

FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES

# The **Practical** Guide to MODERN **MUSIC** THEORY **FOR GUITARISTS**

With over 180 minutes of live audio examples

**Second Edition**

Major, Minor and Modal Theory

Chord Construction and Transposition

Modal Soloing & Pentatonic Substitution

Example Licks for Every Scale

Backing Tracks Put Theory into Practice

JOSEPH **ALEXANDER**

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# The Practical Guide to Modern Music Theory for Guitarists

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# Introduction

“I need to learn guitar theory”...

This is *the* most common statement I hear as a private guitar teacher.

Consider what that statement means to you. Why do you think you’ll benefit from ‘*knowing guitar theory*’? What will you do with it? How will it make you a better player? What is your actual *goal*?

My belief is that the above statement has a couple of flaws. Firstly, what is *guitar theory*? The guitar is a musical instrument, and there is no specific *guitar theory*. What I will teach you in this book is *music theory* as it applies to the guitar, from a guitarist’s point of view.

A rock guitarist quite rightly approaches music (and music theory), very differently from a classical pianist. When we solo, we use mainly *pentatonic* and *modal* scales so our musical perspective does not necessarily begin from The Major and Melodic Minor scales as it might if we were classically trained. The first scale most guitar players learn on the guitar is the *minor pentatonic*. It’s our ‘go to’ sound before we start to explore more advanced concepts.

Today is the day to stop thinking of yourself as a guitarist who plays music. You are a musician who plays the guitar.

It is important to remember though; theory is simply a way to communicate ideas. Just because the classical and rock player may explain an idea differently, it doesn’t mean that one is wrong, it just means they have a different perspective and each is useful in different ways.

My second issue with the statement “I need to learn guitar theory”, is that *there is no point in knowing any theory unless you can apply it musically*.

Imagine for a second that you knew all the rules of English grammar: You knew all about pronouns, the subjunctive, prepositions and modal verbs etc.... Imagine you knew all that, *but* you didn’t know how to speak. That’s a good analogy for studying theory without learning the vocabulary to apply it. What kind of musician do you want to be?

I’m writing this book because I feel that there is a tendency for guitarists to know the theory, but not how to make music with it. In this book I give real, constructive examples of *everything* that is covered. If you only know the theory and not how to put it into practice, it’s a bit like asking someone to describe the colour blue. Isn’t it easier to have a little blue in your palette just to show them?

There are many different ways to describe the ideas in this book. I hope the way I approach and demonstrate each subject works for you. There are audio tracks for every important concept which you can download from [www.fundamental-changes.com/audio-downloads](http://www.fundamental-changes.com/audio-downloads) completely for free.

It is important that you can hear each concept in context, even if you don’t immediately understand the idea. You’ll be surprised how much you can pick up through just listening to each example. Music is about sounds and feelings, not words on paper, so don’t panic if an idea seems complex at first. If all else fails, please email me via the above website and I’ll do my best to answer your questions.

# Part One – The Major Scale Construction, Chords and Harmony

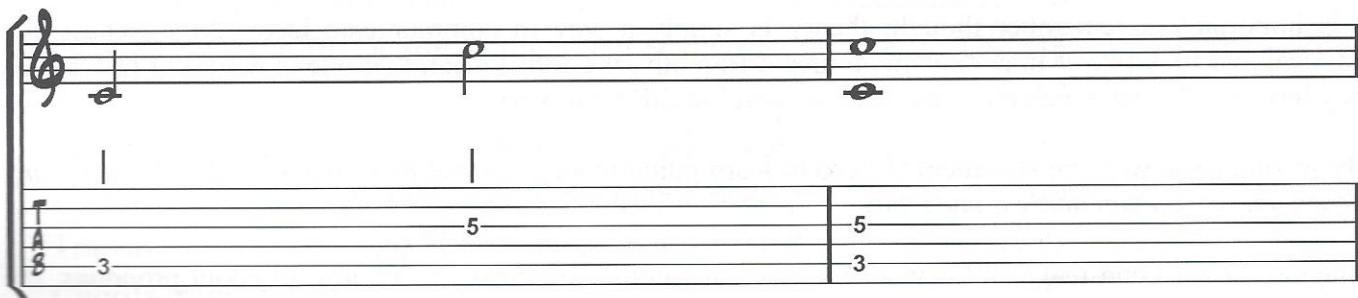
Part One of this book discusses the ‘basics’ of western music. It is essential that you understand these concepts before moving on to Part Two, where we discuss the *modes* of the major scale and the many approaches that we can take when using them to soloing.

In Part One, we examine how scales are constructed, what makes them unique, their harmonisation (chords), and transposing progressions into different keys. We also learn how musicians communicate with a standardised language based on Roman numerals and how accurately name the different notes in a scale.

## What is a Scale?

A scale is a series of steps between two fixed musical points. These two fixed points are always the same note, but in different *octaves*. For example these points could both be the note ‘C’, one being higher in pitch than the other:

### Example 1a:



(Go to [www.fundamental-changes.com/audio-downloads](http://www.fundamental-changes.com/audio-downloads) to get all the audio examples and backing tracks for this book).

Listen to the above example. You can hear that while the notes are fundamentally the same, they are at a different *pitch*. A scale is simply a way to break up the space in between these notes.

One way to think about this is to imagine a ladder where the first and last rungs are fixed, but you can change the spacings of any of the rungs in between. Some spaces may be smaller, some larger but however you arrange them, after climbing the ladder, you will always end up at the same fixed place.

The rungs on our ladder are the notes that we play, and the spaces between the rungs are the distances between these notes. These distances are measured in *tones* and *semitones*. – two semitones are equal in distance to one tone.

It is this arrangement of the notes that makes each scale sound different and gives them a different musical feeling.

