



**International  
Standard**

**ISO 24016**

**Jewellery and precious metals —  
Grading polished diamonds —  
Terminology, classification and  
test methods**

*Joaillerie et métaux précieux — Classification des diamants taillés  
— Terminologie, graduations et méthodes d'essai*

**First edition  
2020-09**

**Corrected version  
2024-03**

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Published in Switzerland

# Contents

	Page
<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>1 Scope</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Normative references</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>3 Terms and definitions</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>4 General</b> .....	<b>5</b>
4.1 The use of the word “diamond”.....	5
4.2 Composite stones/assembled stones.....	5
<b>5 Mass and measurements</b> .....	<b>6</b>
5.1 Mass.....	6
5.2 Measurements.....	6
<b>6 Colour</b> .....	<b>6</b>
6.1 General.....	6
6.1.1 Colourless to yellow, brown and grey (D to L).....	6
6.1.2 Colourless to yellow, brown and grey (M to Z).....	6
6.1.3 Other hues.....	7
6.2 Colour grades (colourless to yellow, brown and grey).....	7
6.3 Colour grades (other than for yellow, brown and grey).....	7
6.4 Fluorescence.....	9
<b>7 Clarity</b> .....	<b>10</b>
7.1 General.....	10
7.2 Clarity grades.....	10
7.3 Clarity characteristics.....	10
7.4 Laser drilling.....	10
<b>8 Cut</b> .....	<b>12</b>
8.1 Cut characteristics.....	12
8.2 Shape.....	12
8.3 Proportions.....	12
8.3.1 Description.....	12
8.3.2 Basis for descriptions of proportions.....	12
8.3.3 Table size (percentage).....	13
8.3.4 Crown height (percentage) and/or crown angle (degrees).....	13
8.3.5 Pavilion depth (percentage) and/or pavilion angle (degrees).....	13
8.3.6 Girdle thickness (percentage) and description.....	13
8.3.7 Culet size (percentage) and description.....	13
8.3.8 Total depth/height.....	14
8.3.9 Proportions comment.....	14
8.4 Finish.....	17
8.4.1 Polish.....	17
8.4.2 Symmetry.....	17
<b>9 Identification</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>10 Testing mass and measurements</b> .....	<b>18</b>
10.1 Testing mass.....	18
10.2 Testing measurements.....	18
<b>11 Testing and grading colour and fluorescence</b> .....	<b>18</b>
11.1 Cleaning of masterstones.....	18
11.2 Masterstones for colour.....	18
11.3 Procedure.....	19
11.3.1 Precautions.....	19
11.3.2 Cleaning.....	19

# ISO 24016:2020(en)

11.3.3	Comparisons	19
11.3.4	Round stones	19
11.3.5	Fancy shapes	19
11.3.6	Colours	19
11.3.7	Lighting	19
11.3.8	Positioning	19
11.3.9	The grade	20
11.3.10	Master-eye effect	21
11.4	Description of fluorescence	22
11.4.1	Equipment and References	22
11.4.2	Masterstones for fluorescence	22
11.4.3	Working conditions and methodology	22
11.4.4	Fluorescence, other than blue	22
<b>12</b>	<b>Testing and grading clarity</b>	<b>23</b>
12.1	General	23
12.2	Apparatus	23
12.3	Procedure	23
12.3.1	General	23
12.3.2	Lighting	23
12.3.3	Distance	23
12.3.4	Plotting	23
12.3.5	Plotting symbols	25
12.3.6	Laser drill holes	26
12.3.7	Surface grain lines	26
12.3.8	Internal graining	27
12.3.9	General	27
<b>13</b>	<b>Testing shape</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>Testing and grading proportions</b>	<b>27</b>
14.1	Appropriate instruments	27
14.2	Description	27
14.2.1	Table sizes	27
14.2.2	Crown height	27
14.2.3	Pavilion depth	28
14.2.4	Girdle thickness	28
14.2.5	Culet size	28
14.3	Proportions comments	28
<b>15</b>	<b>Grading of symmetry and polish (Finish)</b>	<b>28</b>
15.1	Symmetry	28
15.2	Polish	30
<b>16</b>	<b>Expression of results</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Diamond grading report</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Annex A (normative) Clarity, polish and symmetry characteristics</b>		<b>34</b>
<b>Annex B (informative) Clarity examples</b>		<b>37</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>		<b>53</b>

## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 174, *Jewellery and precious metals*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

This corrected version of ISO 24016:2020 incorporates the following corrections:

- In [Table 2](#), lines I and K, the "+" signs have been deleted.

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## Introduction

The aim of a standard for grading unmounted polished diamonds is to set rules for determining with maximum precision and accuracy the mass, colour, clarity and cut of individual polished diamonds. On one hand, based on these four criteria - also known as "the 4C's" - the diamond trade evaluates the value of diamonds. On the other hand, some diamond grading reports may be issued based on different standards by different laboratories, potentially leading to different results for the same individual diamond. This situation damages the reputation of the whole diamond trade. Hence, the need for a unique ISO standard for grading polished diamonds.

