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### **Small Mammals**

*Animals, coyote sized or smaller, should not be skinned unless by a professional. Don't gut the animal. Small mammals, especially carnivores, will spoil quickly because of their thin hide and bacteria. If you can't take the small game animal immediately to a taxidermist, as soon as the carcass cools completely, put it in a plastic bag and freeze it. With the epidemic of rabies evident in many areas of the country, take every safety measure necessary when handling your game.*

### **Fish**

Do not gut your fish.

If you cannot take your fish immediately to a taxidermist, wrap it in a very wet towel and put it in a plastic bag, making sure all the fins are flat against the fish's body (to prevent breakage) and freeze it. A fish frozen in this manner can safely be kept in the freezer for months.



Call If you have any questions glad to help.  
I also have a video on caping a deer come be  
and receive a free copy.

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Randleman, NC  
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# **Taylor's Taxidermy**

## **How to cape your trophy**

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Come and see for your self, over 25 years of experience.

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## Methods of skinning

There are two major methods of skinning for a large life-size mount such as deer, elk, or bear. These methods are the flat incision and the dorsal method.



Figure 1

### The Flat Incision

The flat incision is used for rug mounts and for a variety of poses. The areas to be cut are shown in Figure 1. Makes these slits (cutting the feet free from the carcass) and pull the skin off the carcass. The head is detached as with the shoulder mount.

## The Dorsal Method

### For Life size mounts.

The dorsal method of skinning involves a long slit down the back (From the tail base up into the neck). The carcass is skinned as it is pulled through this incision. The feet/hooves and the head are cut off from the carcass as with a shoulder mount explained later. Only use this method with approval and detailed instruction from your taxidermist. Use this method only when the skin can be frozen quickly after skinning.

## Caping a deer

With a sharp knife, slit the hide circling the body behind the shoulder at approximately the midway point of the rib cage behind the front legs. Slit the skin around the legs just above the knees. An additional slit will be needed from the back of the leg and joining the body cut behind the legs. Try not to cut into the white arm pit area.



Peel the skin forward up to the ears and jaw exposing the head/neck junction. Cut into the neck approximately three inches down from this junction. Circle the neck, cutting down to the spinal column. After this cut is complete, grasp the antler bases, and twist the head off the neck. This should allow the hide to be rolled up and put in a freezer until transported.

These cuts should allow ample hide for the taxidermist to work with in mounting. Remember, the taxidermist can cut off excess hide, but he can't add what he doesn't

