

POCKET GUIDE FOR

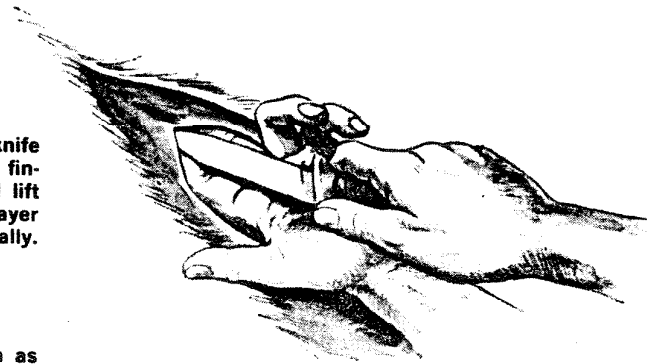
No-Guess Gutting

by Ned Smith

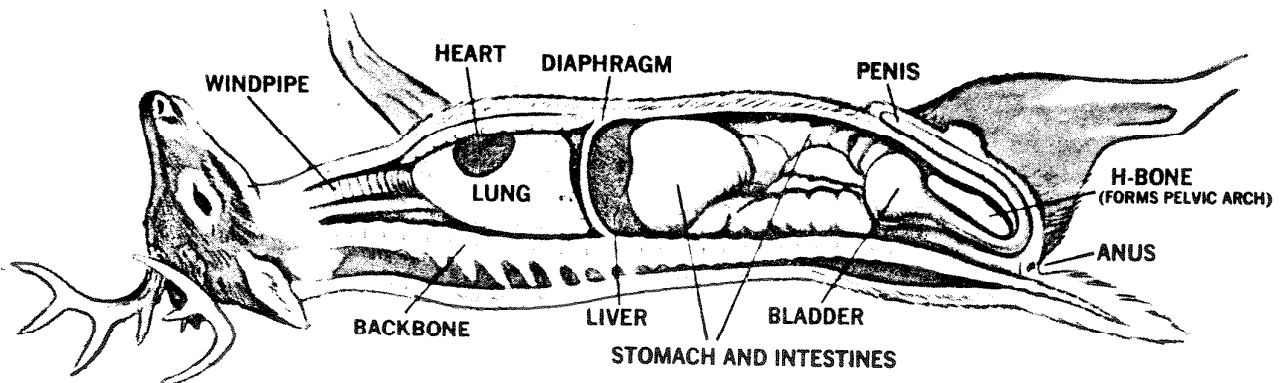


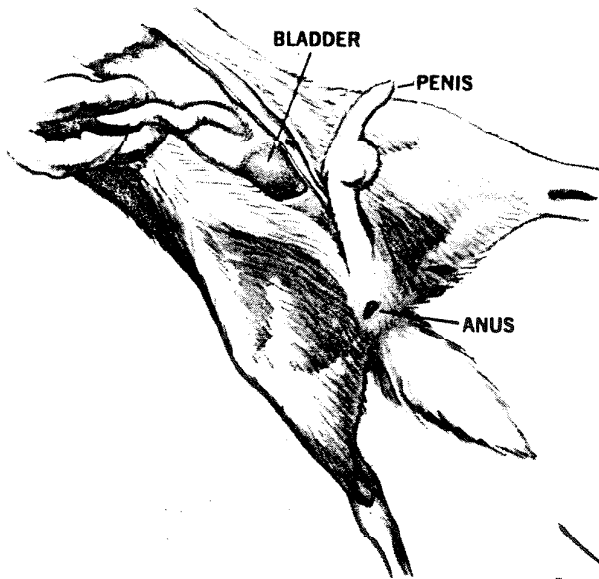
1 Roll the deer on its back, preferably with its head uphill. Avoid touching the musk glands inside each hock. Slit the belly hide from crotch to breastbone, then slit the muscles beneath the hide. Don't hurry the job.

2 Use both hands to guide the knife blade. The index and middle fingers of the left hand should lift the hide away from the muscle layer and prevent cutting into it accidentally.



