The Proper Use of Go, Went, and Gone

The verbs *go*, *went*, and *gone* are frequently misused. Here is a detailed explanation of the proper way to use them.

Go – The present tense form of the verb (the action of "going" is happening NOW)

- Everyday I go to school.
- I feel better about myself when I go to church.
- My sister and I go to the same doctor.
- My son goes to John A. Logan College.

Went – The past tense of this verb (the action of "going" is finished and over with)

- Last year Joe went to New York City for the first time in his life.
- Mary went to visit her sister yesterday but has not returned yet.
- When those three boys went for a hike last weekend, they took plenty of food with them.

Gone – The past tense form of this verb which must be used only after the words have, has, had, is, or any form of the word be.

- had gone
- has gone
- is gone
- have gone
- will be gone
- are gone
- were gone
- *am* gone

- I had gone three miles down the road before I realized that I was driving in the wrong direction.
- My parents were gone by the time I arrived home.
- Our mayor has gone to many different foreign countries.
- Everyone thought that the snow would be gone by early March.
- While I am gone to the store, keep a careful eye on the children.

Note: Never ever use *went* after *has*, *had*, *is*, *have*, *will be*, *are*, or *were*. It is **VERY** incorrect!

Wrong: No one could figure out where the little boy had went.

Correct: No one could figure out where the little boy **had gone**.