



CREATING THE PERFECT ENGAGEMENT RING

BY JESSICA GULLET

You'll be wearing it every day for the rest of your life, so it's got to be perfect. Getting the ideal engagement ring is no longer a matter of hoping, wishing, or dropping gargantuan sized hints. Just create it yourself!

Don't worry; you don't have to smelt or mine to create your own engagement ring. Many of the top jewelers offer simple "design your own engagement ring" features on their websites. If you can point and click with your handy little mouse, then you can design your own engagement ring.

Novori.com is an excellent example of how these easy (and fun!) features work. With this site, you start out by choosing your setting. You can opt for the traditional solitaire or browse the unique tulip col-

lection. Each of the six setting categories contains numerous rings to choose from.

Straight off the bat you'll see that these sites are upfront about cost. The price of each piece, which varies depending on the metal you select, is clearly listed. A running tally of the total cost is displayed at the top of the page so you can make sure you're staying in budget.

Then it's on to the gems. Novori.com lets you narrow down your options by shape, price, and/or carat. Knowing a bit about how diamonds are classified and graded will be an enormous help during this phase of the designing process. For the ultimate in personalization, educate yourself about terms such as clarity, polish, symmetry, and girdle.

To thine own self be true, Shakespeare tells us, and that sage advice certainly applies to creating your engagement ring. The main benefit of designing your own ring is that the finished product will perfectly suit your personal tastes and lifestyle.

When it comes to diamonds, no one exactly wants to think *practical*, but it's a good idea to keep your typical day in mind when you're creating your ring. For example, if you work with your hands, a ring with a high setting or delicate design could get damaged.

Also, consider the jewelry and accessories you already own. Do you find yourself wearing mostly yellow gold or silver? Is your wardrobe simple and classic or do you gravitate towards the dramatic and elaborate? The full-color images of each ring, including multiple angles, offered by sites such as Novori.com help you get a feel for the style and silhouette of the design.

With hundreds of settings combined with tens of thousands of diamonds, the engagement ring you create will truly be one of a kind. Now when Mr. Wonderful gets down on one knee, you'll already know what's in that little velvet box. And you won't have to ponder whether "yes to you, no to the ring" is an acceptable answer to the Big Question. ●