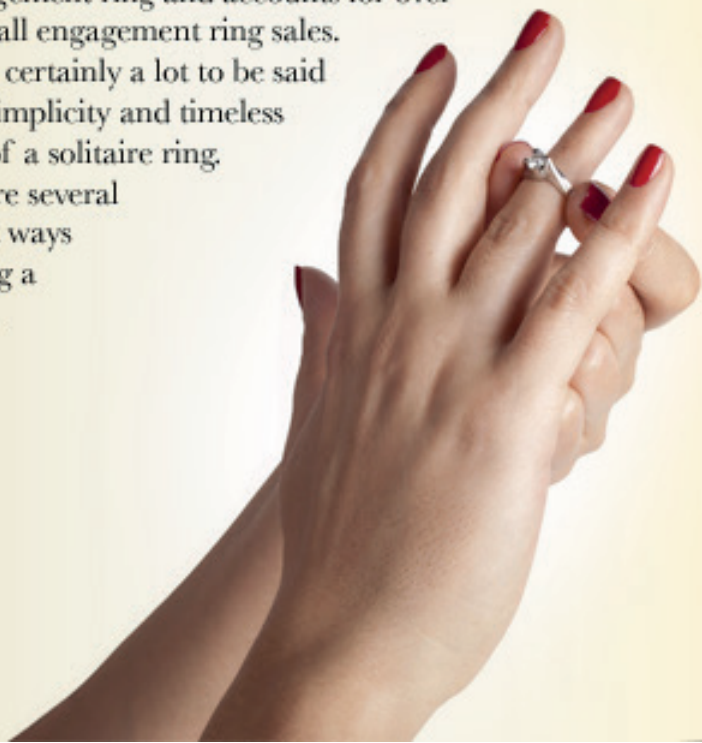


## SOLITAIRE ENGAGEMENT RINGS

The solitaire setting (a single stone set on the ring) is the most classic and popular choice for an engagement ring and accounts for over 75% of all engagement ring sales.

There is certainly a lot to be said for the simplicity and timeless beauty of a solitaire ring.

There are several different ways of setting a solitaire.



### Prong-Set Solitaire

The prong setting (or Tiffany setting) is the most popular setting, as it exposes the greatest percentage of the diamond, allowing the diamond to be visible from both the top and the sides, and therefore generating maximum sparkle.

The prong setting raises the stone slightly above the rest of the ring, making the stone seam larger, but this does have the downside of meaning it can snag more easily and is not as damage resistant as other settings, meaning it may not be ideal for someone with a really active lifestyle.



## Cathedral-Set Solitaire

The cathedral setting, which takes the buttresses of a cathedral as its inspiration, is very similar to the prong setting, but has raised shoulders from the band to the diamond. These shoulders can serve to both protect and accentuate the diamond.

This setting is more raised than a bezel setting, but does not expose quite as much of the stone as the classic prong setting.



## Bezel-Set Solitaire

The bezel setting is becoming increasingly popular and has a metal rim encircling (or partially encircling) the stone just above the girdle. This provides a more secure setting style, and tends to have a slightly lower profile, making it ideal for those with active lifestyles.

Bezel settings can provide an attractively sleek, understated and modern look. The downside of a bezel setting is that with more metal surrounding the stone, slightly less light will penetrate it, although with partial cutaways on the sides or underneath the stone, there will still be plenty of sparkle.





## TRILOGY ENGAGEMENT RINGS

A trilogy ring is simply an engagement ring with three stones instead of one. The side stones tend to be slightly smaller than the centre stone, and serve to compliment it and add glamour. The trilogy ring offers great scope for designing a truly unique engagement ring, as the side stones can be the same shape or different to the centre stone and can be diamonds or different gemstones. Why not experiment with our ring designer? The results can be spectacular. If you know your partners birthstone or favourite gemstone is a sapphire, or ruby, then why not incorporate these stones into a trilogy engagement ring that she will really love?