Once you have ‘set’ the rungs of your ladder, you can carry your ladder to any different location (note) and set it down somewhere new. In the same way, any scale of the same *type* always has the same pattern of tones and semitones, no matter what your starting note is.

For example, the pattern of tones and semitones is the same whether you're playing the scale of C Major, F# Major, Bb Major or any other *major* scale.

Each scale of the same type always has the same pattern.

## The Major Scale

### Overview

Even though it is not one of the most commonly used scales for guitarists, The Major scale has been the fundamental building block of western harmony for the past 800 years. Most of the chords you hear in music can be formed from this scale. It is essential to understand how this scale works because its step pattern is the yardstick by which we describe *any* other musical sound.

Of course, the major scale is used in rock, but often its extremely happy vibe is a bit too bright for us. There are some great exceptions however. Check out **Friends** by Joe Satriani for a truly triumphant major feeling.

Other tunes you might want to check out, depending on your musical taste are:

**Jessica** by the Allman Brothers

The main theme from **Cliffs of Dover** by Eric Johnson, (this kicks in at 2:32)

Or even, **Like a Rolling Stone** by Bob Dylan

Often, you may find that a melody is created from the major scale, before a guitar solo is played in a minor key for a more rocky sound, for example **Jump** by Van Halen

It is extremely important that we understand how the major scale functions, and how to create melody and harmony from it before launching into the rest of this book, so make sure you are comfortable with the ideas in the following sections before moving on to part two.

### Construction

Going back to our ladder analogy, we can say that the particular sound or 'flavour' of the major scale is due to the way the rungs are spaced between the two fixed points at each end. In other words, there is a set pattern of tones and semitones that gives the major scale its unique quality. Let's discover what they are.

The best way to begin is to examine the scale of C Major. There are no sharps or flats in this scale, and if you were playing a keyboard, you would start and end on the note C, and play only the white notes (no black ones).

The notes, therefore, in the scale of C Major are;

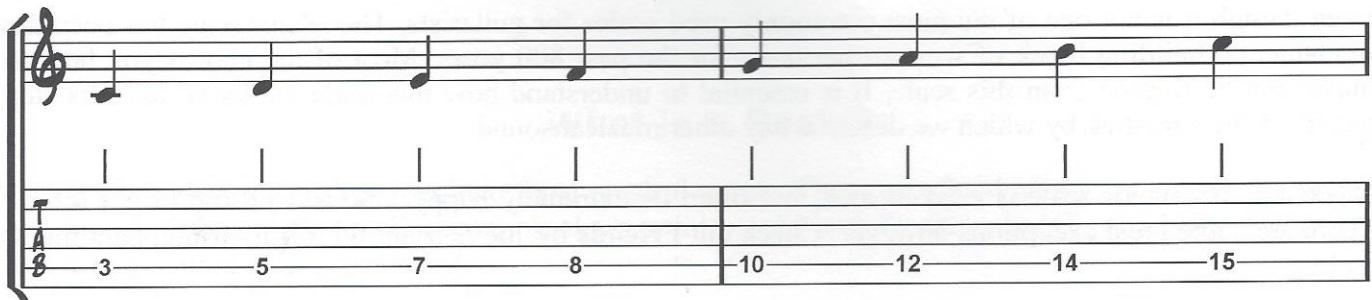
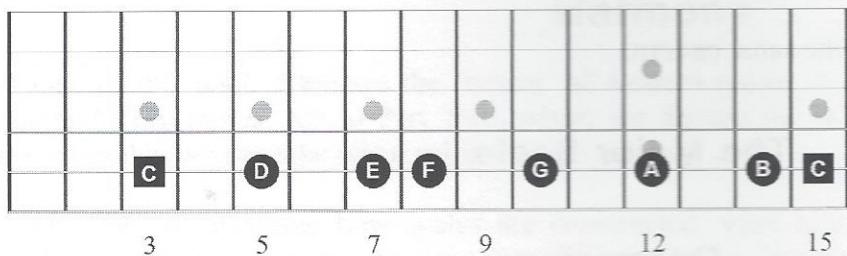
**C D E F G A B**

The note 'C' is the *root* of the scale, often referred to as the 'tonic'

You may be used to playing scales on the guitar across the neck, however to begin with, and to understand how the patterns of tones and semitones lie, we will examine this scale played along one string:

**Example 2a:**

### C Major



Each fret on the guitar is one semitone, (two frets = one tone) so you can see that the distance between C and D is 1 tone, and between E and F it is one semitone.

When the scale is laid out like this, it is clear to see that the distance between some notes is 1 tone, and between others it is 1 semitone.

Listen to, and play example 2a now. Memorise this pattern as it is essential to everything that comes after.

The previous diagram is the ladder for the major scale. Wherever we place the first note, the pattern of tones and semitones must always remain the same if we are to create the exact sound of the major scale.

The set pattern is this:

**Tone, Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone, Semitone.**

C – D Tone

D – E Tone

E – F Semitone

F – G Tone

G – A Tone

A – B Tone

B – C Semitone.

As these notes are important building blocks of all music, and always form the same pattern of tones and semitones in any key, they are given a formula:

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7**

Simple as that may seem, we use this formula to help describe every other scale. For example, later in this book you will see the formula:

**1 2 3 #4 5 6 7**

This is a shorthand way of saying that this scale is identical in every way to the major scale, except that the 4th note has been *sharpened* by a semitone.

In our original key of C Major we had the notes

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

So the new formula tells us that the notes would be

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

## Construction of the Major Scale in Other Keys

To form the Major Scale in the key of C, we simply started on the note C and ran alphabetically through the notes until we got back to our starting point. Let's try this idea starting in a different place, for example, the note 'G':

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

We can check to see if the rungs on our ladder are the same. Remember the major scale pattern:

Tone, Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone, Semitone.

