



How much money can I make as a taxidermist?

Short Answer: If you are lazy, (and we're being honest here)...you won't make a lot of money, no matter where you live or what the economy is like. If however, you live in an area with good hunting or fishing, and If you are self motivated, taxidermy can be extremely lucrative!

Long Answer: A motivated taxidermist can reasonably earn over \$10,000 per month. Taxidermists earn a living through a wide variety of projects, including shoulder mounts (gameheads), rugs, lifesize mounts, birds, fish, antler plaques, European mounts, etc.

Although some taxidermists service areas with lot of fishing and/or bird hunting, most taxidermy businesses make the bulk of their income through gameheads, so that will be used as our example.

Taxidermists vary in what they charge for gameheads, depending on what part of the country they live in, local economy, and of course quality of the taxidermists' work. A taxidermist who takes a lot of shortcuts will most likely be at the lower end of the price scale. These types of shortcuts include practices such as simply skinning the deer, slapping on some dry tanning powder, neglecting to take the cartilage out of the ears, etc. The result is a cheap mount that NOT look good as it ages. Ears shrink & curl, lips separate, noses shrivel, the hide pulls away from the form, and one year can make a poorly mounted deer look ancient.

On the other side of the coin are taxidermists who spend a little more time and a few more dollars on each shoulder mount, resulting in a product that will stand the test of time. And a select few taxidermists (us included), will guarantee their work for life.

So depending on various factors, average customer prices for a deer/antelope size shoulder mount range anywhere from around \$495, to \$700 each. (Elk, moose, etc would of course be more)

To do the numbers and see just how much you can make on gameheads, let's head towards the lower end of the scale and say you only charge around \$525.00 for each deer. Your own costs will average around \$75 for the mannikin, \$25 for eyes/ears, \$45 for tanning, and about \$20 for other supplies such as hide paste, T-pins, mache, etc. This totals a cost of \$165 per deer, which leaves a net profit of \$360 per deer.



Once you have a year or two under your belt, it is pretty easy to bring in at least 60 deer per year, although those numbers can also happen sooner. That is a very low estimate, as many established taxidermy businesses bring in hundreds of deer per season. But in keeping with our conservative estimate of 60 deer gameheads per year, you are looking at a NET (after expenses) profit of \$21,600 just for deer alone. And remember, you will also have birds, fish, fox, coyote, raccoon, lions, elk, moose, and many other species too numerous to list. You can expect to make at least the same (and likely higher) profit margin on the other species you will be mounting. Your own costs for mounting birds and fish for example, are significantly lower than gameheads, and this results in an even higher profit margin.

Getting back to the deer though, let's talk about your time expended and profit per hour. Although each gamehead will go through a variety of stages in the mounting process, the combined time involved is usually about 1 day per shoulder mount. This means that for each deer mounted you are looking at a profit of \$360 per day, or \$45 per hour. At \$45 per hour, a motivated taxidermist who takes just a little time to market themselves properly can make over \$10,000 per month in net profit. And remember, fish and birds can bring in even more in terms of hourly earnings!

When making your decision on whether or not our school is right for you, remember this; At ATTC we guarantee our customer work for life, and we teach you to do the same. We teach you enjoyable ways to market yourself. Our marketing strategies work for everyone, even non-assertive types! Learning taxidermy in six weeks is well worth the time and tuition when you consider the long term payoff. Compared to a conventional college education that may or may not get you a good paying job, attending a taxidermy school simply makes sense for anyone who loves hunting, fishing, and wildlife!

Finally, we encourage you to call us any time with any questions you have about taxidermy as a career. We hope you find this information helpful, during your busy search for taxidermy schools!