## PAVÉ ENGAGEMENT RINGS

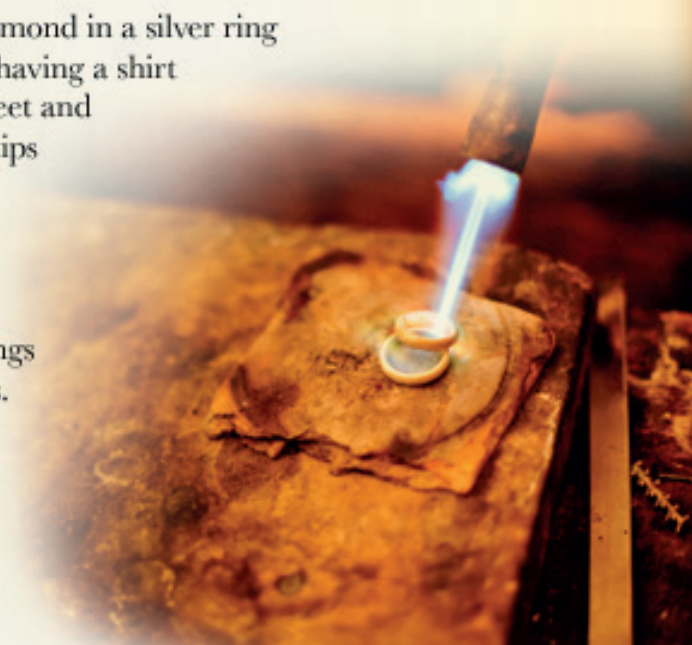
Pavé setting is generally regarded as a vintage or antique style for an engagement ring, but can provide stunning results and add a real sense of glamour to your engagement ring. In the pavé setting, tiny diamonds are set close together and held in place with tiny beads of metal, creating an incredible glittering surface. These tiny stones can be set on the ring shank or around the centre stone itself (this is known as a halo setting), which has the effect of making the centre stone look larger. The pavé setting makes a very elegant engagement ring.



# METAL

Unlike wedding rings, the metal is not the most significant part of the cost of an engagement ring. Because the majority of the value of an engagement ring lies in the diamond, we believe it is best to show off your stone (or stones) with the highest quality metals.

To set a beautiful diamond in a silver ring would be rather like having a shirt tailored on Bond Street and then wearing paperclips instead of cufflinks. For this reason, we only offer Platinum and 18 carat white and yellow gold settings for engagement rings.



## Platinum



Platinum is the rarest and consequently the most expensive of the major precious metals from which to make your setting. Unlike gold, which is very malleable in its pure form and is therefore alloyed with other metals to make it hard, platinum is naturally durable, so platinum rings are 95% pure.

Although expensive, if you have the budget, platinum's qualities make it a superb choice for an engagement ring and it is the most popular choice for high end engagement rings, as the white metal sets off diamonds brilliantly.

It is an extremely durable metal, meaning that a platinum setting will hold your diamond very securely and last a lifetime. It is also the heaviest of the precious metals used in jewellery manufacture, endowing platinum rings with a real sense of substance.



Please note the metal colours shown are for illustrative purposes and as such are approximations only.





## 18 Carat Yellow Gold

18 carat yellow gold is a very traditional choice for an engagement ring. This alloy is 75% gold, meaning that the rings retain a rich gold colour.



Although white metals are currently more popular for setting diamonds, yellow metal can also look stunning with diamonds (and rubies). It's really a simple matter of taste, so why not see how yellow gold will look on your hand with our augmented reality app? 18 carat yellow gold is alloyed with copper and silver to improve the physical properties of the metal and make it more hard wearing. 18 carat gold is heavier than 9 carat gold, but lighter than platinum.



## 18 Carat White Gold

18 carat white gold is one of the most popular choices of metal for engagement rings and is also a traditional choice. This alloy is 75% gold, combined with palladium and silver to give it its white colour. 18 carat white gold is slightly whiter and warmer in appearance than Platinum, which is slightly greyer.

This alloy, like the other 18 carat gold alloys, is lighter than platinum, but still weighty and hard wearing enough for everyday use. 18 carat white gold is usually plated with rhodium, a very tough, white and extremely expensive metal, to improve the lustre and whiteness of the finish. Like platinum, this metal sets off diamonds (and sapphires) wonderfully well.