**G – A = Tone**

**A – B = Tone**

**B – C = Semitone**

**C – D = Tone**

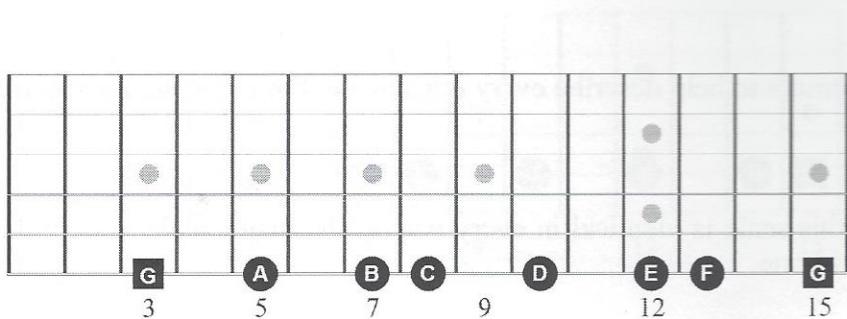
**D – E = Tone**

**E – F = Semitone**

**F – G = Tone**

Hopefully you can already see that there is a problem with the pattern of tones and semitones over the last 2 notes, F and G. This is easier to see on a guitar neck.

**Example 3a:**



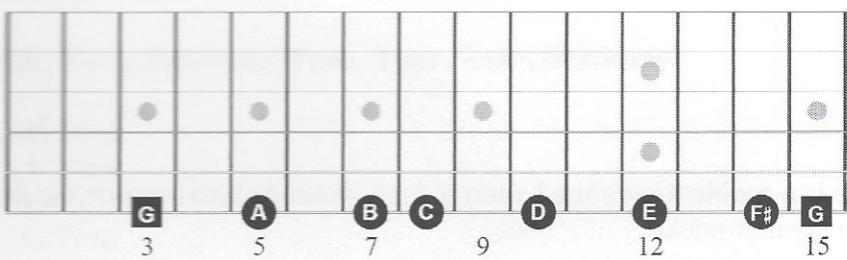
A musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. It shows a sequence of eighth notes starting from G (3rd string) and moving up through A, B, C, D, E, F, and back to G. The staff is aligned with the fretboard diagram above it, with vertical lines connecting the notes to their corresponding positions on the fretboard.

Play through this example and listen to how it sounds. Can you hear something that doesn't belong in a major scale?

The last rung on the ladder should be a semitone, and the one before that should be a tone, like this:

**Example 3b:**

G Major



A musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature. It shows a sequence of eighth notes starting from G (3rd string) and moving up through A, B, C, D, E, F#, and back to G. The staff is aligned with the fretboard diagram above it, with vertical lines connecting the notes to their corresponding positions on the fretboard.

To create our major scale pattern of **Tone, Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone, Tone Semitone**, we had to raise the 7th note of the scale by one semitone.

This scale is now identical in construction to the C major scale that we studied in the last chapter:  
**1 2 3 4 5 6 7**

Before we raised the 7th note to F#, we would have described it as:  
**1 2 3 4 5 6 b7**

We needed to raise the 7th note to make it conform to the major scale formula.

## The Circle of 5ths

I did not choose the scale of G major by chance. It is a rule of music that, “if you ascend a major scale five notes, and begin a new scale from that point, you must always sharpen the 7th note of the new scale to fit it to the major scale formula.”

That sounds complex on paper, so let’s recap the previous example and look at a few others.

Beginning with the scale of C major, I ascended 5 notes. C, D, E, F, **G**

From the 5th note, G, I formed a new scale, using all the notes from the previous major scale of C:  
**G A B C D E F G.**

I then sharpened (or raised) the 7th note of the new scale to make it match the formula for a major scale.  
**G A B C D E F# G**

This is now the scale of G Major, because it obeys the pattern **Tone, Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone, Tone Semitone**.

Let’s study the next example:

Our last scale was G major. Ascend 5 notes; **G A B C D**.

Form a new scale from D and include all the notes from the previous scale:  
**D E F# G A B C D**

Sharpen the 7th note:  
**D E F# G A B C# D**

This is now a scale of D major. As you can see, it follows the set pattern of tones and semitones:

### Example 3c:

D Major

The diagram illustrates the notes of a D Major scale. At the top, a guitar neck is shown with six strings and twelve frets. The notes are labeled: D (3rd string, 3rd fret), E (3rd string, 5th fret), F# (3rd string, 7th fret), G (3rd string, 9th fret), A (3rd string, 12th fret), B (3rd string, 15th fret), C# (4th string, 12th fret), and D (4th string, 15th fret). Below the neck, a musical staff shows the corresponding notes: D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#, and D. Below the staff, a guitar neck is shown with vertical tick marks at the 3rd, 5th, 7th, 8th, 10th, 12th, 14th, and 15th frets.

Play through this example now so you can hear that the scale is correct.

We will repeat this process one more time:

Our last scale was D major. Ascend 5 notes; D E F# G A

Form a new scale from A and include all the notes from the previous scale:

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

Sharpen the 7th note:

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

We have now formed the scale of A major. Test it in the same way to make sure it is correct.

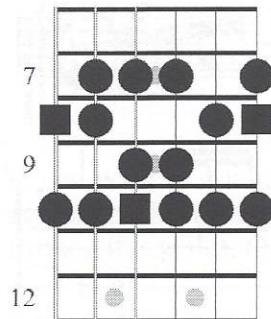
Following this rule, we can form all ‘sharp key’ major scales. This rule is called ‘The Circle of Fifths’ because of the way you always form a new scale from the fifth note of the previous one.

