

Cleaning Your Trophies

There's nothing quite like the feeling of bringing home your newest hunting trophy. The pride that comes from pushing it into place or positioning it on the wall and taking a step back to soak it in. The flood of memories rushes back. It's exhilarating, right?

But then some time passes and eventually you realize you have a lifetime of trying to keep this beautiful trophy...well, beautiful.

At Twisted Ridge Taxidermy, our goal is to allow you to relive your hunting adventures, by preserving your memories in the form of a unique, custom taxidermy mount. But, if a trophy is neglected and allowed to collect dust, some of the impact will inevitably be lost.

While turning to Google for answers might seem like a good idea, we've found it will provide you with a hundred different ways of taking care of your big game trophies—often with frustrating, expensive, or contradictory advice.

But, here's the good news. We've compiled a short list of simple, effective techniques that make it easy to keep your trophies looking pristine and lifelike for decades to come.

WHAT TO DO WHEN TAKING CARE OF YOUR MOUNT:

1. Dust once each week.

This is as straightforward as using a feather duster or a soft, dry rag to dust your trophy from top to bottom on all surfaces, including the surrounding scenic habitat. Seriously, we can't stress enough how important it is to take just a few minutes each week to prevent a buildup of dust and dirt from everyday life. It's crucial and makes a huge difference in the long run. Just be gentle.

2. Thoroughly clean once each year.

We recommend mixing up your own cleaning solution by combining a few drops of mild detergent (like Dawn dish soap) into a bucket of water. Just be careful while mixing that you don't create any suds.

For both short-haired and long-haired trophies, use a damp (not soaked) rag to wipe down your mount in the natural direction of the animal's hair. After wiping down an especially long-haired trophy, make sure to fluff the animal's hair with compressed air, shop vac, or a hair dryer on a non-heat setting.

For cleaning the hard surfaces of the habitat, like rocks and driftwood, we suggest using compressed air to blow dust out of all the hard to reach places. In doing this it's important to take special care when dusting the delicate features of the environment, like grasses and flowers.

A quick note about bird and fish trophies: Your bird and waterfowl trophies can be feather dusted, but never use anything wet when cleaning these types of mounts. Fish trophies are easily maintained by simply wiping with a damp rag, but be sure to pay special attention to avoid damaging the delicate fins.

3. Touch up the features and details of your mount.

Keep antlers and horns looking good by cleaning them regularly with a damp rag. The eyes of your trophy are glass, so using household glass cleaning solution on a Q-tip will make them shine like new. The nose can be wiped down just like the fur. But if you find a nose is missing its realistic, wet look, you can apply a coat of clear sealer (like Mod Podge) to restore the shine.

WHAT NOT TO DO WHEN TAKING CARE OF YOUR MOUNT:

1. Don't use chemical-based household cleaners.

Household cleaners (like Pledge) contain harmful chemicals and will leave an oily residue on your mount. For trophies needing special help with bugs, we recommend Mount Medix, which uses natural ingredients and leaves a fresh minty scent after use.

2. Don't expose your mount to too much smoke.

We recommend displaying your trophy away from wood burning stoves and fireplaces. Also, be aware that cigarette and cigar smoke will impact your mounts.

3. Don't touch your trophy too much.

While it's normal to touch your trophy every once in awhile—regular over-petting can disrupt the natural hair patterns.

4. Don't expose your mount to extreme temperatures or direct sunlight.

Extremes in temperature and humidity can be harmful and troublesome for your trophies. It's best to avoid storing them in rooms that have intense temperature fluctuations, like attics or basements, for instance. It's also important to keep your trophies out of direct sunlight, as UV rays will discolor a mount over time.

DO YOU OFFER CLEANING & TOUCHUP SERVICES?

If you're more comfortable you can schedule to bring your trophy into the shop for a cleaning for a small fee. This may include touching up paint as well.

Ultimately, the real trick to taxidermy maintenance is not a secret.

Rather, it's all about forming a routine habit of consistent care and regular attention. By following these few simple and effective techniques, the vibrancy and realism of your hunting trophy will be preserved for many years to come—ensuring the hunting memories you cherish are not lost beneath a layer of dust.

We are always here to help or answer any questions you may have.

Thanks,

The Twisted Ridge Taxidermy Team



