

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.

KEY POINTS:

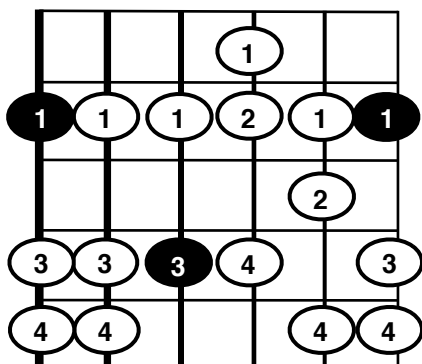
Aeolian is always the 6th mode of any major key.

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

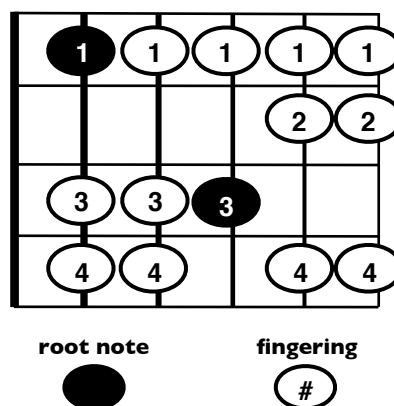
Aeolian is also called Natural Minor or Pure Minor.

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

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



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



The Modes Of The Major Scale - Lydian

The Lydian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in jazz and rock. **Lydian is a major mode and is always the 4th mode in any major key.**

Lydian is very similar to a major scale, (Ionian Mode), except it has a #4. This one alteration gives the mode a very pretty, emotive mood, almost mesmerizing. The Lydian mode scale degrees are 1, 2, 3, #4, 5, 6, and 7.

Lydian is not as commonly utilized as Ionian, but it brings a hip tension with that sharp fourth interval. Simply raise the 4th degree of any major scale a half step, and you have Lydian.

Play this mode over maj7, maj9, maj6, and maj6/9 chords when treating each chord as a "separate event". Also try it over Lydian modal chord progressions, power chords and major triads. Lydian also sounds great over rock ballads.

Lydian always is the 4th mode. To play in E Lydian ask yourself what major scale's fourth note is an E? The answer is B. The fourth note of a B major scale is an E note.

Start on the fourth note in a B major scale and play from the E note to the next E note and you have E Lydian. As you can see below, B major and E Lydian are both constructed from the same notes.

E Lydian = E, F#, G#, A#, B, C#, D#

B Major = B, C#, D#, E, F#, G#, A#

Remember, it's all about MOOD and EMPHASIS when playing in the modes. Which note you start on and emphasize produces the different moods and sound textures of each mode.

Below are two common shapes for Lydian. One has the low root note on the low E-string and the other has the low root on the A-string. As you can see they are almost identical to a major scale except your play a #4.

Find these patterns fast by using your first finger on the low root. Learn all the shapes to play Lydian across the whole neck as per the major scale lessons in the written lessons section of this series.

KEY POINTS:

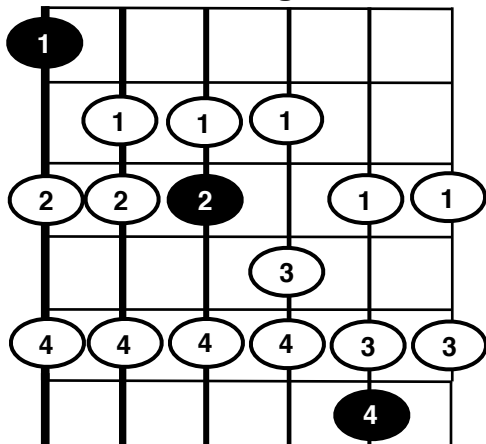
Lydian is always the 4th mode of any major key.

Starting on and emphasizing the 4th note of any major scale produces the Lydian Mode.

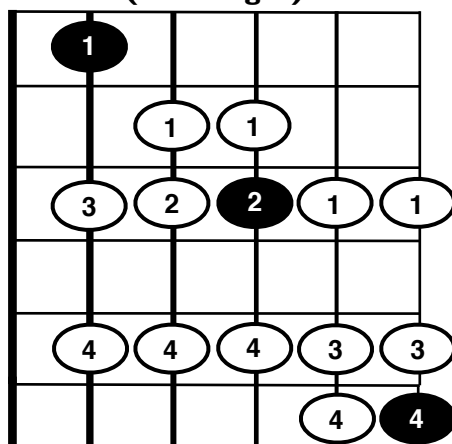
Lydian is often the mode of choice over major 7th and major 9th chords.

