

# Case study

## Joe - Age 15

*Joe has an undiagnosed upper limb difference of both hands. Joe has had two operations on his right hand and will decide in the future whether to have further surgery.*



**Limbformation**



**Fifteen-year-old Joe is passionate about drumming, badminton and gaming. His determination has already seen him accomplish many things and he is now concentrating on his ambitions to work in game design, graphic design or engineering.**

Because Joe was adopted from Vietnam as a baby and nothing was known about his genetic history or birth, he and his parents are still waiting for an official diagnosis for him. Joe's upper limb difference means that he has seven fingers across both hands, no forearm or wrist on one arm and no thumbs.

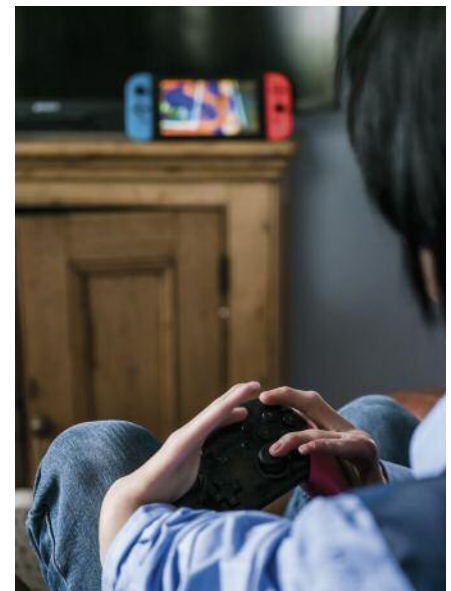
Joe has had two operations on his right hand to try and create a thumb, which weren't successful. He and his parents are debating whether to try again as there's a risk Joe could lose his finger entirely, or an alternative option is a prosthetic arm. In the meantime, Joe has remained focused on his studies and future career.

Joe's resolve, as well as the unwavering support of his parents and siblings, means that he has found his niche at school, excelling at ICT, design and graphics. Despite this, his limb difference brings many hurdles. Questions from new people can be difficult and Joe doesn't always feel comfortable answering them. He finds doing up the buttons on his shirt challenging and writing isn't easy. At school, Joe has a scribe for classwork and exams, which has allowed him to focus on what he wants to say rather than trying to write. When not gaming, Joe can be found either playing badminton or on his drum kit.

Whilst the journey has been bumpy, it's clear to see how proud Joe's parents are of him. His mother, Jane, advises parents of limb different children to ask for all the help they can and to take all the support that is offered to them, even if it doesn't feel comfortable.

His experience of living with his condition combined with his passion for engineering has inspired Joe to want to produce prosthetic arms for children.

Joe recently completed a work placement at a prosthetic company, where he made a small hand for children to use to play on swings. Joe's ultimate goal is to "make life easier for children with limb differences in the future". We're very confident that Joe will make his mark in the future of prosthetics.



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