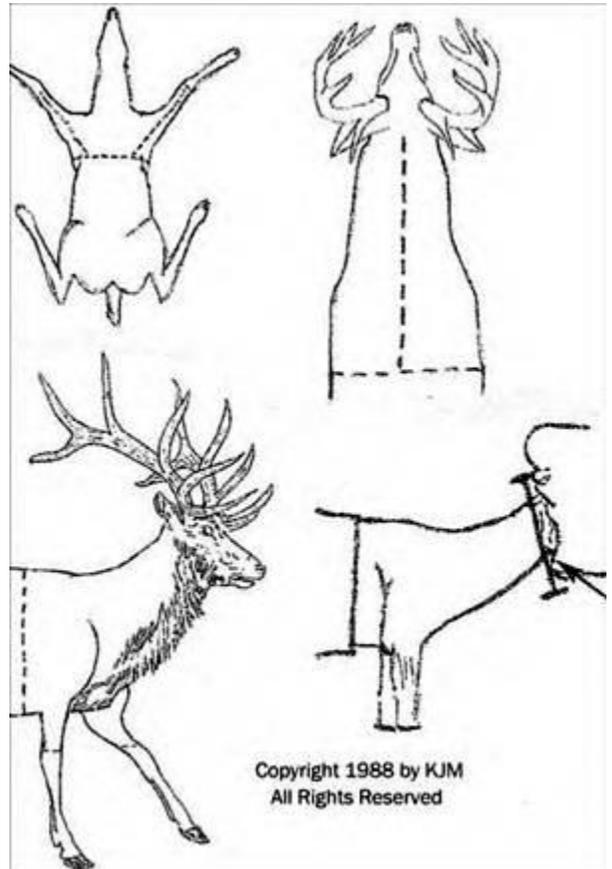


PREPARE BEFORE THE HUNT

Many trophy game specimens are ruined every year due to the wrong and incorrect type of field care. If you will follow the directions below, you will not have any problems with your trophy. Also, the taxidermist will not charge you extra for repair or replacement of skins, hides or capes. All you have to do is deliver it to the taxidermist. It is better to allow a professional taxidermist, or other trained and experienced person, fully cape and perform all of the detailed game head skinning. This includes the turning of the ears and nose and the splitting of lips and associated facial fleshing. Most taxidermists charge extra for this service and it is well worth the small cost to insure the quality of your raw skin, hide and cape. Remember; if at all possible, FREEZE your trophy as soon as possible until delivery to the taxidermist. NEVER ALLOW THE SKIN TO AIR DRY!

The general guidelines for skin, hide and cape care:

- 1) Never let any skin, hide or cape sit in the sun or near any source of heat. Do NOT allow the skin to air dry. Cool the skin quickly. Never let it just lay around. Freeze it if you cannot work on it right away.
- 2) Never slit or cut the throat of any game animal. Do NOT cut up into the brisket or chest area of the cape while field dressing. If possible, consider removing the cape and head of the animal before you field dress it.
- 3) After skinning, always remove all of the fat, meat and flesh that were left on during the skinning process.
- 4) If needed, and if possible to do so, wash the skin in cold water and drain. This will remove any blood, dirt or other fluids which have contaminated the hair and could cause staining and or hair slippage.
- 5) Try NOT to cut the skin in the skinning and fleshing process. Take your time and do a good job. No sense in ruining a trophy by rushing your work.
- 6) Always place the skins on a sloped surface to allow all excess fluids to drain and help prevent any pools of blood or other fluids.
- 7) Always use plenty of salt. Salt everything! You can NOT over salt! Use Hay and Stock salt-- same grind as table salt, but non-iodized. Never use rock salt.
- 8) Always leave plenty of skin for a full shoulder head mount. Leave more than enough.
- 9) Always skin out the paws and hoofs on life size skins to the last joint in the toes and pack this area with salt.
- 10) Never put a fresh skin, hide or cape in a plastic bag. This will cause everything to spoil and hair to slip. Use a porous bag like burlap or other mesh material for storage and shipment of salted and semi-dry (75%) skins. Of course, if you are going to freeze it, place the skin in a plastic bag the moment before you put it into your deep freezer.
- 11) Never use wire on any skin. Use nylon ties, string, rope or other non-staining material.
- 12) Never drag, pull or push skins on the ground or over rocks, sticks, etc. Never pick up the animal by the ears or by a handful of hair.
- 13) Deliver your trophy as soon as possible to the taxidermist. You can freeze the head, skin, cape until delivery to the taxidermist.



- 14) Always save every head skin or cape that you are not going to use. If legal, you can sell these capes and skins to help offset the cost of your hunt.
- 15) Considering all of the diseases and cross infection possibilities to humans, ALWAYS use surgical gloves when field dressing, skinning, etc.
- 16) Use flea and tick spray or powder and other suitable chemicals on the skin, hide or cape to kill ticks, fleas and related vermin. Keep away from meat.

How to skin almost any animal for a full shoulder mount:

Make a circular cut around the entire animal five inches behind the shoulders. (See TOP diagram)

- 1) Cut the skin around the legs three inches above the knee joint. Slit the skin on the back of the legs up to and joining the body cut. (See diagram to RIGHT)
- 2) Pull and peel the skin forward using the knife as required, up to the base of the skull, exposing the juncture of the spine and head. Or, starting at the base of the skull split the skin following the center of the spine down the back to the first circular cut. The skin will now open up like a shirt and is somewhat easier to finish skinning. Just make sure your cut is straight and true. Large game such as moose will have to be split and opened up this way due to size and weight.
- 3) Pulling the skin out of the way, cut through this junction of spine and neck meat at the base of the skull with your knife & using a saw - if needed. Once the spine is severed and the surrounding meat is cut through, simply grab the antlers, horns or head and twist the head with the attached cape, off of the body.
- 4) At this point in time, spread the skin open and allow the natural body heat to dissipate for twenty minutes or so. Do NOT allow skin to air dry. Keep the head and attached cape as cold as possible or keep frozen until delivery to the taxidermist.



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