

Selection of a Taxidermist For Your Trophy

Selecting a qualified taxidermist to preserve your trophy is a very important and tough decision. Not all taxidermists are created equally. There is no standardized criteria that makes each taxidermist have equal abilities. Some are excellent at what they do and others are poor. In the end, it is your responsibility to choose the taxidermist that will make you proud of the trophy you hang on the wall.

There are several criteria you should investigate before leaving your trophy with a taxidermist; these range from abilities to price. Yes, price is the “Z” on the list. Too many times a customer is solely concerned with price. Normally, low discount pricing reflects poor quality and lack of experience. Most taxidermist with above average abilities will charge accordingly. DO NOT make your decision based upon price. Bargain shopping will make you an unhappy customer in the end.

Ability is at the top of the list. Choose a taxidermist that has the ability to make your trophy look like it is “alive” once again. With today’s anatomically accurate manikins and advanced techniques, there is no excuse for a trophy that doesn’t look like the living animal. Take time to visit a prospective taxidermist and learn more about him or her. Ask to see examples of their work. Ask for references of previous clients with similar specimens. See if the taxidermist is striving to better his or her education. Many state and national organizations hold various seminars and workshops to help their membership improve. Most states and the national organization have certification programs that have a regime of qualifications to be considered a Certified Taxidermist. Does your taxidermist actively participate in competitions? If so, ask them how they have fared. Blue ribbons, special awards and titles are very good indications that their peers believe they are an excellent taxidermist.

Time is another factor. Many times too much emphasis is put on time. Most good taxidermists are extremely backed-logged. They actually have several pieces to be completed before they can start on your piece. Patience will pay off in the end. Take that into consideration the next time you ask “How long will it be?” Six months to a year is not uncommon for a good taxidermist.

Most of the time word gets around about a taxidermist. Keep you ears open, talk to other outdoorsmen, and don’t take the advice of just one person. Get a collection of ideas from different individuals.

Remember, you want this trophy to last a lifetime, and the decision you make in choice will effect your trophy for a lifetime.