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Practical Modes Ionian

Guitar Skills

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Harmonising

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Diads

When we harmonise a key or a scale, we start by working with diads. This is the concept of two notes that harmonise together to create a chord, and we generally start by adding the 3rd. Using the notes of the scale, and ONLY the notes of the scale, we gradually build up the chords. For example, let's start with the root note of G.

G A B C D E F# G

If you start on G and play the note a third up, you get B. This is our first diad.

When you put G and B together, you get the sound of a major chord. So there we go, we have our first chord in our harmonised Ionian scale! Let's do the same process with the next note along, A.

G A B C D E F# G

If you start on A and play the note a third up, you get C. This is our second diad.

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Now that we've covered the scale aspect of Ionian, let's take a look at how to create chords within the Ionian mode. This is the often forgotten step when we first start looking at modes, and honestly, should be the most important!

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We now have our second diad, which is notes A and C. When you put these two notes together, in that order, we have the basis of an A minor sounding chord. Let's follow this process now for each of the notes, moving up the E string.

This is a great exercise that you can do over and over again, in as many different keys as you can think of! It's a really good idea to do it all on one string as well, and these same "shapes" apply to the E, A and D string notes. So, for example, if you wanted to do the C major scale in diads, simply start on the **3rd fret of the A string**, and you're away!

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