## Playing the Major Scale in One Position

Until now, we have spread out the notes of the major scale along one string so we can view it as a piano player would do; in a linear fashion. When we’re starting out as guitarists however, we like to see scales played in one position on the neck so all the notes fit within one area of the guitar. The following scale shape is the *root position* of the C major scale. *Root position* means that the lowest note of the scale, (C) is the first note that we play in the shape. The following scale shape covers *two* octaves, not just one as we have been discussing so far.

### Example 4a:

C Major



The squared dots are the roots of the scale.

A musical example for the C Major scale. The top part shows a treble clef staff with a 16th-note pattern. The bottom part shows a bass staff with a 16th-note pattern and a corresponding fingering chart below it. The fingering chart shows the following sequence: 8-10, 7-8-10, 7-9-10, 8-10, 7-8-7, 10-8, 10-9-7, 10-9-7, 10-8-7, 10-8, 10-8.

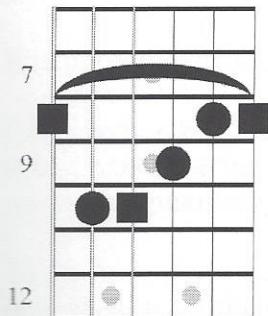
Play through this example *slowly*. This isn't a technique book! The object is to get you to *hear* and understand how this scale sounds and functions musically. Remember, all the audio examples in this book are available from [www.fundamental-changes.com/audio-downloads](http://www.fundamental-changes.com/audio-downloads)

It is absolutely vital that you spend time memorising this scale pattern. There is no point knowing theory without knowing how it sounds and how to use it.

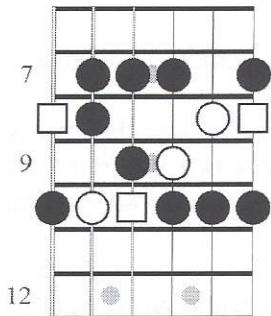
To help you memorise this scale, try to visualise it being played through a C major barre chord shape:

**Example 4b:**

C Major Chord



C Major



From this point on, chord shapes will always be suggested by hollow dots on each scale diagram. Once you have memorised this scale shape, aim to play it ascending and descending using 1/16th notes at 80bpm.

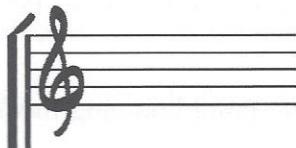
#### **Example 4c:**

My book, **Complete Technique for Modern Guitar**, teaches how to develop technique, increase speed and improve fluency with all of the common scale shapes. At the time of writing, it is currently an Amazon.com best seller.

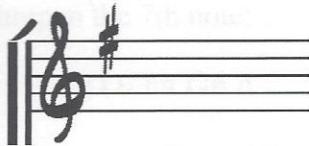
In the second part of this book we will look at how to use the major scale to be creative and create solos.

## Key Signatures

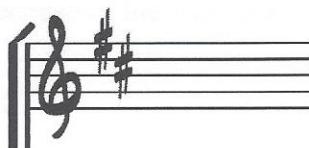
One easy way to tell which *key* a piece of music is in is to look at the number of sharps at the beginning of the music. This is called a *key signature*. If you remember the first scale that we looked at, C major, you will remember that it had no sharps or flats in it. Therefore the key signature of C major does not contain any sharps or flats:



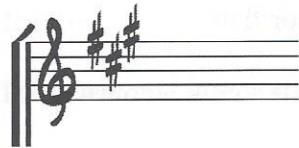
However, the scale of G major contained the note F#, so the key signature for G major shows an F#:



D major contained the notes F# and C#:



And A Major contained F# C# and G#:



If you want to quickly tell which key you are in, look at the last sharp on the right, and go up a semitone. For example, in the key of D Major, the last sharp on the right is C# (the 7th that we raised when we formed the scale). One semitone up from C# = D Major.

If the last sharp in the key signature is G#, you are in A Major.

If the last sharp in the key signature is D#, you are in E Major.

The following table shows the order of keys, and number of sharps you generate when you follow the circle of fifths as described above:

Key	Order of Sharps	Number of Sharps
C Major	/	0
G Major	F#	1
D Major	F#, C#	2
A Major	F#, C#, G#	3
E Major	F#, C#, G#, D#	4
B Major	F#, C#, G#, D#, A#	5
F# Major	F#, C#, G#, D#, A#, E#	6

It is important to note a slight complication here. There are two keys that *share* a key signature; one major key and one minor key.

## Relative Minor Keys

It is important to address the idea of shared key signatures to prevent confusion before we move on.

Every major key has a very closely related minor key. In their purest form, they share exactly the same notes, hence having the same key signature. Often this *relative minor* scale is referred to as the ‘natural’ minor. As guitarists you may have heard it called *The Aeolian Mode*. They are the same thing.

To easily find the relative minor scale of any major scale, ascend 6 notes up the major scale and begin a new scale from there. **Because we start on a different note, the patterns of tones and semitones are different and therefore the scale will sound different.**

For example, in the key of C Major, ascend 6 notes up the scale:

C D E F G A

A minor is the relative minor of C major.

The key signature of A minor is the same as that of C major and contains no sharps or flats.

In G:

G A B C D E

E minor is the relative minor of G major.

The key signature of E minor is the same as that of G major and contains one sharp, (F#).

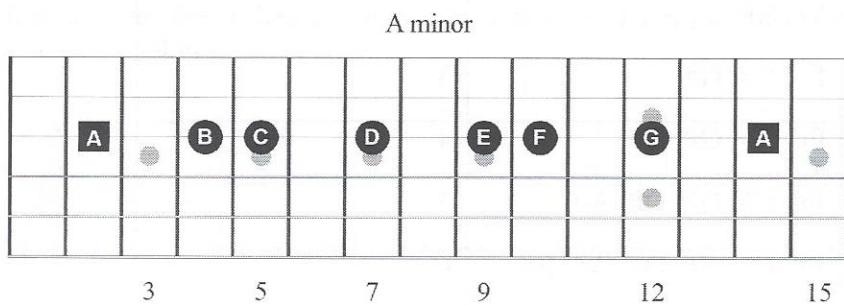
## Natural Minor Construction

When we form a new scale from the 6th note of the major scale, it has a new pattern of tones and semitones.

Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone, Semitone, Tone, Tone.

As can be seen from this diagram:

### Example 4d:



When compared to the major scale, the formula for the natural minor scale is

1 2 b3 4 5 b6 b7.

A quick way to see this, is that there are only three semitones (a *minor* 3rd) between the first and third notes.

You can also easily see that the 7th note, G (12th fret) is one tone below the root of 'A'. When the 7th note is one tone below the root, it is *always* a b7.

The b6 is harder to see, but if you examine the A *major* scale shown earlier, you will see that the sixth note is F#. Here it is F natural and has therefore been flattened.

If we compare the scale of A natural minor with the scale of A major it is easy to see the alterations.

A major: A B C# D E F# G#

A minor: A B C D E F G

Other types of minor scale you may come across are the *harmonic minor* and *melodic minor*. These scales can be seen as based around the natural minor (or Aeolian mode), but with the alteration of certain scale degrees.

The *harmonic minor* scale has the formula:

**1 2 b3 4 5 b6 7** (The 7th degree is raised a semitone from the natural minor)

The *melodic minor* scale has the formula:

**1 2 b3 4 5 6 7** (This is often viewed by guitarists as simply the major scale with a flattened 3rd)

The natural minor scale is covered in much more detail in later chapters, so we will now continue our focus on major scale theory.

## Harmonising the Major Scale

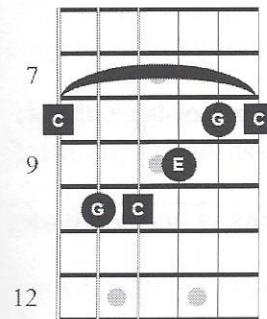
When we use the word ‘harmonising’, what we really mean is ‘building chords’. When we harmonise the major scale, we build a chord from each note of the scale.

### What is a chord?

A chord, technically, is the combination of three or more notes. A pure major or minor chord has only three separate notes. Often we strum major or minor chords on the guitar which use more than three strings. Even though we are playing four, five, or even six strings, we are only playing three separate individual notes which are doubled in different octaves.

For example in the following chord of C major the names of the notes are labelled... You can see that even though we play six strings, there are only three unique notes.

C Major Chord



In this voicing, the note C appears three times, and the note G appears twice. The only note to appear once is the E.

### Where do these notes come from?

To find out which notes go together to form each individual chord, we must learn how to harmonise the major scale.

Chords are formed when we ‘stack’ specific notes from a scale on top of each other. Look again at the previous example. The chord of C major contains only the notes, C, E and G. In the context of the major scale, we have taken the notes 1, 3 and 5:

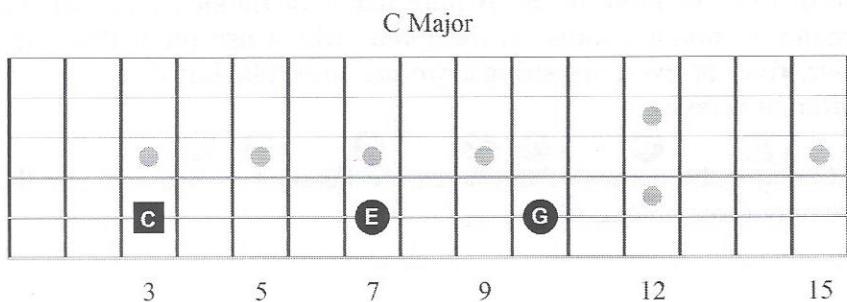
C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8/1

This can be seen as jumping over or ‘leapfrogging’ every other note in the scale. For example, we formed this chord by Starting on C, Jumping D and landing on E, jumping F and landing on G. This is how most simple, 3 note chords are formed.

C E G  
 D F A  
 E G B  
 F A C  
 G B D  
 A C E  
 B D F

If we view the notes of C major spaced out on the fretboard, we can establish what pattern of notes is required to form a *major* chord.

#### Example 5a:



The distance between the notes C and E is *two tones*.

Any chord with a distance of two tones between the first two notes can be classed as a major type chord. This distance in music is called a ‘*major 3rd*’.

The distance between the 3rd and 5th (the notes E and G), is *one-and-a-half tones*. This is *one semitone smaller* than the major 3rd so we call it a *minor 3rd*.

When measured from the *root*, any major chord *must* consist of two tones between the root and 3rd, and three-and-a-half tones between the root and 5th.

It is convention in music to describe the notes in a chord in terms of their relationship to the major scale formula, **1 2 3 4 5 6 7**.

So, in simple terms a major chord has the formula 1 3 5 and **the first chord in any major key is always major**.

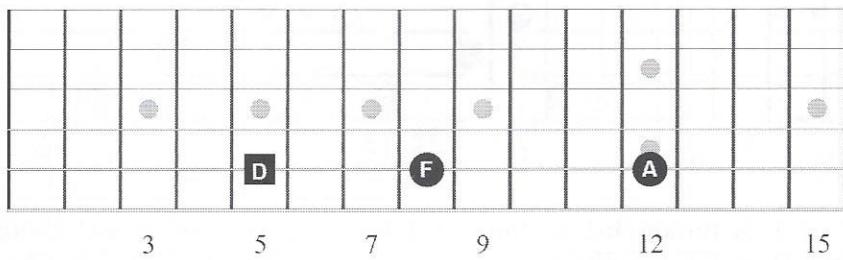
Moving on to the second note in the C major scale, (D) and repeating the previous process we generate:

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8/1

As we harmonise up from the second note of the scale, we get the notes D, F and A. On the guitar, that looks and sounds like:

### Example 5b:

D Minor



The distance between the notes D and F is one-and-a-half tones or a '*minor 3rd*' which means that the chord is *minor*.

