

GIA CHANGES LAB-GROWN DIAMOND GRADING SERVICE: WHAT TO KNOW

Brecken Branstrator, GIA GG

GIA's new lab-grown diamond grading services officially begin Oct. 1.

The previous system of grading lab-grown diamonds used the same nomenclature as for natural diamonds on a digital-only report. After Sept. 30, GIA's new Laboratory-Grown Diamond Quality Assessment will use descriptive terms "premium" and "standard" to describe lab-grown diamonds, based on an overall assessment of clarity, color, and cut, on a printed report.

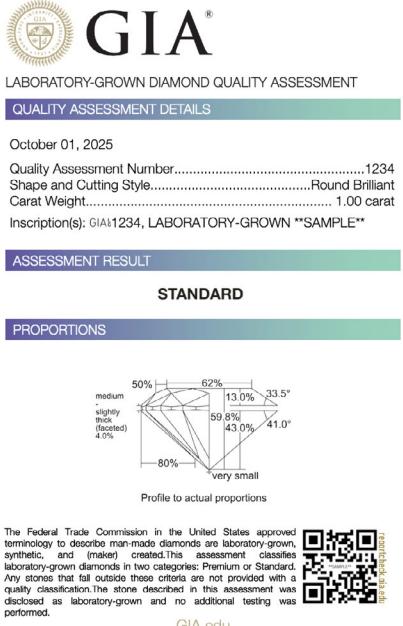
To be classified as "premium," a lab-grown diamond must meet all of the following criteria: VVS clarity or higher; D color; excellent polish and symmetry; and an excellent cut grade for round brilliants.

Lab-grown diamonds that meet any combination of the "premium" criteria and another minimum criterion set will be classified as "standard." Those minimum criteria are: VS clarity; E to J in color; very good polish and very good symmetry (or good for fancy shapes); and a very good cut grade for round brilliants.

Any diamond that doesn't meet all the minimum criteria for "standard" won't receive a designation from GIA.

The minimum size for submission for this GIA service is 0.15 carats. The fee for the GIA Laboratory-Grown Diamond Quality Assessment is \$15 per carat, with a minimum fee of \$15. Submissions that don't meet the minimum criteria for assessment will carry a \$5 evaluation fee.

GIA said the move is intended to help consumers understand the important differences in the two prod-



The image shows a sample of the GIA Laboratory-Grown Diamond Quality Assessment report. It features the GIA logo at the top, followed by the title "LABORATORY-GROWN DIAMOND QUALITY ASSESSMENT". Below this is a "QUALITY ASSESSMENT DETAILS" section with a green header. It contains the date "October 01, 2025", the quality assessment number "1234", and details about the diamond: "Shape and Cutting Style.....Round Brilliant", "Carat Weight.....1.00 carat", and "Inscription(s): GIA1234, LABORATORY-GROWN **SAMPLE**".

Below this is an "ASSESSMENT RESULT" section with a green header. It shows the word "STANDARD" in large letters. Underneath is a "PROPORTIONS" section with a green header. It includes a diagram of a diamond profile with various measurements: 50%, 62%, 13.0%, 33.5°, 59.8%, 43.0%, and 41.0°. The text "Profile to actual proportions" is written below the diagram. At the bottom of the report, there is a note about the Federal Trade Commission's approval of the terminology, a QR code, and the GIA.edu website.

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October 01, 2025
 Quality Assessment Number.....1234
 Shape and Cutting Style.....Round Brilliant
 Carat Weight.....1.00 carat
 Inscription(s): GIA1234,
 LABORATORY-GROWN **SAMPLE**
 Assessment Result.....Standard

medium
 slightly
 thick
 (tautened)
 4.0%

50% 62% 13.0% 33.5°
 59.8% 43.0% 41.0°
 80% very small

Profile to actual proportions

The Federal Trade Commission in the United States approved terminology to describe man-made diamonds are laboratory-grown, synthetic, and (make) created. The assessment classifies laboratory-grown diamonds in two categories: Premium or Standard. Any stones that fall outside these criteria are not provided with a quality classification. The stone described in this assessment was disclosed as laboratory-grown and no additional testing was performed.


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ucts' origin, ensuring their confidence and helping them make informed and educated decisions.

"More than 95% of laboratory-grown diamonds entering the market fall into a very narrow range of color and clarity," Tom Moses, GIA executive vice president and chief laboratory and research officer, said in a June press release first announcing the news. "Because of that, it is no longer relevant for GIA to describe man-made diamonds using the nomenclature created for the continuum of color and clarity of natural diamonds."

GIA is not known for being one of the go-to labs for synthetic diamond grading, so it's not a market-altering move, but it does reflect the current state of the lab-grown market in terms of make-up. Because of

improvements in the manufacturing process, most synthetic diamonds are now of the best quality, meaning, for example, that D color and VVS quality are a lot less rare for synthetics, begging the very question about whether natural and lab-grown should be graded the same when rarity levels are so different between them. (Look for a full analysis on the lab-grown market make-up and prices in GemGuide's November/December 2025 issue.)

HRD Antwerp, meanwhile, announced it will stop grading loose lab-grown diamonds next year. It will continue to research the stones and will still issue

reports for jewelry set with lab-grown diamonds, but is instead turning its focus to natural diamonds and the city's role in that space. It's not a huge move for the lab, which told JCK that lab-grown have accounted for only a "mid-single-digit" percentage of its business.

IGI, meanwhile, which is known for being a go-to for lab-grown diamond reports, has indicated it has no plans to change the way it grades the stones, sticking with its standard diamond grading factors for both natural and lab-grown. ♦

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