

Understanding usage of confusing English words "Ago" & "Before"

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Hello there! Ready for the English lesson for today. I hope you remember that we have discussed about confusing words in English earlier too. There are many words in English that can leave a non-native speaker slightly perplexed, because one wrong word used, eagetutor.com changes the complete meaning of what you are trying to convey. Two of the most confusing words of all times are 'ago' and 'before'. A lot of time, people end up using these two interchangeably, completely changing the meaning of what they are trying to convey. If you are make this mistake too, do not feel bad. It is only natural to make mistakes, after all that is how we learn. And now that you are here, we know that you would like to learn and ensure that you do not go on making mistakes like these. So, what is the difference between these two words, and what is the right way to use them?



What does 'Ago' mean?

Ago is a past tense word that signifies something that has already happened in the past. Like when you want to say that you have already visited a place in the past, you can say, I visited this place a few days/ weeks/ months ago. This notifies that this event took place in the history. The best example is story books – most stories start with 'A long time ago...' which shows that the events mentioned have already happened.

What does 'before' mean?

Before is a past perfect tense word signifying something that came earlier than the subject of the conversation. For example, you can say 'I came before anyone else in the class', which says that you were the first one to reach the class. Before can also be used as a word of caution. When you say, 'Before you jump down, make sure that the safety harness is in place'. Here, before is used to denote that you should do something before you proceed. Before can be used in context of various tenses and does not often have to denote past tense.

Again, as it is with anything to do with the rules of this language, practice is the key. Whenever you need to use either of these words in a sentence, think about the word you are using and test whether it is correct. Do not hesitate from asking for help and double-checking yourself. Happy

learning!

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-By Chander Madan

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