However; the distance between the notes D and A is still three-and-a-half tones, which is the correct spacing for a *perfect 5th*.

With a minor 3rd and a perfect 5th, this chord is classified as a minor chord built on the note D, or simply 'D minor' for short.

As a formula, a minor chord is expressed as 1 b3 5 and **the second chord in any major key is always minor.**

All the notes of the major scale can be harmonised in this way, and with the exception of the 7th note, B, they are all major or minor chords.

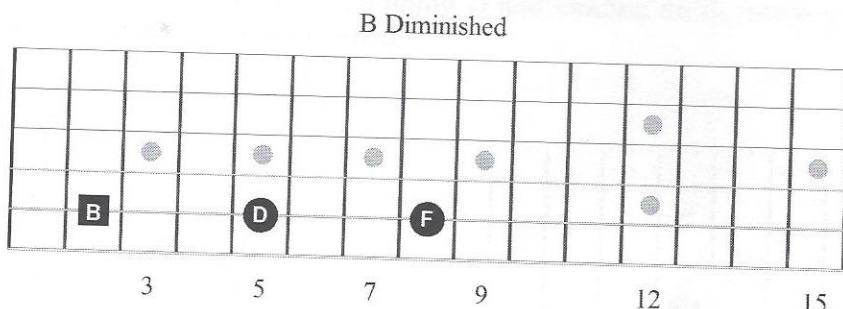
To save space I will not show the construction of every chord (although do try this by yourself). The harmonised chords of the C major scale are:

Chord 1 (I)	C Major
Chord 2 (ii)	D Minor
Chord 3 (iii)	E Minor
Chord 4 (IV)	F Major
Chord 5 (V)	G Major
Chord 6 (vi)	A Minor
Chord 7 (vii)	B Minor (b5) or B Diminished

## Harmonising the 7th Degree of the Major Scale

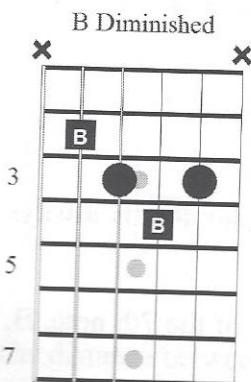
The 7th or ‘leading’ note in the major scale is different. It is the only chord that does not contain a perfect fifth. When we harmonise the 7th degree of a major scale, the 5th is one semitone smaller and is called a *diminished* fifth, or b5 for short. The 7th note in the scale of C major is B.

This can be seen and heard in **example 5c:**



The distance between the notes B and D is a minor 3rd so this must be some type of minor chord. However; the distance between the notes B and F is only six semitones, not seven as in the previous examples. This chord is therefore named B minor(b5) or B *Diminished*. The chord is played like this:

**Example 5d:**



This is the only chord in major scale harmony that has not got a perfect 5th. It is not commonly used in pop music due to its *dissonant* nature. When it is used, it is normally a *substitution* for the 5th chord of the scale.

## The Roman Numeral System

In music, chords are often referred to by the Roman numeral numbering system. Instead of labelling them 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc, they are given the Roman numeral equivalent numbers.

1 = I, 2 = ii, 3 = iii, 4 = IV, 5 = V, 6 = vi, 7 = vii.

This is to avoid confusion when we’re talking about interval distances: 3rds, 4ths and 5ths, and chords: iii, IV or V

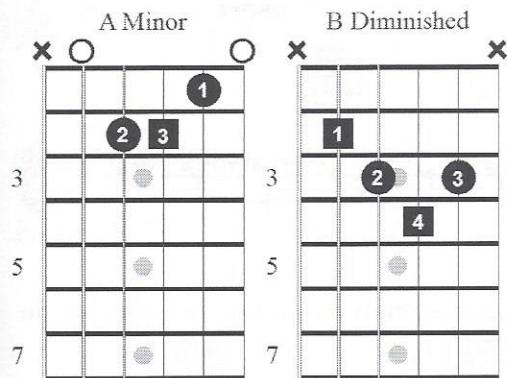
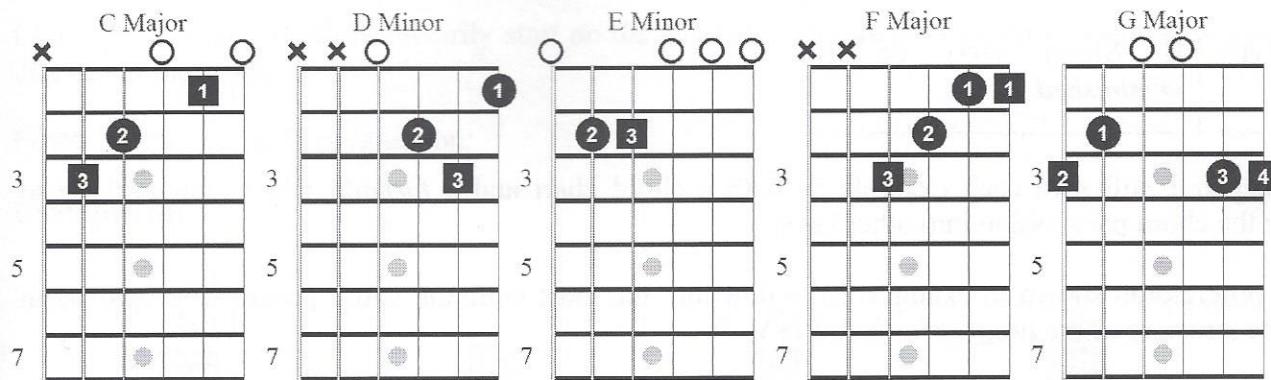
You will notice that sometimes I have used capital letters for each numeral, and sometimes lower case letters. We use capital letters to describe major chords and lower case letters to describe minor chords.

