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Engagement rings are the most timeless, classic expression of love and commitment in modern civilization. When you meet that special woman—the one who wins your heart and makes you yearn for a lifetime together, choosing the perfect engagement ring is the next step toward forever.

Where to Shop for Engagement Rings

It used to be that marriage proposals began with a trip to the local jeweler. While this is still a great place to browse engagement rings, the most efficient way to educate yourself on important facets of diamond shopping, such as quality and value assessment, is through online diamond retailers. These outlets are also the best way to browse the largest selection, and even play with tools that help you to design your own ring if you're so inclined. Because the online jewelry industry has become highly competitive, this is also the venue in which you are likely to find the best price of engagement rings.

Types of Engagement Rings

It only takes a matter of seconds to discover that the choices are practically unlimited when it comes to shopping for engagement rings. Where to start? One way to narrow down the selection is to browse different styles by category. For example, there are solitaire engagement rings that stand alone, designed to be matched with a wedding band later on (this is a very traditional option), but there are also rings which feature diamond accents and various other gemstones for a little extra color and flair. Vintage style rings are making a big comeback, as well, as they carry with them a certain nostalgic quality—a sense of romance based in the idea of the timelessness of the love you share.

Getting the Most for Your Money

Budget is a proprietary concern when it comes to engagement rings. Yet, even in a tough economy, the diamond industry still thrives. That's because people don't "cut-back" when it comes to their love for a lifetime. There are ways, however, in which you can use your consumer savvy to ensure that you are getting the most "ring" for your hard-earned money. First, there is the issue of carat weight. It's natural to assume that a bigger diamond is going to be more expensive, but this is only true if the two diamonds you are comparing are of equal color and clarity. In some cases, people opt for a diamond of slightly lesser quality in exchange for being able to afford a larger solitaire, as minor differences are often invisible to the naked eye. Similarly, certain cuts of diamond appear larger than others, even though the stones are of equal carat weight. The more facets a diamond has, the greater the sparkle factor, regardless of its shape or size.

Knowing where to begin your search for engagement rings is half the battle. From there, simply determine what you're looking for as far as style is concerned, and follow these tips for getting the most "ring" for your money.

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Alexandra Gulkin is a reporter, writer and columnist in the jewelry industry. She is celebrated for her real-time coverage of trade shows, jewelry trends in a [engagement rings](#), gemstones, events and secrets on where to find the highest quality a [diamond engagement rings](#).

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