

The Modes Of The Major Scale - Aeolian

The Aeolian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues, rock, jazz, and many other musical genres. It is also called Natural Minor or Pure Minor. **Aeolian is considered a minor mode and is always the 6th mode in any major key.**

Aeolian produces a sad, dark, and mournful sound that is different than minor pentatonic and Dorian. It adds melodic half steps and more lick and string bending avenues. The scale degrees are 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, b6, and b7.

Play this mode over minor chords when treating each chord as a “*separate event*”. Also utilize Aeolian over ALL the chords in a minor key jam **UNLESS** the IV chord is major or the ii chord is minor.

If you want to play G Aeolian first utilize the “ACE” principle as taught in the previous lesson. Aeolian is the 6th mode. To play in G Aeolian ask yourself what major scale’s sixth note is a G? The answer is Bb. The sixth note of a Bb major scale is a G note.

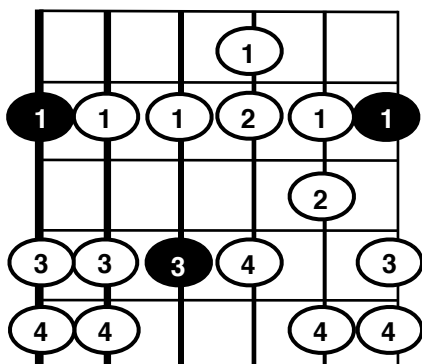
To play in G Aeolian start on the sixth note in a Bb major scale and play from the G note to the G note and you have G Aeolian. As you can see below, Bb major and G Aeolian are both constructed from the same notes.

G Aeolian = G, A, Bb, C, D, Eb, F
Bb Major = Bb, C, D, Eb, F, G, A
major and relative minor

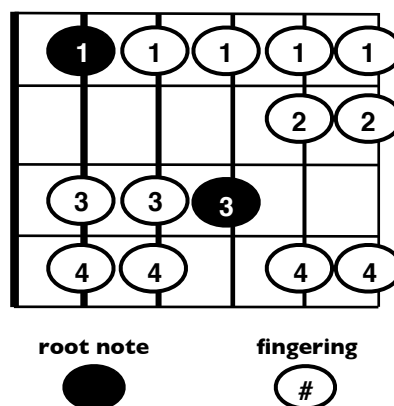
Remember, it’s all about MOOD and EMPHASIS when playing in the modes. Depending on the note you start on and emphasize, gives you the different moods and textures of each mode.

Below are two common shapes for Aeolian. One has the low root note on the low E-string and the other has the low root on the A-string. Find these patterns fast by using your first finger on the low root. Start with these, but learn all the shapes to play Aeolian across the whole neck as per the major scale lessons in the written lessons section of this series.

**Low E-string root
(first finger)**



**A-string root
(first finger)**



root note

fingering

KEY POINTS:

Aeolian is always the 6th mode of any major key.

Starting on and emphasizing the 6th note of any major scale produces the Aeolian Mode.

Aeolian is also called Natural Minor or Pure Minor.

Remember, it’s all about MOOD and EMPHASIS when playing in the modes