You can see that in a major key, chords I, IV and V are always major, whereas ii, iii, vi and vii are minor.

## Playing the Chords of the Harmonised C Major Scale

Now we have harmonised all the notes of the C major scale, here is how you play each one in open position.

### Examples 6a – 6g:



## Common Chord Progressions from the Major Scale

Now you know how the basic chords of the major scale are formed, it is important that you play them and get to know how they function in modern music. There are no ‘rights or wrongs’ in composition, just whether you like how it sounds. That said though, there are some great starting points to learn before you start to ‘break the rules’.

Chord progressions, as mentioned before, are normally described in terms of Roman numerals. To recap each chord of the major scale look at the following table:

Chord 1 (I)	C Major
Chord 2 (ii)	D Minor
Chord 3 (iii)	E Minor
Chord 4 (IV)	F Major
Chord 5 (V)	G Major
Chord 6 (vi)	A Minor
Chord 7 (vii)	B Minor (b5) or B Diminished

In this chapter I will give each example as both a chord chart and a *formula* which you can use to transpose the chord progression into other keys.

The first progression shown in example 7a is probably the most common chord progression in western music. The structure of the progression is I, IV, V, IV.

#### Example 7a:

Example 7b is the chord progression I, vi, ii, V. Again, this is an extremely common progression in popular music.

#### Example 7b:

I, IV, ii, V is something you will have heard in many songs:

### Example 7c:

A diagram showing four guitar chords: C, F, Dm, and G. Above each chord is its name in capital letters. Below each chord is a corresponding Roman numeral: I, IV, ii, and V. The chords are arranged horizontally, with vertical lines separating them.

Chord progressions don't necessarily start on the I chord. Here are some useful ideas that begin on other degrees of the scale.

Firstly, the vi, IV, I, V, progression:

### Example 7d:

A diagram showing four guitar chords: Am, F, C, and G. Above each chord is its name in capital letters. Below each chord is a corresponding Roman numeral: vi, IV, I, and V. The chords are arranged horizontally, with vertical lines separating them.

Others you might hear are IV, V, iii, vi:

### Example 7e:

A diagram showing four guitar chords: F, G, Em, and Am. Above each chord is its name in capital letters. Below each chord is a corresponding Roman numeral: IV, V, iii, and vi. The chords are arranged horizontally, with vertical lines separating them.

Or ii, iii, IV, V:

### Example 7f:

A diagram showing four guitar chords: Dm, Em, F, and G. Above each chord is its name in capital letters. Below each chord is a corresponding Roman numeral: ii, iii, IV, and V. The chords are arranged horizontally, with vertical lines separating them.

There are many possible combinations. The best thing is to try your own and get creative. Simply write a 4 bar chord progression as I have done above using the chords from the key of C major. Listen out for progressions on the radio and try to figure them out with just your guitar. After a while, you will begin to recognise certain common chord movements.

When you have this awareness, you'll realise that certain chord progressions come up time and time again and it's simply the arrangement or *orchestration* of the chords that disguises these common sequences.

## Transposing Chord Progressions into Other Keys

As we have seen, common chord progressions often follow set formulas. Because of this, it can be easy to transpose a chord progression into another key once we have worked out how each chord fits with the Roman numeral system. For example, take the following chord progression in the key of C major:

### Example 8a:

The diagram shows four guitar chord diagrams for C major. Each chord is labeled with its name above the diagram and below the corresponding staff. Chord I is C, Chord IV is F, Chord VI is Am, and Chord V is G.

Analysing it with Roman numerals shows us that in the key of C we are playing Chord I, Chord IV, Chord VI and Chord V.

We can now shift this progression into any other key by simply transferring the same chord pattern into a new major scale. For example, let's move it to the key of A major, (A B C# D E F# G#)

Chord I is A Major  
Chord IV is D Major  
Chord VI is F# minor  
Chord V is E Major.

So our new progression becomes:

### Example 8b:

The diagram shows four guitar chord diagrams for A major. Each chord is labeled with its name above the diagram and below the corresponding staff. Chord I is A, Chord IV is D, Chord VI is F#m, and Chord V is E.

In the key of E, it becomes:

### Example 8c:

Guitar chord diagrams for E, A, C<sup>#</sup>m, and B chords, followed by a staff with a treble clef and a '4' time signature.

Chord I      Chord IV      Chord VI      Chord V

Try writing out the following two chord progressions in different keys.

- I vi ii V
- IV V I vi

Work out the Roman numerals for the following two chord progressions in **G Major** and then transpose them into the key of **E Major**.

1)

Guitar chord diagrams for Am, D, G, and Em chords, followed by a staff with a treble clef and a '4' time signature.

2)

Guitar chord diagrams for Bm, Em, Am, and D chords, followed by a staff with a treble clef and a '4' time signature.

It is easy to practice transposition by analysing any song you are already familiar with playing, writing it out in Roman numerals and then moving those numerals into another key.

## Chords from Outside the Key

Study the following chord progression:

### Example 8d:

Guitar chord diagrams for G, B, C, and Cm chords, followed by a staff with a treble clef and a '4' time signature.

This progression is based on a song by Radiohead and is in the key of G, however when we analyse it, we come across some chords that are not formed from the harmonised G major scale. The second chord in the song is B *major*. The note B is the third note in the key of G and as you might know by now, when we harmonise the third degree of a major scale, we always form a *minor* chord.

It is clear that the B minor chord has been changed into a B major chord. This is perfectly fine to do, and happens often. It makes the chord progression more interesting and is clearly what the composer intended to write. The only question is, how do we write this in Roman numerals?

