

# Man Without Legs Uses a Skateboard to Move Around

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Category : Human Interest

## Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **amputate** / ‘æm pyʊ teɪt / (v) – to cut someone’s legs and/or arms through surgery  
*Example:* The doctors had to **amputate** my brother’s feet after he got into a bad accident.
- 2. **get in the way of (something)** / **get ɪn ðə weɪ ʌv** / (idiom) – to stop someone from doing something  
*Example:* Her full-time job does not **get in the way of** her time with her children.
- 3. **hold (someone) back** / **hoʊld bæʔk** / (phrasal) – to hinder  
*Example:* My friend’s fear of public speaking **holds him back** from being a teacher.
- 4. **far-fetched** / ‘fɑː fɛtʃt / (adj) – very unlikely to happen  
*Example:* I did not believe his stories because I found them **far-fetched**.
- 5. **limb** / **lɪm** / (n) – an arm or a leg of a person  
*Example:* My sister’s **limbs** hurt after going to the gym.

## Article

Read the text below.

Rowdy Burton, a 30-year-old man without legs from Alabama, uses a skateboard to move around.

Burton was born with Sacral Agenesis /ˈseɪ krəl, ‘sæk rəl ərˈdʒən ə sɪs /—a spine condition that affects the development of one’s legs. As a result, both of his legs were **amputated** when he was only three years old. His condition subjected him to bullying when he was a child, but it stopped when he stepped into high school.

As an adult, Burton is determined to not let his condition **get in the way of** doing what he loves. However, he refuses to use a wheelchair and would rather rely on his hands and skateboard.

The only time that Burton uses a wheelchair is when he plays tennis with his friends. According to his friends, they sometimes forget that Burton does not have legs. Such positive remarks boost Burton’s confidence in himself.

Yet, Burton admitted that his condition **holds him back** from pursuing some things such as a romantic relationship and his dream job as an astronaut. He perceives the profession as **far-fetched** because it is physically demanding. But, other than that, he feels that nothing else is impossible.

On a similar note, 31-year-old Kyle Maynard was born with a condition that left him without the lower parts of his legs, as well as his arms. Still, he learned how to eat, write, and walk by himself.

Maynard strived to play sports like American football, wrestling, and powerlifting, in which he won the “World’s Strongest Teen” award. Additionally, he became the first man without **limbs** to climb Africa’s highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, in 2012.

## Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

### Discussion A

- How do you think people like Burton and Maynard can ensure their safety when they are doing their activities?

- If you were friends with Burton and Maynard, how would you support them?

**Discussion B**

- What are some personal dreams that you would like to pursue? Give details.

- Would you still pursue something even if it feels impossible to achieve? Explain.

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