Today, the need for an ISO standard for the grading of polished diamonds is supported by recent agreements between international and national diamond organizations with CIBJO (The World Jewellery Confederation) with the aim of adopting CIBJO's unique diamond grading and diamond nomenclature standard.

Together with ISO 18323, which sets the nomenclature for diamonds, synthetic diamonds and diamond simulants, an ISO standard for the grading of polished diamonds will strengthen the trust in the diamond industry worldwide.

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# Jewellery and precious metals — Grading polished diamonds — Terminology, classification and test methods

## 1 Scope

This document specifies the terminology, classification and the methods that are used for the grading and description of single unmounted polished diamonds over 0,25 carat (ct).

This document applies to natural, unmounted, polished diamonds. It is not to be used for fancy coloured diamonds, synthetic diamonds, treated diamonds (other than is allowed for in 7.4), nor for assembled stones.

## 2 Normative references

The following document is referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 18323, *Jewellery — Consumer confidence in the diamond industry*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 18323 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### polished diamond

diamond with a defined *cut* (3.5)

#### 3.1.1

##### diamond

mineral consisting essentially of carbon crystallised in the isometric (cubic) crystal system, with a hardness on the Mohs' scale of 10, a specific gravity of approximately 3,52 and a refractive index of approximately 2,42, created by nature

Note 1 to entry: The denomination "diamond" without further specification always implies "natural diamond". These two terms are equivalent and carry the same meaning.

#### 3.1.2

##### treated diamond

*diamond* (3.1.1) having undergone any human intervention other than cutting, polishing, cleaning and setting, to permanently or non-permanently change its appearance

EXAMPLE Coating, fracture filling, heating, irradiation, laser drilling, HPHT treatment or any other physical or chemical process.

### 3.1.3

**synthetic diamond**  
**laboratory-grown diamond**  
**laboratory-created diamond**

artificial product that has essentially the same chemical composition, crystal structure and physical (including optical) properties as a *diamond* ([3.1.1](#))

Note 1 to entry: The English terms laboratory-created diamond or laboratory-grown diamond may be used synonymously with synthetic diamond. Where there is no acceptable local direct translation of the English terms laboratory grown diamond or laboratory created diamond then only the translation of the term synthetic diamond should be used.

Note 2 to entry: Abbreviations such as "lab grown", "lab created" "lab diamond" or "syn diamond" shall not be used.

Note 3 to entry: The word "laboratory" refers to the facility which produces the synthetic diamonds. This should not to be confused with a gemmological laboratory that is dedicated to the analysis, authentication, identification, classification (grading) of diamonds.

### 3.1.4

**composite stone**  
**assembled stone**

stone constructed of two or more parts

## 3.2 Internal characteristics

### 3.2.1

**bearding**

tiny *feathers* ([3.2.8](#)) extending in from the girdle

### 3.2.2

**bruise**

surface percussion mark, accompanied by tiny, root-like *feathers* ([3.2.8](#))

### 3.2.3

**cavity**

large or deep opening

### 3.2.4

**chip**

damage, usually occurring along the girdle or culet, which alters the outline of the stone

Note 1 to entry: Also to be considered as an external characteristic (see 3.3.4) depending upon depth.

### 3.2.5

**cleavage**

large *feather* ([3.2.8](#)) occurring in a plane, parallel to a crystal face

### 3.2.6

**cloud**

hazy or milky area made up of a number of very small *inclusions* ([3.10](#))

### 3.2.7

**crystal**

mineral crystal included in a *diamond* ([3.1.1](#))

### 3.2.8

**feather/fracture**

separation or break due to either *cleavage* ([3.2.5](#)) or fracture, often white and feathery in appearance

### 3.2.9

**grain centre**

small area of concentrated *crystal* ([3.2.7](#)) structure distortion



**3.2.10**

**internal graining**

internal indications of irregular *crystal* (3.2.7) growth

**3.2.10.1**

**coloured graining**

graining which appears as coloured streaks

**3.2.10.2**

**reflective graining**

graining which appears as a reflective plane

**3.2.10.3**

**whitish graining**

graining which may appear as whitish streaks or may give the stone a hazy (cloudy) appearance which decreases transparency

**3.2.11**

**indented natural**

*natural* (3.3.6) that penetrates the stone

Note 1 to entry: Also to be considered as an external characteristic (see 3.3.15) depending upon depth.

