

Have gone vs have been

CEFR A2-B1 • 20 questions • A4 / US Letter

Have gone means someone left and is still away; have been means the visit is over or the person has experience of the place.

The rule

Have gone: away and not back

- Have gone to a place means someone left for that place and is still there or still travelling.
- "Anna has gone to Madrid" means Anna is not here; she is in Madrid or on her way.
- Gone is the past participle of go, used in the present perfect: go, went, gone.
- Use have gone when the important fact is the absence of the person from here.

Have been: visited and returned

- Have been to a place means someone visited it at some point and is not there now.
- "Anna has been to Madrid" tells us she has experience of Madrid; she is back home.
- Been is the past participle used in this pattern, even though the verb is go: go, went, been.
- Use have been for experiences and for the number of visits: "I have been there twice."

Where is the person now?

- Have gone: the person is not here. Do not expect them at dinner.
- Have been: the person is here or back, and the trip is finished.
- "Where has Tom gone?" asks for his present location: "He has gone to the bank."
- "Where has Tom been?" asks about all his past visits, not about now.

Have been in and have been at

- Have been in a place means spent time there: "I have been in London for a week."
- Have been at a place means was there recently or is there now: "She has been at the office all morning."
- Have been to introduces a visit: "Have you been to London?"
- The preposition decides the meaning: to is a visit, in is a period, at is a point on the map.

Past simple and present perfect together

- A finished visit with a finished time word takes the past simple: "I went to Madrid in 2020."
- The present perfect appears when the time is open or unstated: "I have been to Madrid."
- Never mix the two: "I have been to Madrid in 2020" is wrong because 2020 is finished time.
- The same contrast works for gone: "He went home at six" against "He has gone home".

Questions

Write your answer on the line under each question. Check your work with the answer key on the last page.

1. Tom is not here. He ___ to the post office.

2. She ___ to Italy three times.

3. Where is everyone? They ___ home.

4. I ___ never ___ to Japan.

5. He has ___ to the bank, so he will be back in an hour.

6. Where is the train? It ___ already.

7. Have you ever ___ to Scotland?

8. She has ___ at the office since eight o'clock.

9. My parents have ___ to the seaside for the weekend.

10. I ___ to Berlin in 2019.

11. She has ___ in Paris for six months.

12. Where has Sam ___? His coat is still here.

13. We have ___ to that restaurant before.

14. The dog has ___ into the garden.

15. The new museum is wonderful. We have ___ there three times.

16. He has ___ to the shops; he will not answer his phone.

17. How many times have you ___ to London?

18. The bus has ___, so we must walk.

19. She has ___ at home all day with a cold.

20. I have ___ to the new cafe twice this week.

Answer key

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1. **has gone** — Tom is still away now, so have gone is the correct present perfect form.
2. **has been** — Been to reports completed visits and experience.
3. **have gone** — The people are still away, so have gone fits the present result.
4. **have ... been** — Experience uses have been to; never appears between have and been.
5. **gone** — He is still at the bank or on the way, so the participle gone is right.
6. **has gone** — The train is not here now, so the present perfect has gone fits the result.
7. **been** — The question asks about experience, so have been to is the natural form.
8. **been** — Been at means she stayed at one place over a period that continues.
9. **gone** — They left for the weekend and are away, so gone is correct.
10. **went** — In 2019 is finished time, so the past simple went is required.
11. **been** — Been in marks a stay over a period; gone would mean she had left this place.
12. **gone** — The question asks about the present absence, so gone is the form.
13. **been** — Been to reports a completed visit in the speaker's experience.
14. **gone** — The dog moved away and is not here, so have gone fits the result.
15. **been** — Been to reports completed visits and experience, here counted three times.
16. **gone** — He is out now, so have gone shows the present absence.
17. **been** — Been to counts completed visits over a lifetime.
18. **gone** — Gone describes something that has left and cannot be caught now.
19. **been** — Been at means she stayed in one place; gone would suggest she is out.
20. **been** — Been to describes visits that are complete, even in the current week.