

Tan-a-Hide™

FULL AT-HOME TANNING KIT FOR LARGE MAMMAL HIDES



Developed by the industry pioneer
& Taxidermy Hall-of-Famer
DALE KNOBLOCH

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This guide was created by *Advanced Tanning Solutions* for use with our **Tan-A-Hide™ Kit**.



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Developed by the industry pioneer, Dale Knobloch, who was the first to formulate the original self-tan for the taxidermy and fur dressing industry in the 1980s. **Tan-a-Hide** is an all-inclusive deluxe tanning kit containing Dale's newly formulated products to tan your large mammal hide from start to finish.

These products are used by professional tanneries and will produce a soft, supple, stretchy leather.

Tan-a-Hide will tan approximately 3-4 medium size deer or up to 1 large life-size elk, moose, or cow hide. See our **Tan-a-Fur Skin** kit for tanning smaller mammal fur skins.

For tanning birds, fish or snakeskins, see our **Bird & Fish Tan** and **Tan-a-Snake** products.



FREE MASTERCLASS

Scan this code to see our free Masterclass on tanning an elk hide with **Tan-a-Hide**! Or find it by visiting our YouTube Channel.

Package contents include:

- Fleshing/Shaving Tool
- Detergent
- Pickle Tan
- Hide Oil
- Hair Gloss & Conditioner
- Softening Stone
- Silk Powder
- Dust Mask
- Microfiber Towel
- Non-latex disposable gloves (2)

What you will need - the amount will depend upon the size of the hide(s):

- Table Salt
- Household Bleach
- Baking Soda
- Large Plastic Bucket/Container
- Hot Water

Directions: To fully understand the process, read the complete directions prior to starting. Plan for a multi-step process requiring 4-5 days. Wear splash proof goggles/safety glasses and rubber gloves to avoid any eye or skin irritation. This kit contains enough product to make 17 gallons of tan. The amount of tan bath you mix will depend upon the size of the hide(s) being treated.

Step 1 - Prepare the Hide

The hide needs to be taken care of as soon as it is removed from the animal. You will have the best results with a properly taken care of hide from the start. If the hide can't be fleshed right away, it should be folded hair side to hair side, placed in a plastic bag and frozen.



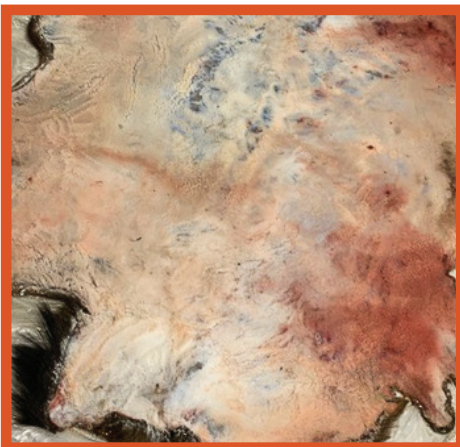
Use the enclosed **Fleshing/Shaving Tool**, to remove the excess flesh, fat and membrane. Work away from you with the tool at an angle using a back-and-forth “slicing” motion. Carefully pull the meat and membrane while cutting it. To avoid cutting holes in the hide, remove the thicker tallow (fat) areas in layers.

If the intent is to tan the hide with the full head, legs and tail, remove the skull, split open the lips and nostrils, turn the ears inside out and remove the tail and foot bones.

Step 2 - Salting

Salting is important to help remove the residual blood and body fluids and also draws out the non-tannable proteins. Lay the fleshed hide flesh side up on cardboard or a tarp to catch any drainage. Apply a heavy layer (1/2” thick) of fine salt (table or canning salt, DO NOT use rock salt) and thoroughly rub into all areas - including the face, feet and tail if applicable. Leave the salted hide lying flesh side up for a minimum of 12-24 hours.

The next day, if the salt is moist, shake it off and reapply a layer of new salt. Let this sit again for a minimum of 12-24 hours.



*For Hair-On Tanning, go to **Step 3**.*

HAIR-OFF OR BUCKSKIN TANNING

To remove hair: After prepping and salting, place the hide in a bath of 1 teaspoon **Detergent** per EACH gallon of room temperature water. Use a plastic or rubber container (not metal) large enough to hold the hide. Agitate and leave the hide in the bath for 24 hours. The next day, discard the detergent and water bath and replace with fresh water only for the next 24 hours. Repeat the process of changing the water daily until the hair starts to loosen and easily pulls out throughout the hide. Drain the hide until damp, lay it out hair side up on a fleshing beam or hard surface and scrape or push the hair off with a dull edge. To avoid cutting a hole in the hide, do not use a sharp tool. If residual hair still remains, place the hide back in a fresh water only solution on a daily basis until all the hair is completely removed.

