

How to Clean, Whiten and Mount a Whitetail Deer Skull in 24 hours --- By Dennis



From the field to the wall in 24 hours; you'll love whitening and mounting your own trophy.

This Do it Yourself project should take between 3 – 6 hours of labor throughout the course of 1-2 days.

If you can't begin the process cleaning right away after harvest of the deer just store the head in a freezer – this will stop any staining. Take the head out of the freezer about 24-hours before starting the cleaning and whitening process to give the meat plenty of time to thaw.

Here is what you will need to get started.



- 1. A sharp filet knife**
- 2. A Short stiff pocket knife**
- 3. Long needle nose plyers 12"**
- 4. A turkey baster or smaller similar type syringe**
- 5. A long Philips screwdriver 12"**
- 6. A high-pressure garden hose with adjustable nozzle**
- 7. Outdoor propane cooker (with a regulator) or understanding wife who lets you do this in the kitchen**
- 8. A large pot**
- 9. Rectangular container to place to skull in**
- 10. Rubber gloves**
- 11. Eye protection**
- 12. Apron to wear while washing**
- 13. Bottle of 40 volume peroxide**
- 14. Arm & Hammer Super Washing Soda or Borax, (used in removing smaller, more stubborn pieces of meat that's stuck to the skull)**

TIP - Never use bleach when whitening a skull as it could cause serious, irreversible damage to your trophy

1. Fill a large pot of water; it should be big enough to completely submerge the deer's skull



TIP - Don't get too much water covering the antlers because it may remove natural color from them.

2. Add ½ cup Arm and Hammer Super Soda Wash into the water along with 3 table spoons of liquid dish soap (any brand), this will degrease the skull and loosen the flesh.
3. Start skinning and de-fleshing the skull, clean off the head as best as possible, removing all excess meat.

TIP : Once the water has started to boil turn the burner down just enough so that it does not overflow

4. Once you've cleaned the skull as best as you can, place it into your pot of boiling water. Ensure the water covers all the meat on the back of the skull. The water should be about 1/2" above the base of the antlers.

TIP - Keep an eye on the skull through the whole boiling process to make sure it stays submerged. If not any meat on top will dry out and be very difficult to remove later on.

5. Leave the skull in the boiling water for about 30 minutes. You'll know it's time to pull the head out of your boiling water when the flesh on the skull cap just begins to split and looks jellied.
6. Remove skull and begin spraying it with a high-pressure GARDEN HOSE. **(DO NOT USE A HIGH PRESSURE GUN IT WILL BREAK THE BONES APART)** If the tissue can be easily removed you can start pulling it off with pliers. Once the skull starts to cool down the tissue and fat will start hardening up and when this happens you will need to place the skull back in the water for another 20 minutes before removing more.

7. Continue fleshing and spraying with garden hose and be sure not to get too close to the nasal cavity, as high pressure water can blow right through it and break the bones apart.
8. Once all tissue is easily coming off you can remove the lower jaw bone. The lower jaw is typically easily removed by spreading the mouth open as far as you can and pulling it out.

TIP - There is always a lot of debate among us that do the euro mounts about whether or not to remove the nasal cartilage, it's near impossible to completely clean the skull with the nasal passage intact.

9. Before beginning the process of washing the skull you will now use the needle nose pliers to remove all the cartilage from inside the nasal cavity.
10. Next take the long Phillips screw driver and push it through the nasal cavity to the brain cavity there are two openings side by side in the back of the nasal cavity at the entrance to the brain cavity that need to be opened up to later remove brain matter.
11. After you've removed most of the meat from the skull re-submerge it into your boiling water and leave it for another 20 minutes.

TIP - Over boiling will cause the bones to separate and teeth to fall out so do not boil for more than 20 minutes.

TIP - There are two nasal covers that will need to come off while boiling so you can clean all membrane from the nasal cavity. If any teeth or any other bones fall off during the cleaning process do not get worried they can be hot glued back together

12. Remove the lower JAW and discard it. Once the jaw has been removed now it is time to remove the brain matter. I use the long filet knife to break up the brain matter then pull it out with the pliers, You could also try a j hook as this is the most time consuming part of the entire process

TIP - : The Arm & hammer soda Wash or Borax will aid in tedious tissue removal. Sometimes the tissue is greasy and neither pliers nor your bare fingers can grab it. Add a little Borax and you will be able to grab right on to it and pull it out.

13. Wash off the remaining meat (including any meat you might have missed in the nasal cavities and brain) and Repeat all processes until you are sure that all tissue has been removed. If it has, you now can dry all pieces off and wait about a day to glue any teeth or bones back on. Make sure that you have removed all tissue from the skull. The last thing you will want is to find out that you

missed some after it has been hanging in the house. Allow the skull to dry completely if it is a sunny day put the skull out in the sun then and nightfall bring it in to dry in the house for 24 hours.

14. Put on your gloves and eye protection and long sleeve shirt, you're about to start working with the 40 volume peroxide – you do not want to get this stuff on your skin
15. Set the skull into the rectangular container.



- a. Pour about 1/2 a cup of the 40 volume peroxide into your plastic cup.
- b. Draw the peroxide into the baster and start pouring on the skull making sure you get into every cavity.

TIP - Do not get any of the peroxide onto the antlers, as it will turn them white as well

- c. You can apply as many as four applications. Let the skull dry between applications.

TIP - Reuse the peroxide that's in the bottom of the rectangular pan it is still good and this way you do not waste any.

16. Allow the skull to dry in the sun if possible as it will increase in the whiting process

YOUR EURO MOUNT IS DONE AND YOU SAVED HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS ON A HEAD MOUNT. HERE IS A PICTURE OF A MOUNTING SETUP I MADE FOR MINE OUT OF WOOD FROM MICHAELS ARTS AND CRAFTS.



**HERE ARE A FEW PICTURES TO SHOW HOW THE SKULL
SHOULD LOOK AFTER COMPLETION.**