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

**Low E-string root
first finger**



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



The Modes Of The Major Scale - Phrygian

The Phrygian Mode produces a very distinctive dark, exotic, Spanish type of sound. Often its called the Spanish Minor Scale. **Phrygian is a minor mode and is always the 3rd mode in any major key.**

Often you will hear the Phrygian mode played in hard rock, metal, fusion, and flamenco guitar. You don't hear this mode utilized as often as Aeolian or Dorian, but it is super fun to experiment with and get some killer exotic tones.

You can try this mode over minor chords, but it can sound a tad exotic, some may say dissonant. Often its the mode of choice when you see a b2 chord, or play it over a m7 chord, minor triad, or power chords.

Phrygian has only one note different than the Aeolian. Phrygian has a flatted 2nd, (b2), while Aeolian has a natural 2nd. The scale degrees of Phrygian are 1, b2, b3, 4, 5, b6, b7.

Phrygian is always the 3rd mode in any major key. To play in E Phrygian ask yourself what major scale's third note is a E? The answer is C. The third note of a C major scale is E. Play C major scales but emphasize the E notes. C major and E Phrygian consist of the same notes.

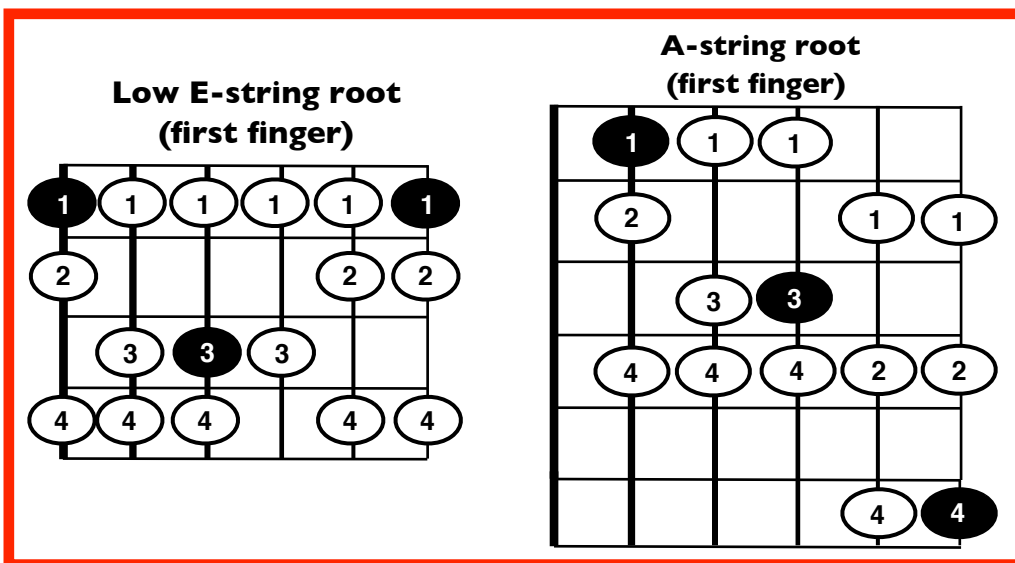
C Major scale - C, D, E, F, G, A, B
E Phrygian - E, F, G, A, B, C, D

Remember, it's all about MOOD and EMPHASIS when playing in the modes. Which note you start on and emphasize produces the different moods and sound textures of each mode.

Below are two common shapes for Phrygian. 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.

Don't think of "shapes" or "positions" as modes. Get in the habit of looking at the entire fretboard as the vehicle for the mode, not just a certain position.

Learn the mode and its interval structure across the entire fretboard. Start with the scales below, but learn all the positions as per the major scales lessons in the written lesson section of this series. Try to get creative with this mode and let your ear guide you to what sounds best - enjoy!



KEY POINTS:

Phrygian is always the 3rd mode of any major key.

Starting on and emphasizing the 3rd note of any major scale produces the Phrygian Mode.

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

The Modes Of The Major Scale - Dorian

The Dorian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues, rock, and many other musical genres. **Dorian is considered a minor mode and is always the 2nd mode in any major key.**

Dorian produces a mystical, minor sound that is a bit sweeter than Aeolian. The Dorian scale degrees are 1, 2, b3, 4, 5, 6, and b7. There is only one note difference between Dorian and Aeolian - the 6th.

I find myself using Dorian all the time as it sounds awesome in rock, hard rock, blues, and even in some jazzy scenarios.

Utilize Dorian over all the chords in a minor key jam when there is a major IV chord or a minor ii chord. You can also use Dorian over minor type chords when treating each chord as a "separate event".

Remember Dorian is the 2nd mode in any major key. To play A Dorian the question is what major scale's 2nd note is an A note? The answer is G major. A Dorian would be converted back to its parent scale of G major.