Note: hair loosens by bacteria action and changing the water on a daily basis helps control the bacteria. The lack of changing the water will promote rapid bacteria growth and could cause damage to the inner fiber structure and the epidermis of the hide.

Once all the hair is removed, place the hide in a fresh bath of $\frac{3}{4}$ cup salt and 1 tablespoon of household bleach to EACH gallon of water. Agitate and soak for 15 minutes. This will stop the hair removal action. Remove and drain.

The hide is now ready for pickling (skip Steps 3 and 4 and move to Step 5).



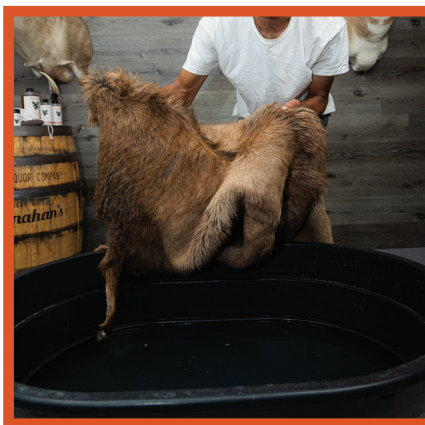
Step 3 - Rehydration Bath

Salt draws moisture from the hide, so after salting, it needs to be rehydrated. In a plastic or rubber container, (not metal) large enough to hold the hide, create a salt bath by mixing the following amounts for EACH gallon of HOT water:

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup of salt
1 teaspoon of **Detergent**
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of household bleach

Mix enough solution to completely cover the hide allowing it move freely. Stir to dissolve the salt and let cool prior to adding the hide. Soak the hide in the bath until it is pliable, usually 12-24 hours, then remove and drain.

Tip: When mixing a large bath, 10 gallons for example, add ALL the ingredients for a 10 gallon bath in half the amount of hot water, which is 5 gallons. Once dissolved, then add the remaining 5 gallons of room temperature water.



Step 4 - Cleaning [optional]



If the hair feels dirty, it can be cleaned using a hose. Hang up or lay the hide out flat, apply **Detergent** along the neck area and using gentle pressure, spray with clean water in the direction of the hair allowing the **Detergent** to work down to the tail. Hang to drain until damp. The hide is now ready for pickling.

Step 5 - Pickling Bath

Wearing the enclosed dust mask, discard the rehydration bath and in the same container, mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of **Pickle Tan** to EACH gallon of HOT water. Stir to dissolve the tan and then mix in $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of salt for EACH gallon and dissolve. Again, use the Tip above when mixing a large bath.

Soak the hide in the pickle solution for 24 hours or up to 48 hours for thicker hides, agitating every 4 - 6 hours. If the hide has a bluish color, it may not be thoroughly pickled, so soak for another 12 - 24 hours or until it looks white all the way through.



After soaking for the allotted time, remove from the pickle bath and allow the hide to drain on both sides until just damp.



IMPORTANT: Do not discard the pickle bath as it will be used again to tan the hide in Step 7.

Step 6 - Shaving

After pickling, the next step is to shave the hide.

This is an important step, as having a thin hide will help the tan to penetrate better, provide more stretch and softness and reduce shrinkage. To thin, lay the damp hide flesh side up on a hard surface such as a board, log or a fleshing beam if available. Using the **Fleshing/Shaving Tool**, start at one end and working away from yourself, shave the hide to create a uniform thickness throughout. Get it as thin as possible, being sure not to shave to the point where the hair follicles are coming through. For best results, keep the tool sharp.

For extra thick hides such as elk, moose, bison and cow, a hand grinder with a coarse grit can be used. *Note: be sure the hide is semi-dry so the grinder does not slide across the wet flesh side.*



Step 7 - Tanning Bath



To tan the shaved hide, place it back into the pickle bath for an additional 24 hours, or up to 48 hours for larger hides. Next, *pull the hide back out of the bath*, put a few cups of the bath into a mixing container and add 2 heaping tablespoons of baking soda for each gallon of solution used in the bath and stir to dissolve. For example, for a 10 gallon bath, use 20 tablespoons of baking soda.

