



The National Association of Jewellers

Shaping the future of jewellery, together.

Diamond Terminology Guideline

Introduction & Reference

National Association of Jewellers (NAJ) together with nine of the leading diamond industry organisations (AWDC, CIBJO, GJEPC, IDI, IDMA, NDC, RJC, WDC and WFDB) endorses the present guideline to encourage full, fair and effective use of a clear and accessible terminology for diamonds, synthetics diamonds and imitations of diamonds by all sector bodies, organisations and traders.

This Diamond Terminology Guideline serves as a reference document for the diamond and jewellery trade when referring to diamonds and synthetic diamonds. It is built on two internationally accepted standards: the ISO 18323 Standard ("Jewellery – Consumer confidence in the diamond industry") and the CIBJO Diamond Blue Book.

Definitions

- A diamond is a mineral created by nature; a "diamond" always means a natural diamond.
- A synthetic diamond is an artificial product that has essentially the same physical characteristics as a diamond.
- An imitation diamond, also named a diamond simulant, is an artificial product that imitates the appearance of diamonds without having their chemical composition, physical properties or structure.
- A gemstone is a mineral of natural origin that is used in jewellery for reasons of combined beauty, rareness and intrinsic value.

When and where to use the Diamond Terminology Guideline

The leadership of NAJ, AWDC, CIBJO, GJEPC, IDI, IDMA, NDC, RJC, WDC and WFDB strongly recommend all traders, sector bodies and other organisations to comply with the guideline on all documents, websites and other means of communication that are intended to e.g. sell, buy and promote diamonds, synthetic diamonds, gemstones, gemmological laboratory reports, diamond jewellery and synthetic diamond jewellery.

Terminology

- When referring to synthetic diamonds:
 - Use one of the following authorised qualifiers when referring to synthetic diamonds: "synthetic", "laboratory-grown" or "laboratory-created".
 - Do not use abbreviations such as "lab-grown" and "lab-created".
 - Do not use the following terms: "cultured diamonds" and "cultivated diamonds" as "cultured" and "cultivated" refer exclusively to organic/biogenic products.
 - Do not use the following terms: "real", "genuine", "precious", "authentic" and "natural" as those apply exclusively to natural minerals and gemstones.
- A diamond is natural by definition. Therefore, use the word "diamond" without a qualifier when referring to a diamond. If differentiation from synthetic diamonds is required, use the term "natural diamonds" as term of equivalent meaning.
- Do not use the following confusing expressions: "natural treated diamonds" and "treated natural diamonds". Instead, simply use "treated diamonds".

Supported by:



Interpreting the Diamond Terminology Guidelines

Diamonds, synthetic diamonds and diamond simulants are different products catering to different markets with different value propositions.

Did you know?

Retailers and suppliers have an obligation to disclose clearly and accurately the nature of the product they are selling - whether the information has been requested or not. Best practice is to provide the consumer with information before the purchase. For example, on the website alongside the product, and verbally and in writing in store.

Definitions set acceptable terminology:

A diamond is a 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. A diamond always means a natural diamond.

A synthetic diamond is an artificial (man-made) product that has essentially the same chemical composition, crystal structure and physical (including optical) properties as a diamond.

A diamond simulant is a product (natural or artificial) that imitates the appearance of a diamond without having its chemical composition, physical properties or structure. Examples are cubic zirconia, moissanite, white sapphire and yttrium aluminium garnet.

Diamond simulants may also include items made from other products or gemstones that have then been coated in synthetic diamond.

In summary...

A diamond is natural by definition. Therefore, using the term diamond vs synthetic diamond is sufficient to differentiate between the two types; there is no need to use the term natural.

A word of warning

Confusing expressions such as natural treated diamond or treated natural diamond should not be used. In these instances, treated diamond would suffice. Beware - there are treated synthetic diamonds too.

Other examples of misleading terms include real diamond hybrid, cultured diamond, vegan diamond, Type IIa diamond, CVD diamond, HPHT diamond or eco-friendly diamond.

The United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has produced its own subtly different guidance on diamond terminology, but this is not recognised for diamonds sold outside the US.

What does 'Assured Advice' mean?

The NAJ has successfully raised the Diamond Terminology Guideline to the status of Primary Authority Advice which is assured and recognised by Trading Standards in the UK market.

The 'Assured Advice' is designed to benefit consumers and protect NAJ Members, rather than prosecute those who do not follow the rules. Those ignoring the Diamond Terminology Guideline could be deemed to be in breach of consumer protection laws if a customer feels they have been mis-sold or misguided.

naj.co.uk/member-documents

Why not view NAJ's consumer advice for buying diamonds?

naj.co.uk/advice/buying-diamonds

Or scan the QR code with your phone's camera to view the diamond terminology video.

