



Sika Country Taxidermy Ltd.

984 Poihipi Road, RD1, Taupo 3377, New Zealand

p: +64 7 378 4908

e: info@sikacountrytaxidermy.co.nz

Skinning instructions for rug mount or flat skin

Rug mount instructions are useful for bear, zebra and big cats, while flat skins are used for anything else.

Opening cuts – When skinning an animal for a rug mount; cut down the inside of the legs to the centre of the centre of the chest and belly. Make sure the cuts are identical on either side of the body. Cut up the centre of the belly to the top of the throat. Punch the skin off the body as much as you can. Use a knife for the rest taking care to keep the skin as clean and free of meat as possible. Remove the bones in the paws if possible, otherwise cut the leg bones off. Make sure the skin has been knifed away from the bone, so there is room for salt.

To remove the skin from the head: skin down the sides of the head, cutting off the ears close to the skull. Next is the eye, insert your index finger into the back corner of the eye and lift the skin, cutting at the same time as close as possible to the bone. Be careful not to cut through the skin at the front of the eye. Next we come to the mouth – insert your finger into the corner of the mouth and pull the lip away while cutting close to the bone. Leave as much lip skin as possible. Cut through the nostril cartilage leaving about 15mms of the nostril tubes on the skin.

If you don't want the hooves and head on the flat skin, simply cut the skin off just above the hooves and at the base of the neck.

The skin is off – if you are at home roll up skin to skin, seal in a plastic bag, label and freeze it. If you are freezing the skin: **DON'T** salt it (as salt lowers the freezing point).

If you remain in the field for more than a couple of days you will have to split the lips and nostrils, turn the ears and salt the skin:

Hold the lips between the thumb and forefinger and open up with your knife. This is done to enable the salt to penetrate to the hair roots.

You will also have to split the nose cartilage down the middle between the nostril openings. Salt will only penetrate about 5mm of flesh, so anything thicker has to be thinned down.

To turn the ears, cut between the ear cartilage and the skin at the back of the ear until the ear cartilage is clearly seen. Then with a spoon handle or steel etc, carefully push up between the skin and the cartilage to the tip and edges of the ear. Turn inside out and remove the flesh from the ear butt. Don't remove the ear cartilage.

Spread the skin out and liberally cover with **PLAIN** salt and rub in and out to the edges ensuring it is completely covered. Make sure there is plenty of salt around the bullet hole, face and hooves. Roll up skin to skin and place in a muslin type bag to drain in a cool shady place – **DON'T PUT IT IN A PLASTIC BAG**. Leave for 24 hours and resalt. The average skin will require between 2 - 4 kg of plain salt depending on size.

The skull can be boiled - adding a table spoon of washing powder to your boiling water can help remove

the oils and break down the flesh quicker. Only boil until the meat falls off the skull. Soak in cold water and scrape the meat off, making sure the nose and brain cavity is clean.

