

Modes (use the [Triads](#) and [Intervals](#) sheets for reference)

Let's take one more look at our two-octave C major scale:

C - D - E - F - G - A - B - C' - D' - E' - F' - G' - A' - B' - C''
 R - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - R' - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - R''

Basically, the modes are constructed by running the sequence from a note to its octave. The first mode, from C to C' is the major scale itself; modally it is known as the Ionian mode. The second mode, D to D', is the Dorian mode. The full table below shows the names and intervals of all seven major-scale modes:

Mode	Notes	Whole/Half Steps	Compared to major scale
Ionian	C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C	W-W-H-W-W-W-H	Major scale
Dorian	D-E-F-G-A-B-C-D	W-H-W-W-W-H-W	b3, b7
Phrygian	E-F-G-A-B-C-D-E	H-W-W-W-H-W-W	b2, b3, b6, b7
Lydian	F-G-A-B-C-D-E-F	W-W-W-H-W-W-H	#4
Mixolydian	G-A-B-C-D-E-F-G	W-W-H-W-W-H-W	b7
Aeolian	A-B-C-D-E-F-G-A	W-H-W-W-H-W-W	b3, b6, b7 (natural minor scale)
Locrian	B-C-D-E-F-G-A-B	H-W-W-H-W-W-W	b2, b3, b5, b6, b7

The key to understanding the modes is in the 3rd and 4th columns of the table above. You can also refer to the table on p.2 of the [Intervals](#) sheet; each column is a mode, from Ionian to Locrian.

The changing progression of whole-step/half-step sequences is what gives each mode its respective quality, and seeing how each one differs from the major scale provides a valuable point of reference. There are actually some pretty cool mathematical sequences associated with the modes, but for now, it's more important that any references to intervals, triads, or modes are universally understood.

Play through each of the modes to get a handle on the distinct tonality and "flavor" of each one. Some of them, such as the Lydian, Ionian, and Mixolydian, are "brighter" in sound, while the other four get progressively "darker" as more flats are included (in order: Dorian, Aeolian, Phrygian, Locrian).

The modes in order from "bright" to "dark":

Lydian, Ionian, Mixolydian, Dorian, Aeolian, Phrygian, Locrian.