

Term	Definition / Description
Abduction	A movement of your limb away from the middle of the body
Adduction	A movement of your limb towards the middle of your body
Alignment	The position / orientation of prosthetic componentry, like the socket and prosthetic device, and how it aligns with other prosthetic units as well as the human anatomy
Anterior	Towards the front of the body
Bilateral	Referring to both sides of the body
Biomechanics	The science of movement of a body, including how muscles, bones, tendons, and ligaments work to produce movement
Cervical	Referring to the area of the neck; 7 cervical vertebrae make up the cervical spine
Check Socket	A temporary socket made of transparent plastic that is used by the prosthetist to diagnose the fit of the socket; think of it as a clear version of the cast taken. Also called a Diagnostic Test Socket, or DTS
Circumduction	The circular motion of a limb that is created when the movements of flexion, extension, abduction, and adduction are sequentially performed
Contracture	Tightening of the muscles, tendons, or ligaments that prevents normal movement of a joint; these can occur from trauma or sitting still for too long. This should be prevented at all times
Coronal plane	Imaginary plane that divides the body into front and back halves
Cosmesis	The outer covering of a prosthesis serving the purpose of aesthetics; sometimes referred to as cosmetics
Definitive Prosthesis	A replacement for a missing limb after post-surgical swelling has subsided; likely the second prosthesis you will receive after your amputation. The device that is delivered after the year-long period of change your limb goes through post-amputation
Disarticulation	Amputation through a joint (i.e. ankle, knee, hip)
Distal	A reference point that is towards the end of your limb, away from your body (i.e. closer to the end of your limb than your knee for a transtibial amputee)

Term	Definition / Description
Donning / Doffing	The process of putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) a prosthesis
Dorsal Surface	Describes the area on top of the foot and the back of the hand
Dorsiflexion	Pointing the toe or foot upwards
Edema	Swelling of the tissues; occurs with poor circulation, certain medications, and when your limb is hanging down
Eversion	The movement of the plantar surface, or sole, of the foot so that it faces away from the midline of the body
Extension	Increase in joint angle, straightening the knee, pulling your thigh behind your body
External Rotation	The rotation of a body part away from the midline of the body
Flexion	Decrease in joint angle, bending the knee, pulling your thigh towards your chest
Gait	How you walk; the pattern of movement in your limbs
Gait Training	Learning, usually from a physical therapist, how to walk safely and properly with a prosthesis
Internal Rotation	The rotation of a body part toward the midline, of the body. Palmar (Volar) Surface: Describes the area on the palm of the hand
Inversion	The movement of the plantar surface, or sole, of the foot so that it faces toward the midline of the body
Lateral	Away from the midline of the body to the outside
Liner(s)	A covering for the residual limb that is used for suspension, cushioning and protection, it goes on your limb and inside the socket
Lumbar	Referring to the area of the lower back; five vertebrae (bones) make up the lumbar spine
Medial	Towards the midline of the body, towards the inside

Term	Definition / Description
Myodesis	A process during an amputation where the muscles are attached to bone
Myoplasty	A process during an amputation where muscles are attached to opposing muscles
Neuroma	A nerve ending that is cut during an amputation and turns into a disorganized growth or lump of nerve cells; neuromas (also be identified as “pinched nerve” or “benign tumor of nerve tissue”) are extremely sensitive and can be painful
Occupational Therapy	Evaluation and training performed by a licensed occupational therapist which focuses on maximizing the activities of daily living
Phantom Limb Pain	Pain that appears to come from an area below where the amputation occurred, often a sharp, firey, or electrical feeling
Phantom Limb Sensation	The feeling that an amputated limb is still attached to the body, it may present as an itch in a part of your limb that is no longer there
Plantar Flexion	Moving the ankle so the toe or foot point downwards
Plantar Surface	Describes the bottom, or sole, of the foot
Physical Therapy	Evaluation and training performed by a licensed physical therapist, which focuses on exercise, reducing pain and regaining mobility
Pronation	Rotation of the forearm so that the palm of the hand faces downward or backward; opposite of supination
Posterior	Towards the back of the body, behind you
Prosthesis	An artificial body part
Prosthetist	Healthcare practitioner who evaluates, fabricates, fits and adjusts prosthetic devices
Proximal	Used for a reference point that is towards your body along your limb, (i.e. closer to your knee than the end of your limb for a below knee amputee)
Residual Limb	The portion of a limb that remains after amputation
Rotation	Circular/turning movement of body parts, like the back, around its long axis

Term	Definition / Description
Sagittal Plane	Imaginary plane that divides the body into left and right halves
Sound Side Limb	The limb that has not been amputated
Supination	The rotation of the forearm so that the palm of the hand faces upward or forward; opposite of pronation
Thoracic	Referring to the area of the mid and upper back; 12 thoracic vertebrae (bones) make up the thoracic spine
Transfemoral	Amputation that occurs at a level above the knee joint but below the hip joint; also known as “above knee”
Transtibial	Amputation that occurs at a level below the knee joint but above the ankle joint; also known as “below knee”
Transverse Plane	Imaginary plane that divides the body into top and bottom halves
Unilateral	Referring to one side of the body
Valgus	Bent or turned outward, used in deformities in which the most distal anatomical part is angled outward. Used commonly to describe the knee and elbow
Varus	Bent or turned inward, used especially of deformities in which the most distal anatomical part is angled inward. Used commonly to describe the knee and elbow

If you're living as an amputee or have a congenital limb difference, chances are you'll encounter many terms you may not be familiar with. We know that sometimes it's easier to avoid asking questions for clarity in the moment, but it's important to understand these terms to communicate with your practitioner and peers in the disability community.

Here at [Ottobock.care](https://ottobock.care), we are dedicated to providing resources just like this one to support you through every step of your journey with us and beyond.

