

Diamond Scams

When it comes to diamonds, there are numerous scams to avoid. Most scams are minor, but there are some major ones that come up from time to time concerning the buying and selling of diamonds. Scams occur simply because most people who buy diamonds - for whatever reasons - don't know that much about diamonds. Therefore, they are easily fooled.

A common scam that most jewelry stores participate in is the Carat Total Weight scam. The tag on the piece of jewelry, usually a ring, only states the total carat weight of all diamonds in the piece, instead of listing the total weights separately for each diamond. This leads consumers to believe that the main diamond in the piece is actually bigger than it is. Ask what the total carat weight of the center stone is. Also beware of fractions. Jewelry stores are allowed to round off diamond weights. This means that if the jeweler tells you that it is a $\frac{3}{4}$ carat diamond, it is probably between $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ carat - but closer to $\frac{3}{4}$.

Jewelry stores often run 'fluorescence' scams to varying degrees. Referring to a diamond as a blue-white diamond is such a scam. A blue-white diamond sounds very unique and special, but in fact, this type of diamond is of lesser quality - even though the jeweler will try to make you think you are getting something special. Jewelry stores also like to show their diamonds in bright lights. Lights make diamonds shine. Ask to see the diamond in a different, darker type of lighting as well.

Some truly unscrupulous jewelers target those who want appraisals on diamonds

that were given to them as gifts or that were purchased elsewhere. They will try to tell you that the diamond is worthless, or worth less than it actually is worth - and offer to take it off your hands or trade it for a much better diamond, along with the cash to make up the difference. This is called low balling. Get a second, third, and even a forth opinion before taking any action.

Another common dirty trick is to switch the diamond you have chosen and paid for with one of lesser quality and value when you leave it to be set in a piece of jewelry, or leave a diamond ring to be sized. The only way to avoid this is to do business with one trustworthy jeweler. Avoid jewelers that you have not done business with in the past.

There are many more scams that jewelry stores commonly pull on unsuspecting consumers. Just use your best judgment, and purchase your diamonds with the utmost care and consideration.

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