

Jimmy McGuire's Taxidermy
1206 Cynthia Road
Clinton, MS 39056
601-925-8775



Proper Field Care

****Proper field care of your trophy is essential to a quality mount****

Big Game

Once it is down, you will need to skin it as soon as possible. This is so the hide will cool off. **Heat is the enemy.** Heat causes bacteria to grow and bacteria causes' hair to fall out. When a skin is ruined, it is caused by improper care in the field. With skin, clean off blood, dirt, leaves, and freeze as soon as possible. If it is 70 degrees outside, you only have a few hours. If it is 30 degrees, you have a day or two. Be sure it is in a sealed plastic bag to prevent freezer burn.

Birds

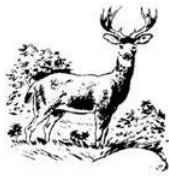
Clean off any loose debris, and lightly rinse and blot dry any blood on the feathers. Plug the mouth, nostrils, and any wound with pieces of paper towel, to keep any seepage from staining the feathers. It is optional to slide the bird into an old pair of nylon stockings, head first, to protect and hold the feathers down and in place. Carefully place the bird in one or two layers of plastic bag, tie shut, and freeze immediately. For ducks it is essential that you retrieve it yourself as a dog's mouth will pull feathers loose or even rip skin.

Full Mounts

Animal's coyote size and smaller should be brought in whole. **Do not** belly cut. Clean the specimen off, place a little paper towel in any area where blood is seeping, such as a wound, mouth, nose, etc. to absorb blood and keep it out of the hair or fur. Then place in a plastic bag, tie shut and freeze at 0 degrees or below.

Games Heads

When skinning for a shoulder mount, it is better to cut too long than too short. With the animal laying on its side, poke your knife into the side skin, blade edge up, starting behind the trailing edge of the front leg. Then imagine a straight line going up to the animal's back. Slowly cut up heading to the spine. It is better to angle slightly back towards the tail, than towards the head. After you have made your incision up one side, roll the specimen over to its other side.



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Games Heads (continued):

Now continue your cut from where you stopped your last cut at the spine, and cut down to behind the trailing edge of the other front leg. Continue this incision across circumference incision that you've already made around the body, make a perpendicular cut over to, and then down a couple of inches, of both trailing edges of the front legs. Now make a perpendicular cut from the bottom of the trailing edge leg cuts, all the way around the upper leg to separate the upper leg skin from the rest of the leg. With one hand holding the edge of the skin and the other hand cutting, carefully work the knife between the skin and muscle. Keep working all the way around, working towards the head, rolling the skin back like you were inverting a sock. When you have worked the skin like this all the way to the back of the head, you can stop. Let the taxidermist skin out the head.

For the taxidermist to have enough neck left to measure to acquire a proper fit, use a saw starting approximately 3" back from the head to cut through the neck and separate. Now make sure the cape is clean of debris and blood on the face, ears, or hair, is rinsed off. Then place in a plastic bag and tie shut. Either REFRIGERATE OR FREEZE depending on how soon you can deliver it to a taxidermist.

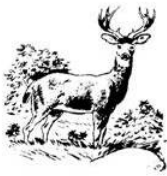
Fish

For skin mounts: Lay fish flat with fins flat against fish and freeze fish in one or two plastic bag, **never gut the fish**

For replicas: Measure total length and girth of fish. Take good photographs of fish for color.

Antelopes

You have to be very careful with antelopes. If you fold the hide up (flesh to flesh) and toss it in the freeze, the hair may slip at the folds. Antelope hair is a very good insulator. If folded up while warm, it can retain that heat for a long time. Spread it out as open as possible and cool it off. Then bunch up the hide skin side out, put in a plastic bag and freeze. Absolutely no blood on antelope hair, it will stain.



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Correct Hide Care

Dos & Don'ts

DO:

- * Treat the skin like food
- * Remove all pieces of fat and meat from the skin
- * Cool the skin off as quickly as possible
- * Freeze the skin if you cannot immediately take it to a taxidermist. Animal hair is a great insulator, so turn the hide skin side out (hair side to hair side) and spread it out in the freeze for ½ hour or so to cool, then bunch (not roll) the skin up and put it in a plastic bag (or two!) And freeze it solid. It will last a long time frozen, but it must be in a plastic bag to prevent freeze burn.
- * Cut the cape on deer, elk, etc. well behind the shoulders and the brisket (lower front)

DON'T:

- * Cut the throat or anything on the front (throat) side of a deer, elk, antelope, etc.
- * Salt the hide unless you completely skin the head (and the feet on a bear), turn the ears and split the lips of the animal
- * Leave the skin in the sun
- * Put the skin where it is warm, like the part of your pickup bed over the hot exhaust pipe!
- * Cruise around for a week with the hide in the back of your car or pickup and expect to keep all the hair on it! (people really do this!!!)
- * Get blood on the hair or horns. It can stain them.