

Been or Gone?

What is the difference between "been" and "gone" in English?

"**Been**" is the past participle of "**be**".

For example:

- I have **been** very happy in this house.
- You've **been** so kind to me.
- She's **been** a teacher for two years.

BUT "**been**" is also a past participle of "**go**".

"**Go**" has two past participles, "**gone**" and "**been**", but they are used differently.

1. **been** = somebody went somewhere and came back

We use "been" for a completed visit. The person has visited a place and returned.

- He has **been** to New York.
(He went to New York and came back.)
- I have **been** to the dentist.
(I visited the dentist and am not there now.)

Visually, you can imagine it like this:



2. gone = somebody went somewhere and is still there (or is on the way there)

We use "gone" when the person has left and has not returned yet.

- He **has** gone to New York.
(He is in New York now or is travelling there.)
- They **have** gone to the post office.
(They are at the post office now or are on the way there.)

Visually, you can imagine it like this:



! Note: Sometimes people use "gone" instead of "been" if it is clear from the context that the visits are complete. These sentences mean the same thing:

- I have **gone** to the gym three times this week.
- I have **been** to the gym three times this week.

In the example above, "gone" and "been" are interchangeable because the phrase "three times this week" makes it clear that we are talking about completed, repeated visits.

We use "gone" for most other meanings of "go".

For example:

- Have they **gone** yet?
(Have they left yet?)
- The time has **gone** quickly.
(The time has passed quickly.)
- My headache hasn't **gone** yet.
(My headache hasn't disappeared yet.)
- Has the day **gone** well?
(Has the day progressed well or been a success?)