



# Wolfgang Schenk Taxidermy

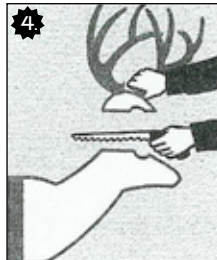
## SKINNING TROPHIES

The proper care of trophy skins and scalps in the field is the first step – and a most important one – in the production of fine mounted trophies. No special tools or equipment are necessary. A good hunting or skinning knife, or even a pocket knife, will do. Salt is necessary for the preservation of any green skin and should be apart of every outfit. Prompt action and conscientious attention are most important.



**1** HEAD AND SHOULDER MOUNTS – Skin heads as shown in diagram. Make initial cut along back of neck and a second cut forming a „T“ running to the base of the horns. Cut carefully around the horns or antlers and cut the skin away from the base. On antlered game, a heavy screwdriver is useful in prying skin loose around the antlers.

**2** HEADS – Cut ear cartilage from skull on the inside and clean meat away from the base of ear. (Skin out the back sides of the ears to approximately within one quarter inch of the edges.) Skin down the skull, being careful not to cut through the skin, especially around the eyes. Preserve the eyelids. Use the fingers of the free hand as a guide on the outside to be certain you are not cutting into the lids.



**3** LIPS – The lips should be cut close to the skull, leaving the lips attached to the skin. The inside of the lips should then be slit.

**4** SCALPS – Make sure scalps are cut long enough for the type of mount desired. Shoulder mounts show more of the true form and character of the animal. Scalps for these mounts should be cut at the forelegs in order to include enough of the brisket for a full shoulder mount. It is not necessary to clean the skull. The top of the skull with horns or antlers attached is all that is needed. Merely saw off the top of the skull through center of eyes after skinning is completed.

**LIFE-SIZE ANTLERED MOUNTS** – The preparation of skins for life-size mounting requires considerable care and effort. The first cut on horned or antlered animals should be from the brisket to the end of the tail as shown in the diagram. The cuts on the legs should be at the rear of the limbs from the hoofs to the center line cut as shown in the diagrams. The head should be skinned in the same manner as for a head mount, but do not detach the scalp from the rest of the hide. In other words, on horned or antlered game cut from the top of the shoulder to between the horns or antlers. Then make „T“ cut as shown in diagram **1** on this page. Skin out the body. Skin the legs out to the hoofs and remove the bones, but leave the hoofs attached to the skin.

**RUGS OR LIFE-SIZE MOUNTS** – Bears, Lions, Bobcats, Coyotes, and other similar animals should be skinned in the same way whether the skin is intended for a rug or a life-size mounting. Cut throat to approximately three inches from bottom of jaw and peel head skin off. Never cut through the lip line. From the center of the throat, continue to cut straight out to the end of the tail. Legcuts are made from the center of the pads up the back of the legs to the center cut. Skin out the feet to the last joints leaving the claws attached to the hide. The skinning of the head requires the same careful attention to lips, eyes, and ears as other game heads. Be sure not to remove the pads on the feet if the animals are to be mounted life-size.

**SMALL ANIMALS** – Animals smaller than a fox need not be skinned if you have access to a freezer. The animal may be wrapped in burlap or cloth and placed in a freezer. After frozen, it should then be shipped as soon as possible to prevent freezer burn. Please pack with dry ice and ship so it arrives during the middle of the week rather than on a weekend.

**SALTING** – Salting and drying hides is of utmost importance. The first step is to remove all excess flesh and fat from scalps or skin so that the salt may penetrate the pores. The skin may be fleshed with a two-handed knife or a hunting knife. In camp or in the field, this work may be made easier by laying the skin over a smooth log where it may be held firmly in place with the body while surplus tissue is pared off with a downward and forward movement. After fleshing, the skin should be laid flat and salted thoroughly. The ears should be turned inside out and salted, and care taken to dress the slit inside lipswell with salt. Make sure there are no folds or wrinkles in the skin. Where skin folds and remains unsalted, it will decay causing hair slip. Be sure to use sufficient salt. Rubbing it into the skin with the hands is the best way to be sure of getting it over the entire skin. The edges or flanks of skins must not be neglected as unsalted areas will decay.

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