3 Now, cut the diaphragm free of the rib cage. Reach as far into the neck as you can, grasp the windpipe, gullet and large blood vessels and sever them. Withdraw them from the body cavity, bringing the entrails with them except where attached to the pelvis. (The anchoring tissues along the backbone must be snipped.)

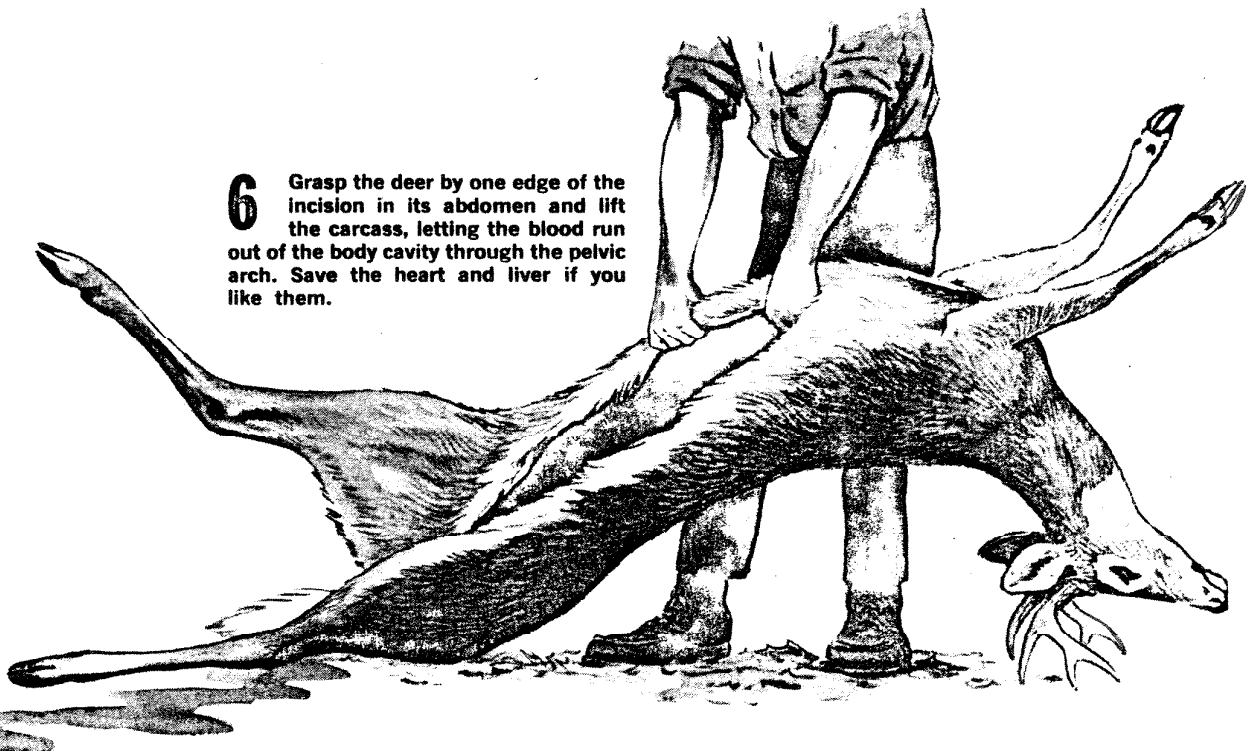




4 With most of the entrails out of the way, free the penis to where it emerges from the H-bone. Turn it away from the carcass and squeeze out all the urine to prevent accidental contamination of the meat. Some hunters merely skin out the penis, leaving less meat exposed to dirt and drying. Others split the H-bone with an axe—quick, but it lets in dirt.



5 Cut through the hide around the anus and penis. By pulling on the intestine and bladder while cutting, free them from the pelvic arch with the rest of the viscera. A doe is gutted in similar fashion, the anus and vagina cut free and pulled out with the entrails, taking care not to contaminate the meat.



6 Grasp the deer by one edge of the incision in its abdomen and lift the carcass, letting the blood run out of the body cavity through the pelvic arch. Save the heart and liver if you like them.