



# BUTCHERING (I)

## Aim

The aim of this guide is to provide a basic introduction to venison butchery covering the primal breakdown of a venison carcass. A more detailed step by step guide is available on-line at [www.dcs.gov.uk](http://www.dcs.gov.uk).

## Introduction

**3** The carcass should be skinned as soon as it has been lardered.\* The carcass should then remain hung in the larder initially to enable the heat to dissipate from the carcass slowly in the first 6 hours after skinning. This will ensure the full and rapid onset of rigor mortis and will prevent 'cold shortening' of the soft muscles in the carcass. The carcass should then be hung in a chilled environment with good air flow at 0° to 4° C for up to 10 days to ensure tenderness and the desired maturation level. There should be no contact with other carcasses and skinned carcasses should be hung separately from any that are unskinned.\* Whether primary cuts are made with the carcass suspended (as shown) or lying flat on a cutting table will be down to individual experience and preference.

**Equipment:** potable water (ideally hot) | meat saw | steak knife | boning knife | chain-mail glove and apron | good quality cutting board or block | freezer bags | roasting bands

A: neck  
B: shoulder  
C: forequarters  
D: saddle  
E: haunch



fig. 1

(fig. 1 above) neck removal: any bloody meat should be removed from under the neck at this stage as this will be discoloured and deteriorate quickly if left on the neck

(fig. 2 far left) shoulder block removal: open the seam by gently pulling away the fore leg and the seam will open to allow better access. Care should be taken not to cut into underlying muscles

(fig. 3 left) the underside of the shoulderblade bone is now visible under fingers



fig. 2

seam

fig. 3

blade bone



fig.4 shoulder block muscle group: A: inner blade – diced; B: feather – diced and casserole; C: blade – diced and casserole; D: thick rib of LMC – braising steaks; E: clod – mince; F: fore shin – shin and mince; G: flat blade – diced and mince



(fig.5 above) boning out the shoulder

**2** Begin by ensuring that all work areas, equipment and hands are clean.

### Neck removal

**3** To remove the neck make a square cut to the back bone just below the fold of the shoulder and neck and then saw off the neck (fig. 1). Clean all bone dust from both surfaces.

### Shoulder block removal & preparation

- 3** The shoulder blocks are removed from the main part of the carcass by opening the seam indicated (figs. 2 & 3) and following the shape of the blade bone.
- 3** The shoulder block consists of three sections containing the blade bone, humerus bone and the fore leg. To prepare the shoulder, these are removed separately starting with the blade bone (fig.5). Once completed the process is repeated on the other side of the carcass. The shoulder block can be further broken down into smaller cuts (fig.4).

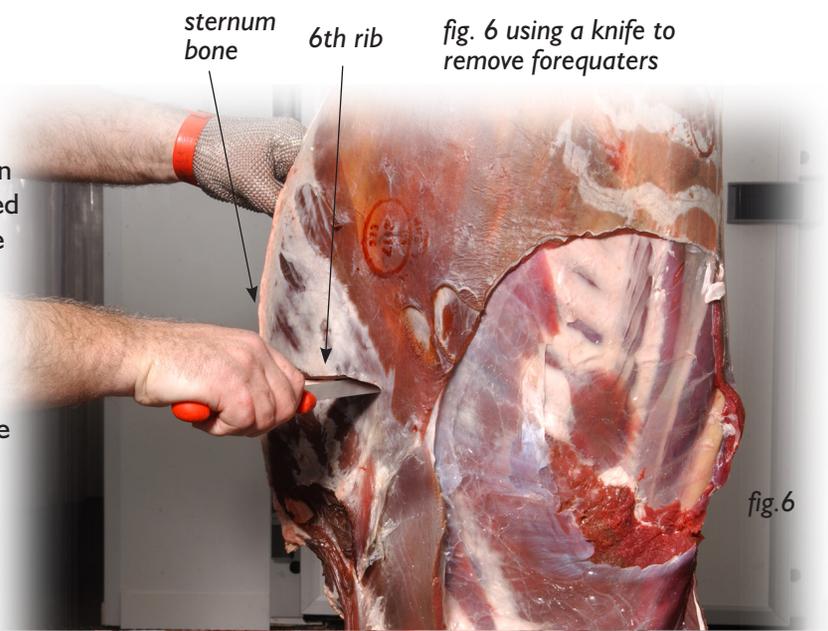


fig. 6 using a knife to remove forequarters

fig.6

### Forequarter removal

- 3** Make an incision between the 5th and 6th rib (counting from the neck end), saw through the sternum bone (fig.6).
- 3** Make a square cut to the backbone and then saw through the backbone keeping the saw in line with the ribs. Take care to only saw through bone and not into the underlying muscles on the opposite side of the carcass.
- 3** Follow the saw cut with a steak knife following the rib to remove the pair of forequarters by sawing through the sternum on the other side of the carcass (fig.7). Make sure that all bone dust is removed from both surfaces.



fig.7 continuing with a knife after sawing the backbone

continued in Butchering(2)