**3.2.12**

**knot**

included *diamond* (3.1.1) crystal which reaches the surface

**3.2.13**

**laser drilling**

burning a channel with a laser between the surface of a *diamond* (3.1.1) and an *inclusion* (3.10) (generally black), the channel being used as a conduit to allow a chemical treatment of the *inclusion* (3.10) with the purpose of making the *inclusion* (3.10) less visible

**3.2.14**

**needle**

long, thin included *crystal* (3.2.7) which looks like a tiny rod

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**3.2.15**

**nick**

minor damage, occurring along the girdle, the culet or facet edge, which does not significantly affect the outline of the stone

Note 1 to entry: Also to be considered as an external characteristic (see 3.3.7) depending upon depth.

**3.2.16**

**pinpoint**

very small *inclusion* (3.10); under 10x normally seen as a tiny dot, either singly or in groups or strings

**3.2.17**

**reduced transparency**

cloudy, milky, or hazy appearance of the whole or part of a *diamond* (3.1.1) due to internal features that may or may not be visible at 10x magnification

**3.2.18**

**twinning wisp**

*inclusions* (3.10) usually located in a plane, which occur as a result of the change in orientation of the diamond crystal structure

**3.2.19**

**etch channel**

high-temperature magma erodes the weak area of the *diamond* (3.1.1), leaving behind tubular traces extending from the surface to the inside, with a quadrangle opening

### 3.3 External characteristics

#### 3.3.1

##### **abrasion**

tiny *nicks* ([3.3.7](#)) along facet junction's or culet, producing white fuzzy lines instead of sharp facet edges

#### 3.3.2

##### **bruting lines**

tiny lines on a girdle not displaying a feather-like appearance

#### 3.3.3

##### **burn mark**

surface clouding caused by excessive heat, or uneven polished surface

#### 3.3.4

##### **chip**

damage, usually occurring along the girdle or culet, which alters the outline of the stone

Note 1 to entry: Also to be considered as an internal characteristic (see 3.2.4) depending upon depth.

#### 3.3.5

##### **extra facet**

facet located without regard for symmetry and not required by the cutting style

#### 3.3.6

##### **natural**

part of the original *crystal* ([3.2.7](#)) surface remaining on the polished stone

#### 3.3.7

##### **nick**

minor damage, occurring along the girdle, the culet or facet edge, which does not significantly affect the outline of the stone

Note 1 to entry: Also to be considered as an internal characteristic (see 3.2.15) depending upon depth.

#### 3.3.8

##### **pit**

tiny opening, often looking like a white dot

#### 3.3.9

##### **polish line**

tiny parallel lines left by polishing; fine parallel ridges confined to single facet, caused by *crystal* ([3.2.7](#)) structure irregularities; or tiny, parallel, polished grooves produced by irregularities in the scarify surface

#### 3.3.10

##### **pitted girdle**

very rough bruted girdle surface

#### 3.3.11

##### **scratch**

linear indentation normally seen as a fine white line across a facet

#### 3.3.12

##### **surface grain line**

surface indication of structural irregularity which is not seen internally; may resemble faint facet-junction lines, or cause a grooved or wavy surface; often the lines cross facet junctions

#### 3.3.13

##### **lizard skin**

transparent concave wave texture on the surface of a polished *diamond* ([3.1.1](#)), usually parallel to the direction of the *cleavage* ([3.2.5](#)) surface

**3.3.14**

**inscription**

mark on the surface of or in a *diamond* (3.1.1)

**3.3.15**

**indented natural**

natural that penetrates the stone

Note 1 to entry: Also to be considered as an internal characteristic (see 3.2.11) depending upon depth.

**3.4**

**naked eye**

naked (unaided) eye, or visible to the eye through glasses adjusting an anomalous eyesight to normal

**3.5**

**cut**

*shape* (3.6), proportions, polish and symmetry of a *diamond* (3.1.1)

Note 1 to entry: The term finish encompasses polish and symmetry.

**3.6**

**shape/form**

outline of a *diamond* (3.1.1) when viewed perpendicular to the table facet

**3.7**

**diamond loupe**

achromatic and aplanatic, triplet type, 10x magnifying lens

Note 1 to entry: The frame of the loupe shall be of a neutral 'colour'.

**3.8**

**first generation masterstone**

*diamond* (3.1.1) that has been selected by direct comparison with the relevant masterstone in the set of masterstones originally used to establish the D to Z grades, as specified in 6.1 and equal in hue, tone and saturation to the relevant original masterstone

**3.9**

**second generation masterstone**

*diamond* (3.1.1) that has been selected by direct comparison with the relevant *first generation masterstone* (3.8) and equal in hue, tone and saturation to the relevant *first generation masterstone* (3.8)

**3.10**

**inclusion**

physical alteration to the interior of a *diamond* (3.1.1)

## 4 General

### 4.1 The use of the word "diamond"

It is unnecessary to note the genesis of a diamond, as the use of the word "diamond" alone and without qualification states that it is natural.