Pour the baking soda mixture into the tan bath. *Note: the baking soda will foam, so be sure the soak tank is large enough that it doesn't overflow.* This raises the pH of the solution which allows the tan to bond to the hide.

Once the foam subsides, place the hide back in the tan bath for an additional 4-12 hours, agitating the bath every hour. The final soak time will depend upon how thick the hide is. Remove from the soak and drain for 12-24 hours, or until the hide is just damp.



Step 8 - Oiling

Lay the damp hide flesh side up on a piece of cardboard and pour **Hide Oil** into the center. Wearing rubber gloves, rub the oil into all areas of the flesh side. For best absorption, the oil and hide should both be at room temperature (65°F or above) when applying. After the oil has completely penetrated (1-2 hours), fold the hide flesh side to flesh and let it sit overnight.



Step 9 - Drying



The next day, open the hide and hang it to dry in a cool area where air can get to both sides.

To prevent the hide from becoming stiff and to keep it flexible, it is important to work it as it dries. Start working it after it has dried for 1-2 days first. If the hide is too wet, you risk pulling the hair out. There are several ways to break the fibers.



Stand in the middle of the hide and pull up to stretch it on all sides.



Work the edges back and forth with your hands and over a table edge.



Tug of war. With 2 people, alternate stretching each side.

When it is mostly dry, buff the flesh side with the enclosed **Softening Stone** working in a circular motion. This will also help to break the fibers and create a soft suede-like feel.



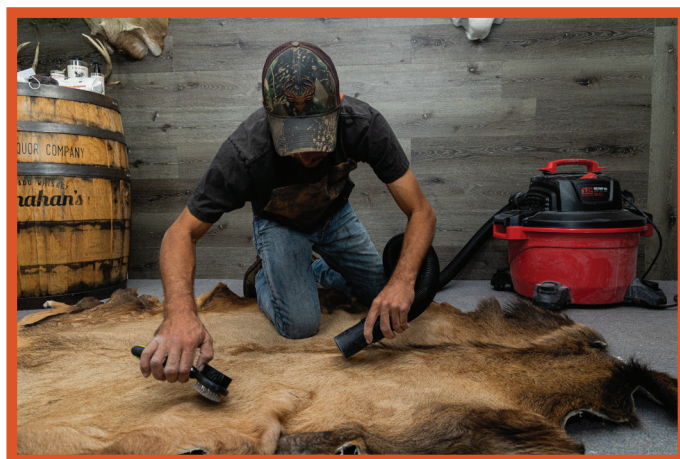
Tip: If the hide dries stiff, reapply a light mixture of 25% **Hide Oil** with 75% water. Fold it flesh to flesh until it is relaxed then open and repeat the drying and working process.

If there is **Hide Oil** residue on the hair, wipe it down with a soap and water sponge, or lightly rinse that area with water and avoid wetting the flesh side.

Step 10 - Finishing

FLUFFING THE HAIR

For a fluffier look to the hide, vacuum it first in the direction of the hair while giving it a quick comb. This will also remove any leftover dander and loose hairs. Then, use the vacuum or an air compressor, to blow against the grain of the hair - gently lifting the hair with a brush.



HAIR GLOSS & CONDITIONER

For a bright, clean look, spray a thin application on the clean hair and using the enclosed microfiber cloth, gently rub in the direction of the hair. Allow **Hair Gloss & Conditioner** to set in hair for 1 - 2 hours, then wipe off excess.

SILK POWDER

For a soft silky feel, lightly sprinkle the flesh side with the **Silk Powder** and rub in with your fingers. Knock or shake off any extra.



You did it!

Congratulations on completing the tanning of your hide!

Check out our website to share a photo of your finished project and see photos of tanned hides from other customers.

advancedtanningsolutions.com



@tanning.your.hide



Disclaimer: Being that hides are natural materials, susceptible to varying degrees of putrefaction, natural defects, disease, mishandling, experience of the user, and are used under conditions beyond our control, as the seller, we make no guarantee or warranty expressed or implied as to the use of this product. All information contained here is accurate to the best of our knowledge in good faith and is based upon thorough testing.

Developed by Dale Knobloch
Made in the USA by Advanced Tanning Solutions, LLC
PO Box 7533, Golden, CO 80403
303.642.3060
Info@advancedtanningsolutions.com

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