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## BEGINNER'S GUIDE ELLEN TAKES US DEEPER INTO THE MODES ZONE

**H**ey low-enders! Welcome back to the second instalment of our study of the modes of the major scale. Last month we were introduced to the seven modes and how they correlate to each degree (or step) within a certain key (or parent scale). Knowledge of this frees us up to play with confidence across the fretboard. Let's have a quick recap.

As you can see from the table, certain modes can be played over particular chords of the harmonised major scale. This is because each mode has certain attributes that work well with certain chords.

For example, Ionian, Lydian and Mixolydian all have a major 3rd, so they work well over major triads. That said, if they are 7 chords then the Ionian and Lydian will work over a major7 chord, but the Mixolydian mode should be played over the dominant7 chord.

This month we will look in depth at the more 'major' sounding modes. See **Example 2**.

| Scale Degree | Mode       | ...which can be played over these chords | chord symbol      |
|--------------|------------|--|-------------------|
| 1st - I      | Ionian     | major – major7                           | maj, maj7, m7     |
| 2nd - II     | Dorian     | minor – minor7                           | min, min7, m7     |
| 3rd - III    | Phrygian   | minor – minor7                           | min, min7, m7     |
| 4th - IV     | Lydian     | major – major7                           | maj, maj7, m7     |
| 5th - V      | Mixolydian | major – dominant7                        | maj, dom7         |
| 6th - VI     | Aeolian    | minor – minor7                           | min, min7, m7     |
| 7th - VII    | Locrian    | minor – minor7b5                         | min, min7b5, m7b5 |

### Example 1

Example 1 shows fretboard diagrams for seven modes: Ionian, Dorian, Phrygian, Lydian, Mixolydian, Aeolian, and Locrian. Each mode is represented by a staff with a bass clef and a fretboard diagram below it. The fretboard diagrams show the notes of the mode across the strings and frets, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-5.

### Example 2

Example 2 shows fretboard diagrams for three modes: Ionian, Lydian, and Mixolydian. Each mode is represented by a staff with a bass clef and a fretboard diagram below it. The fretboard diagrams show the notes of the mode across the strings and frets, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-5. In the Lydian and Mixolydian diagrams, the 4th and 7th frets are highlighted in bold to indicate chord tones.

The Ionian mode is also known as the major scale and consists of the following formula:

Root – major 2nd – **major 3rd** – perfect 4th – **perfect 5th** – major 6th – **major 7th**

The Lydian mode consists of this formula:

Root – major 2nd – **major 3rd** – *augmented 4th* – **perfect 5th** – major 6th – **major 7th**

And the Mixolydian mode consists of this formula:

Root – major 2nd – **major 3rd** – perfect 4th – **perfect 5th** – major 6th – *minor 7th*

As you can see, I have highlighted in bold the chord tones of each mode/scale as they define which chord goes with which mode. This way you can see that the chord tones of Ionian and Lydian are the same (M3, P5 and maj7th) but for Mixolydian the 7th is flattened so you now have (M3, P5 and a minor or flattened 7th). This means that the Ionian and Lydian modes can be played over a major7 chord, but Mixolydian is used to play over a dominant7 chord as it has both a major 3rd and a flat 7.

I have also indicated in italics the only differences the Lydian and Mixolydian have from the Ionian. The Lydian is just like the Ionian (major scale), but with an augmented (or sharpened) 4th while the Mixolydian has a flattened (or minor) 7th. Until next month, have fun! ■