The word "diamond" alone shall not be used to describe synthetic diamonds no matter which basic material or methods are used. Products made in this way shall be clearly referred to as "synthetic diamond" and shall not be graded according to this document.

### 4.2 Composite stones/assembled stones

Composite stones/assembled stones shall be clearly identified and shall not be graded.

## 5 Mass and measurements

### 5.1 Mass

The mass of a diamond shall be expressed in metric carats (ct), one carat is equivalent to 200 mg (1/5 g). The mass of a diamond shall be stated in carats to two decimal places.

NOTE It is acceptable verbally to express one-hundredth of a carat as a “point”.

Mass shall be rounded upwards if the third decimal is a 9.

#### EXAMPLES

— 0,996 → 0,99 ct

— 0,998 → 0,99 ct

— 0,999 → 1,00 ct

Mass may be stated to three decimal places if the accuracy of the weighing equipment is accurate to this degree.

### 5.2 Measurements

The measurements of a diamond shall be expressed in millimetres to two decimal places.

The following measurements shall be contained in the diamond grading report ([Clause 18](#)):

- round shape: minimum diameter, maximum diameter and depth (total height);
- fancy shape: length, width and depth (total height). Length shall be the maximum measurement in the vertical line of the plotted diagram and width shall be the maximum measurement in the horizontal line of the plotted diagram.

## 6 Colour

### 6.1 General

Diamond colours shall be divided into the following three main categories (see [6.1.1](#), [6.1.2](#) and [6.1.3](#)).

NOTE For all main categories (see [6.1.1](#), [6.1.2](#) and [6.1.3](#)), photometric measurements intended for colour grade determination have no conclusive value at present.

#### 6.1.1 Colourless to yellow, brown and grey (D to L)

The colour of diamond within the D to L grade range shall be determined by visual comparison with masterstones of first or second generation which is equal in hue, tone and saturation to the official CIBJO set of masterstones for determining the colour grades. The determination shall be carried out by a trained observer with normal eyesight (see [3.4](#)) and colour discrimination, under an artificial light source, the specification for which ranges from D<sub>55</sub> to D<sub>65</sub> [International Commission on Illumination (CIE) standard illuminant].

The colour grade shall be described by the letter or letter range between D and L, (in capital letters) with or without the colour corresponding terms in [Tables 1](#) and [2](#).

Colour comparison shall refer to masterstones of first or second generation.

NOTE Optionally the hue of a diamond when different than yellow can be mentioned in addition to the colour grade.

#### 6.1.2 Colourless to yellow, brown and grey (M to Z)

Those colour grades are not currently covered by the present document.

### 6.1.3 Other hues

Apart from those diamonds referred to in [6.1.1](#) and [6.1.2](#) there are those diamonds that are darker in tone and/or higher in saturation than the Z colour grade and diamonds with other noticeable hues or tones and these are coloured diamonds. In this category, the specific term “fancy” shall precede the colour description of a coloured diamond.

### 6.2 Colour grades (colourless to yellow, brown and grey)

The colour grades that shall be used are given in [Table 1](#). The German, French, Italian, Chinese and Scandinavian equivalent terms shall be as given in [Table 2](#).

### 6.3 Colour grades (other than for yellow, brown and grey)

Diamonds with colours other than yellow, brown or grey, in which the colour is not visible in the face-up position, shall be graded in accordance with the colour grading scale (see [Table 1](#)). The grade shall be described either with the letter grade or by stating the term “faint” followed by the hue, or by both.

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Table 1 — Colour grading scale

CIBJO The World Jewellery Confederation	GIA Gemological Institute of America	NOTES
Exceptional white +	D	NOTE 1 For diamonds weighing under 0,47 ct, the grades D EW+ and E EW can be combined into one grade as Exceptional White or D-E.
Exceptional white	E	
Rare white +	F	NOTE 2 For diamonds weighing under 0,47 ct, the grades F RW+ and G RW can be combined into one grade as Rare White or F-G.
Rare white	G	
White	H	
Slightly tinted white	I	NOTE 3 Combined letter grades including and below I can be used. NOTE 4 For grades I to J the term "equivalent colour grade" can be used in conjunction with the letter grade for those diamonds that have brown or grey present.
Slightly tinted white	J	
Tinted white	K	NOTE 5 Combined letter grades including and below K can be used.
Tinted white	L	NOTE 6 For grades K to L the term "equivalent colour grade" can be used in conjunction with the letter grade for those diamonds that have brown or grey present.
Tinted	M	NOTE 7 Combined letter grades including and below M can be used. NOTE 8 Descriptions indicating the presence of brown or grey can be given for Grades M and below with or without using the letter grades if the hue / tone description is prefixed with "light".
	N	
	O	
	P	
	Q	
	R	
	S	
	T	
	U	
	V	
	W	
X		
Y		
Z		