To play in A Dorian start on the 2nd note in a G major scale and play from the A note till the next A note and you have A Dorian. You are playing a G major scale from the A to the A and voila', you have A Dorian.

Playing G major scales starting on the 2nd note and emphasizing the A notes, not the G notes, produces A Dorian. This establishes the tonal center as A. G major and A Dorian are constructed from the same notes.

G Major scale – G, A, B, C, D, E, F#

A Dorian scale - A, B, C, D, E, F#, G

Below are two common shapes for Dorian. One has the low root note on the low E-string and the other has the low root note on the A-string. Find these patterns fast using your first finger on the low root.

Start with these scales below, then learn all the shapes to play Dorian across the neck. For more info refer to the major scale written lessons in this series.

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

root note

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

fingering

KEY POINTS:

Dorian is always the 2nd mode of any major key.

Starting on and emphasizing the 2nd note of any major scale produces the Dorian Mode.

Dorian has one note difference than Aeolian. Dorian has a natural 6th while Aeolian has a b6. Dorian has a bit more sweeter, mystical sound than Aeolian.

The Modes Of The Major Scale - Mixolydian

The Mixolydian Mode is a seven-note scale often used in blues and rock. **Mixolydian is considered a major mode and is always the 5th mode in any major key.** Often it's the mode of choice played over dominant chords, like dominant 7ths and 9ths.

Mixolydian is basically a major scale, (Ionian Mode), but with a b7. The scale degrees are 1,2,3,4,5,6,b7. Try this mode over dominant chords like 7th and 9th chords when treating each chord as a "separate event".

Mixolydian is the 5th mode and the key is to shift the tonal center to the root of the mode. For example, to play G Mixolydian over a G7 chord ask yourself what major scale's fifth note is a G? The answer is C.

The fifth note of a C major scale is a G note. Play C major scales over a G7 chord but emphasize the G notes for G Mixolydian. C major and G Mixolydian consist of the same notes:

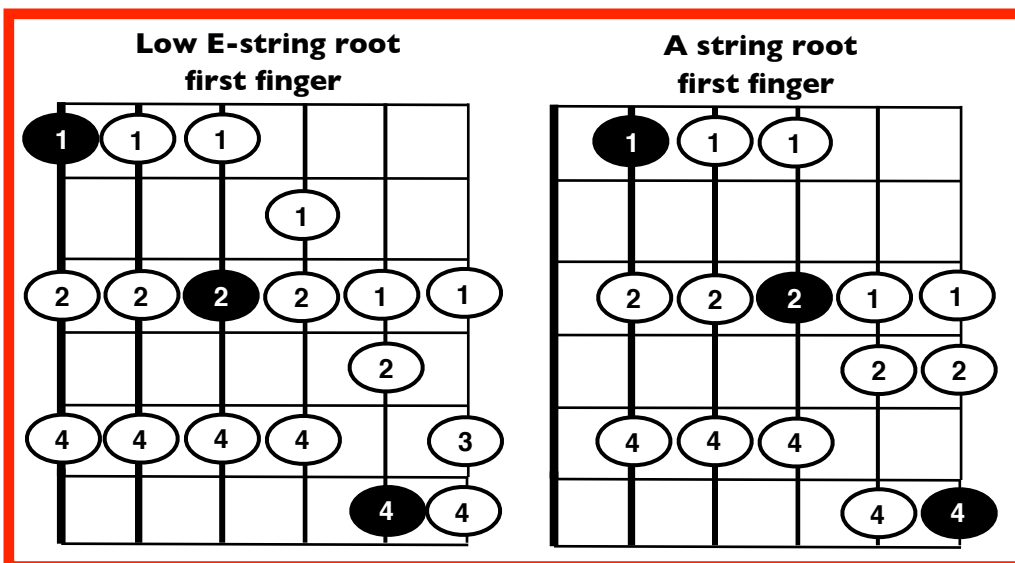
C Major scale - C, D, E, F, G, A, B
G Mixolydian - G, A, B, C, D, E, F

This is an incredibly useful mode, especially for blues and jazz playing. To play E Mixolydian over an E7 chord ask yourself what major scale's fifth note is a E? The answer is A.

The fifth note of a A major scale is an E note. Play A major scales over an E7 chord but emphasize the E notes. A major and E Mixolydian consist of the same notes.

Remember, it's all about MOOD and EMPHASIS when playing in the modes. Which note you start on and emphasize produces the different moods and sound textures of each mode.

Below are two common shapes for Mixolydian. 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 and try them in various keys over the appropriate jam tracks - and have fun!



KEY POINTS:

Mixolydian is always the 5th mode of any major key.

Starting on and emphasizing the 5th note of any major scale produces the Mixolydian Mode.

Mixolydian is often the mode of choice over dominant 7th chords.