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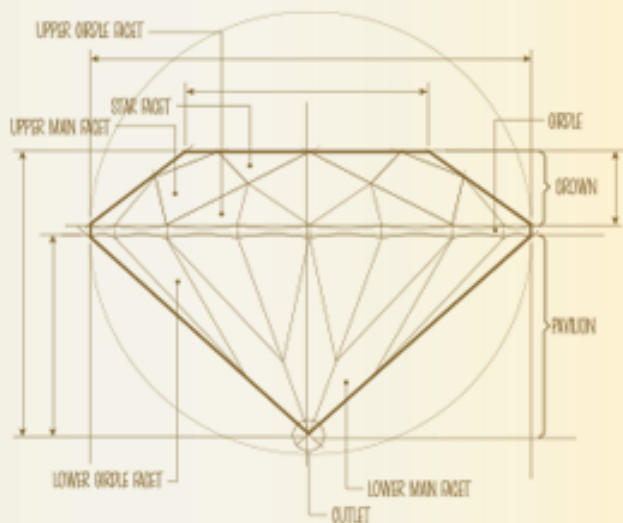




## DIAMOND SHAPES

Once a diamond has been mined, it must be cut into a finished stone ready to set in a ring. Experts will look at the original crystal and use its natural shape to decide which shape of stone to cut it into. They will cut and facet the stone to make the most of its natural characteristics, making the perfect angles to reflect light back out of the stone and make it truly sparkle. The shape of stone you choose for your ring will clearly have a big impact on how the piece of jewellery will finally look, and is purely a matter of personal preference.

Beloved Bespoke offer the most popular shapes of diamond, as detailed on the following page.



## Round

A round diamond, also known as a 'Brilliant cut' is the most popular diamond shape and accounts for over 75% of all diamonds sold. The precise mechanics and 360 degree symmetry of this cut maximise the sparkle of the diamond and make it more brilliant than other cuts. This is a timelessly classic choice.



## Princess

The princess cut is the next most popular choice after round diamonds. With its modern look and clean lines, this square or rectangular shaped stone works well in a wide range of engagement ring settings.

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## Oval

This is a similar cut to the round brilliant cut, but with a slightly elongated oval shape. This elongated shape can have the effect of making the stone seem slightly larger and also works well with smaller hands, as it has the effect of lengthening the finger.



## Marquise

This very strikingly shaped diamond is an elongated oval shape with pointed ends.

The marquise cut has a large surface area proportionate to its weight, which can make a stone look bigger than it is. This shape works especially well as a solitaire and again has the effect of lengthening the finger slightly.

## Emerald

This is a very distinctive rectangular cut with cut corners, where concentric planes are cut like steps from the large open table on top of the stone. This cut does not sparkle as dramatically as a brilliant cut and works best with high quality stones, as it highlights the clarity of the stone.



## Cushion

The cushion cut is square with rounded corners. This is a very traditional cut, also known as pillow cut, which has been in existence for nearly two centuries. This cut works especially well in antique style rings.





## DIAMONDS THE FOUR C'S

The quality of a diamond is commonly defined by considering the "Four C's", namely cut, colour, clarity and carat (weight). We explain each of these areas below, but at Beloved Bespoke, because you are making so many choices in designing your engagement ring, we have tried to keep the choices of diamond simple, by asking you to choose your preferred shape and size of diamond, whilst keeping the other elements constant.

We explain our choices below, but in a nutshell, we always opt for stones that look stunning, with great cut, colour and clarity, but without going so far that you are paying through the nose for levels of purity that the human eye cannot detect



## Cut

The cut of a diamond is the only characteristic that is defined by man rather than nature. However brilliant the natural qualities of a diamond are, it will not truly sparkle unless it is well cut.

A diamond's facets must be skilfully cut to the perfect proportions and angles to ensure that the light that enters the stone is reflected back out, rather than being lost out of the bottom or sides of the stone. The cut of a diamond is the single most important factor for ensuring the brilliance of a diamond, which is why all Beloved Bespoke's diamonds are all of 'good' or better cut.



