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# Practical Modes

## Ionian

Guitar Skills

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## Harmonising

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### Barre Chords

Let's now take the time to learn the complete triad version of the harmonised Ionian scale. All we need to add, to make the triad, is the 5th degree. This works very much the same way as the Diad. We choose the note from the scale and add the third above and 5th above, using **ONLY** the notes of the scale. Let's take a look at how this works for the G chord, the first note of the G Ionian mode.

G A B C D E F# G



If you start on G and play the third and fifth above, you get the first triad. This is a G Major chord.

When we put these three notes together anywhere on the fretboard we get the full G major chord. We repeat the same process for each degree of the scale. So let's pretend we've already done the A and jump up to the B and see what we get:

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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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G A **B** C **D** E **F#** G



If you start on B and play the third and fifth above, you get B, D and F#. This is a B minor chord.

So, there we have it! We would repeat this process for every note of the scale. We end up with the following chords:

Gmaj Am Bm Cmaj Dmaj Em F#dim Gmaj

We can play all of these chords as barre chords - You can view these on the low E String in the fretboards section.

So, now we have the diads and triads for G major, get these practised, and in the next lesson, we'll formalise this approach so that you can start applying it to every single key!

## ...maj, min, dim?

By harmonising the major scale in triads we get three types of chord, major, minor and diminished. But how do we know which is which? This is covered in detail in our Essential Theory course, but we'll give a quick breakdown here too.

All chords are built using their own formula, you simply have to memorise them! The numbers refer to the scale degree relative to the major scale. This also tells you the **gaps between the notes**. **Here are the rules:**

**Major** 1 3 5

**Minor** 1 b3 5

**Diminished** 1 b3 b5

By checking the distance between the notes we get when harmonising the scale we can make sure we're labelling the chord with the correct name. Let's check a couple from the above example:

G A ~~B~~ C D E F# G

The distance from G to B is 4 frets on the guitar, which in music theory is 2 tones. This is called a major 3rd. The distance from G to D is 7 semitones which are a 5th. So we end up with **1 3 5 ie a G major chord.**

G A ~~B~~ C D E F# G

The distance from B to D is 3 frets on the guitar, which in music theory is one tone and one semitone – a minor 3rd. The distance from B to F# is 7 semitones which is a 5th. So we end up with **1 b3 5 ie a B minor chord.**

Feel free to take our word for it, or if you prefer you can create every triad (G B D, A C E, B D F# etc and check the intervals for yourself!



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