

## TIPS AND HOW TO

# Find the Perfect Engagement Ring this Valentine's Day

NewsUSA

(NU) - Preparing to pop the question this Valentine's Day, but unsure how to choose the right engagement ring? Read on for all the tools you need to make the perfect pick!

While choosing an engagement ring can be exciting, the variety of settings, precious metals, and diamonds can be overwhelming. However, the following tips will help you in finding the ideal diamond engagement ring.

### Set your price limit.

Before you start shopping, know how much you want to spend. There is no right or wrong amount to put toward a ring, and many beautiful stones and styles are available to suit any budget. It's important to note that lab-grown diamonds can be up to 40 percent less expensive than mined stones.

### Learn the "4 C's" of diamonds.

These are: cut, color, clarity, and carat. Here's the translation:

**Cut:** The cut of a diamond is the most important factor in determining its fire, brilliance, and sparkle.

**Color:** Not all diamonds are clear; some have varying tints of yellow.

**Clarity:** A measure of the number of flaws or inclusions in the stone.

**Carat:** A measure of the weight of the diamond. However, more weight also indicates a bigger size.

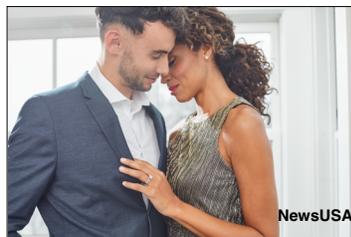
### Consider shape.

The common diamond shapes used in engagement rings are round, cushion, pear, oval, princess, radiant, and emerald.

Each of these shapes has its fans and distinctive features. For example, a round diamond is the classic engagement ring style, but the larger facets of a cushion style can enhance brilliance, and the elongated emerald cut presents a bold look that can make a diamond appear larger than its carat weight.

### Choose a setting.

Deciding the right setting or diamond shape for your stone is a per-



**Pictured: A princess-shaped lab-created diamond bridal set.**

sonal decision. Some people have specific ideas for a setting, and take more time on the stone, or vice versa.

However, not all settings accommodate all shapes so it's important to prioritize one or the other if you are set on a particular shape or setting.

Typical engagement ring styles include the solitaire, a simple band that showcases any diamond shape; halo, in which a central stone is surrounded by smaller diamonds; classic, which features a row of accent diamonds along the ring band; and vintage, which replicates design styles from different time periods.

### Contemplate your center stone.

When it comes to your center stone, there are a few different options to choose from. Although diamonds are the most popular, birthstones, moissanite, and cubic zirconia are also great budget-friendly options.

In regards to diamonds, there are two types to choose from: mined diamonds and lab-created diamonds.

While mined diamonds are extracted from the earth, lab-grown stones are guaranteed to be ethically sourced and, as mentioned above, up to 40 percent less expensive.

Both types are identical in terms of chemistry and physical appearance. However, interest in lab-created diamonds has surged in recent years as more couples are concerned with sustainability, as well as beauty and romance.