## Colour

A perfectly colourless diamond is graded 'D' (for some reason A, B & C are never used), and it is certainly important for a diamond to flash with clear icy brightness.

The colour grade extends to 'Z', at which point a diamond will have a light yellow colour, but at Beloved Bespoke, we only supply diamonds which have a colour grade of 'H' or better, meaning that the stones will appear colourless to the human eye.



## Clarity

The clarity of a diamond is a measurement of the number of inclusions (internal markings or impurities) within the stone. The fewer the inclusions, the more valuable the diamond will be.

A diamond with no internal marks at all is extremely rare and known as 'internally flawless'. Sometimes people get overly preoccupied by the clarity of a diamond.

At Beloved Bespoke, we believe it is these tiny internal markings that make each diamond unique and special, but still only stock diamonds of VS2 or higher quality, meaning that the inclusions cannot be seen by the human eye, and are only barely discernible at 10x magnification. This type of inclusion will have no discernible effect on the brilliance of your diamond.



## Carat

The carat of a diamond is the measurement of its weight (which obviously determines its size). A carat is 0.2gm. The price of diamonds goes exponentially upwards the higher the carat, as good quality large stones are extremely rare.

The average size for an engagement ring diamond is between half a carat and one carat. At Beloved Bespoke, we offer four weights of diamond, to meet our customers varying budgets and design requirements: 0.5ct, 0.8ct, 1ct and 1.5ct. Stones above 1.5ct become extremely costly, and we do not believe they are suitable for purchase online.

Large stones also affect the size of setting needed, meaning the stone may have to sit rather high above the finger. A one carat diamond is an absolutely classic size for an engagement ring and a highly popular choice, although due to the popularity of going to 1ct, we offer a 0.8ct option, which represents very good value and appears nearly as large as 1ct stone.





## FINISHING TOUCHES

Once you have made the major decisions about what type of ring you want, what stones, metal and setting, at Beloved Bespoke, we offer the ability to add a finishing touch to make your ring completely unique.

Why not set a 'secret stone' inside the ring, or add an engraved message for your partner?



## Internal Diamond Setting

Having a diamond (or other gemstone) set on the inside of your engagement ring is a subtle and interesting addition to your engagement ring. A 'secret stone' is set on the inside of the ring, and cannot be seen when the ring is being worn, but can provide uniqueness and added significance to the wearer.



## Engraving

Engraving the inside of your engagement ring is a simple, inexpensive way to truly personalise your ring. This engraving cannot be seen when the ring is being worn, but adds significance for the wearer and makes any engagement ring truly unique.

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## SOURCING & CERTIFICATION

Most consumers have heard of 'blood diamonds', and it goes without saying that nobody wants one of the most romantic purchases of their life to be associated with helping to arm a rogue

government or militia. After a diamond has been cut, it is not possible to know the origin of the stone, so at Beloved Bespoke we insist that our suppliers subscribe to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, and we also provide individual certificates for all diamonds of 0.8cts and over.

We want our customers to have complete piece of mind that their rings are of excellent provenance, which is why we also manufacture all our rings in the UK and carefully monitor the sources of our metal as well as our stones.



## Conclusion

Despite the wealth of advice available on the subject and huge number of choices, there are no hard and fast rules about engagement rings. The most important thing is that you choose a ring that you and your partner love, and we hope that our design software makes that process easier and more rewarding. At Beloved Bespoke, we keep our costs down by operating online rather than maintaining lavish premises on the high street, which allows us to keep the cost of our rings highly competitive whilst still offering a truly bespoke product. We do not ever compromise on the quality of our rings. We use the best materials and British workmanship available to ensure all our products are of an exceptionally high standard. When purchasing an engagement ring from us, you will also receive:

- **Certification for your diamond (over 0.8cts)**
- **Cast iron guarantee that your ring will be in perfect condition**
- **Free size adjustment if your ring does not fit perfectly**
- **Free ring polishing & servicing on your first anniversary**
- **Any other alterations to your design completed 'at cost'**
- **Stylish box & suede pouch to protect your ring when not being worn**
- **Independent insurance valuation certificate for your ring**

