

## LET'S GET MODAL!

Let's take our G major scale:

Root      2<sup>nd</sup>      3<sup>rd</sup>      4<sup>th</sup>      5<sup>th</sup>      6<sup>th</sup>      7<sup>th</sup> degrees

Then after the root the different 'degrees' of the scale.

Each of these different 'degrees' creates a different interval with the note adjacent to it and also with the root itself.

tone      tone      semi-tone      tone      tone      tone      semi-tone

tone  
major 3rd  
perfect 4th  
perfect 5th  
major 6th  
major 7th

Let's explore the modes of G major!

### 1<sup>st</sup> degree

maj 3rd

maj 7th

Gmaj<sup>7</sup>  
or  
GΔ<sup>7</sup>  
↑  
our  
chord  
symbols!

This, our G major scale, is also known as the IONIAN mode. The major 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> are giving it its tonal identity.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> degree (starting on A)

minor 3rd

major 6th

minor 7th

Amin<sup>7</sup>  
or  
A-7

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> degree is known as the DORIAN mode, a minor mode due to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> but light relatively due to the major 6<sup>th</sup> in terms of colour.



## 3<sup>rd</sup> degree

minor 2nd

minor 6th

minor 3rd

minor 7th

Bmin<sup>7</sup> $\flat$ <sup>9</sup>  
or  
B-7 $\flat$ <sup>9</sup>

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> degree is called the PHRYGIAN mode. This is an extremely cool mode and has a very 'Spanish' feel due to the minor 2<sup>nd</sup> and minor 6<sup>th</sup>. It's a darker minor mode to the Dorian but NOT the darkest of all!!



## 4<sup>th</sup> degree (I've gone down the octave as I hate ledger lines!)

raised 4<sup>th</sup> or #11 ! 'TRITONE'!!

major 3rd

major 7th

Cmaj<sup>7</sup> $\sharp$ <sup>11</sup>  
or  
CΔ<sup>7</sup> $\sharp$ <sup>11</sup>

Our 4<sup>th</sup> degree is the LYDIAN mode, a major mode and the 'brightest' of all the modes, even the IONIAN, due to the raised 4<sup>th</sup>, #11. Debussy LOVED this mode!



## 5<sup>th</sup> degree

major 3rd

**DOMINANT SEVENTH!**

D<sup>7</sup>

Our 5<sup>th</sup> degree is the MIXOLYDIAN. It's very important, as, being a dominant 7<sup>th</sup>, it appears every time there is a II. V. I. cadence (i.e. a perfect cadence). AND, it is the second of the modes we are using for our IMPROV section!

## 6<sup>th</sup> degree

minor 6th

minor 3rd

minor 7th

E<sup>min</sup>7<sup>b</sup>13  
or  
E-7<sup>b</sup>13

Our 6<sup>th</sup> degree is the AEOLIAN mode, my personal favourite because Fauré used it all the time. It's a minor mode but with a plangent minor 6<sup>th</sup> but major 2<sup>nd</sup> and the FIRST of our two modes that we will be using in our IMPROV section.

## 7<sup>th</sup> degree

min 2<sup>nd</sup>

diminished 5<sup>th</sup>

minor 6<sup>th</sup>

minor 3<sup>rd</sup>

minor 7<sup>th</sup>

F<sup>#</sup>min<sup>7</sup>b<sup>9</sup>b<sup>5</sup>b<sup>13</sup>  
OR  
F<sup>#</sup>Ø7

This, my friends, is the LOCRIAN mode. The darkest of them all; if you are feeling like having a moment of deep introspection, go and improvise with this mode! Its minor 2<sup>nd</sup>, diminished 5<sup>th</sup> and minor 6<sup>th</sup> not only provide us with anguish, but also the so-called 'Tristan' chord, or 'half-diminished' chord.

P.S. lots of composers used this chord



before Wagner but he seems to take credit for it!

SO, TO RECAP!

G major scale

The image displays seven musical staves, each representing a different mode of the G major scale. The notes are as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> degree: G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G (IONIAN MODE)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> degree: G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G (DORIAN MODE)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> degree: G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G (PHRYGIAN MODE)
- 4<sup>th</sup> degree: G, A, B, C, D, E, F#, G (LYDIAN MODE)
- 5<sup>th</sup> degree: G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G (MIXOLYDIAN MODE)
- 6<sup>th</sup> degree: G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G (AEOLIAN MODE)
- 7<sup>th</sup> degree: G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G (LOCRIAN MODE)

OUR TWO MODES THAT WE ARE USING ARE RIGHT THERE,

THE **AEOLIAN** starting on E

+

**MIXOLYDIAN** starting on D

ALL FROM OUR G MAJOR SCALE

(who would have thought it?!)

THE NEXT STEP!

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO WANT TO TAKE THIS FURTHER (and I hope that's all of you!)

TRY PRACTISING THE MODES FROM  
**LIGHT TO DARK**, STARTING ON THE SAME ROOT NOTE!

**G LYDIAN**  
D major scale G to G

**G IONIAN**  
G major scale G to G

**G MIXOLYDIAN**  
C major scale G to G

**G DORIAN**  
F major scale G to G

**G AEOLIAN**  
B flat major scale G to G

**G PHRYGIAN**  
E flat major scale G to G

**G LOCRIAN**  
A flat major scale G to G

**Flatten the G and you get G flat LYDIAN!**

## OTHER COOL AND IMPORTANT MODES

### 6<sup>th</sup> degree of B flat melodic minor

Gmin7<sup>b</sup>5#9  
or  
GØ7#9

A musical staff in treble clef showing the 6th degree of the B flat melodic minor scale. The notes are G4, A4, Bb4, C5, D5, Eb5, F5, G5. A red bracket underlines the interval from G4 to Bb4, labeled 'minor 3rd'. Another red bracket underlines the interval from G4 to F5, labeled 'minor 7th'. A black line connects G4 to Eb5, labeled 'DIMINISHED 5TH'. A black line connects G4 to A4, labeled 'maj 2nd'.

### G Locrian #2

Like our Locrian from our 'major' set of modes but this melodic minor scale has a major 2<sup>nd</sup>, FULL of colour – ANOTHER VERSION OF THE 'TRISTAN' or half diminished chord.



### 7<sup>th</sup> degree of A flat melodic minor

G alt  
or  
G7<sup>b</sup>9#9<sup>b</sup>5<sup>b</sup>13

A musical staff in treble clef showing the 7th degree of the A flat melodic minor scale. The notes are G4, Ab4, Bb4, C5, Db5, Eb5, F5, G5. A red bracket underlines the interval from G4 to Bb4, labeled 'effectively a major 3rd'. Another red bracket underlines the interval from G4 to F5, labeled 'dominant 7th'. A black line connects G4 to Ab4, labeled 'min 2nd'. A black line connects G4 to C5, labeled '#9'. A black line connects G4 to Db5, labeled 'b5'. A black line connects G4 to Eb5, labeled 'b13'.

### G ALTERED

Contact me personally for this one, all insomniacs etc. BUT, it's not complicated!!!

It's just a G dominant 7<sup>th</sup> with a LOT OF SPICE!!!

