

How to Butcher a bird

A STEP BY STEP GUIDE FOR
TURKEYS, WATERFOWL
AND UPLAND BIRDS

ARTICLE, PHOTOS AND VIDEO ANDREW ROCHON

SET UP

Start butchering as soon as possible after a hunt. If you want to keep a turkey beard as a trophy, cut it from the breast skin and cure it in salt or borax. This is also the time to put aside any feathers you'll be keeping for fly tying.



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STEP 1

Using your hands, remove feathers from the breast down to the legs.



STEP 2

Make an incision from the point of the sternum towards the leg. Do this on each side of the sternum, for each breast.



STEP 3

Separate the breast from the bone gradually using your knife, while pulling the breast away.



STEP 4

Keep following the sternum until you reach the bottom of the breast meat.





STEP 5

Make a cut between the breast and leg, as shown.

STEP 6

Finish filleting out the breast from the leg up towards the head.



STEP 7

Open the leg by pulling it back from the body.





STEP 8

Cut the meat between the thigh and body, and carefully separate the hip joint. Remove the leg and thigh.



STEP 9

Peel the skin down to the foot. Sometimes this is easier if the leg is still attached to the bird.



STEP 10

Use a saw to remove the foot. A knife will work on small birds.



STEP 11

Separate each thigh and leg. Unless you're dealing with a turkey, you're done.



**Continue for
turkey wings:**

STEP 12

Open each wing and separate it from the body at the joint.





STEP 13

Remove the feathers
with a knife or scissors.

STEP 14

Separate the wing at
the last joint, as shown.
Then split the wing.





A fully
butchered
turkey

FOLLOW ALONG