The chord is still *functioning* as chord iii, but as it has been altered to become a major chord instead of a minor one, we simply write, 'III Major'. (notice the capital I's? Lower case is for minor, upper case is for major).

The C major in bar three is correct to the key (it is chord IV major), but in bar four, the C major becomes a C minor chord. This would be written as 'iv minor'. Again, lower case numerals indicate that this is a minor chord.

The full progression, therefore would be written as:

I, III(major), IV, iv(minor).

A minor blues like this

#### Example 8e:

The image shows four guitar chord diagrams above a musical staff. The chords are Am, Dm, Em, and Am again. Each chord is labeled with its name above the diagram. The staff below has a treble clef and a '4' indicating common time. There are vertical bar lines separating the chords, representing measures.

could be written

i(minor), iv(minor), v(minor), i (minor).

Sometimes, however, a chord may not even exist inside the scale of the parent key.

This chord progression comes from the middle section of *Sitting on the Dock of the Bay*, by Otis Redding.

It is in the key of G:

#### Example 8f:

The image shows six guitar chord diagrams above a musical staff. The chords are G, D, C, G, F, and D. Each chord is labeled with its name above the diagram. The staff below has a treble clef and a '4' indicating common time. There are vertical bar lines separating the chords, representing measures.

All the chords are derived from the key of G major, except for the F in bar 3. The scale of G major does not contain the note F, (it should be F#). If we were analysing the above progression with Roman numerals, we would deal with the F Major by writing bVII (major) as the 7th degree of the G major scale (F#) has been *flattened* to become the note F, and is being played as a major chord.

The whole progression is written as I, V, IV, I, bVII (major), V.

Another great use of the bVII (major) is in the *Blues Brothers' Everybody Needs Somebody*:

**Example 8g:**

A diagram showing a sequence of eight guitar chords. Above each chord is its name: C, F, Bb, F, C, F, Bb, and F. Each chord is represented by a fretboard diagram with a specific fingerings above it. Below the chords is a musical staff with a treble clef and a '4' indicating common time.

This progression is I, IV, bVII(Major), IV

Another common *non-diatonic* chord is bIII(major), used here in the key of A:

**Example 8h:**

A diagram showing a sequence of five guitar chords. Above each chord is its name: A, E, C, D, and A. Each chord is represented by a fretboard diagram with a specific fingerings above it. Below the chords is a musical staff with a treble clef and a '4' indicating common time.

This progression is I, V, bIII(major), IV, I.

A chord *The Beatles* used to good effect was bVI(major). Here it is in the key of C:

**Example 8i**

A diagram showing a sequence of four guitar chords. Above each chord is its name: C, F, Ab, and C. Each chord is represented by a fretboard diagram with a specific fingerings above it. Below the chords is a musical staff with a treble clef and a '4' indicating common time.

The progression is I, IV, bVI(major), I.

Try writing these examples in other keys. More importantly, make sure you can play them and recognise them.

## 7th Chords

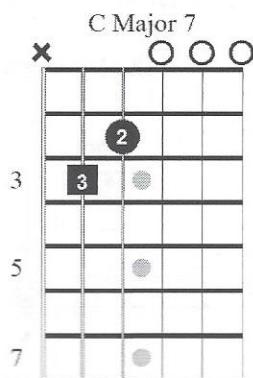
In virtually all music, you will see chords with names like ‘G7’, ‘A minor 7’, ‘C Major 7’ or even ‘B minor 7b5’. All these chords can be formed from the major scale. In fact, they are simply *extensions* of the original method we used to construct chords in the harmonisation chapters.

Look back at how we formed major and minor chords from the major scale. We took the first, third and fifth notes by leapfrogging adjacent scale tones. If we continue to jump notes, and land on the seventh note, i.e., 1 3 5 7 we would have created a ‘7th’ chord. For example:

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8/1

Instead of just the notes C, E and G, we have now introduced the note B. This chord is a C Major *triad* with an added *natural 7th* and is now named C Major 7. Notice how the 7th note, (B) is one semitone below the root, (C). The chord can be played like this:

### Example 9a:



The added note, B is played on the open 2nd string. Play and listen to this chord. Notice how it has a richness compared to an ordinary C major chord. The formula for a major 7th chord is 1 3 5 7.

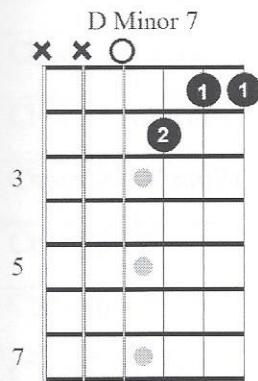
When we add the 7th note to chord ii (D minor), we get the following notes:

D F A C.

This time, the 7th note (C) is a *whole tone* below the root, (D). This 7th note therefore is a *b7* not a *natural 7* as in the previous example of C major.

When we add a *b7* note to a minor chord, the chord is named ‘minor 7’. In this case we have formed the chord of D minor 7. It can be played like this:

### Example 9b:



I hear this as a kind of *softened* minor chord. Still sad, but not as sad as a straight minor chord. Any minor 7 chord has the formula 1 b3 5 b7.

The previous two chord types, major 7 and minor 7, account for five of the harmonised scale tones:

Chord 1 (Imaj7)	C Major 7
Chord 2 (iim7)	D Minor 7
Chord 3 (iiim7)	E Minor 7
Chord 4 (IVmaj7)	F Major 7
Chord 5	
Chord 6 (vim7)	A Minor 7
Chord 7	

As you can see, I have missed out chords V and vii. This is because they are slightly different. As you know, when we harmonise the major scale, chord V (G) is always a major chord. However, the added the 7th note *not* a natural 7th. Here is the harmonised V chord in the Key of C:

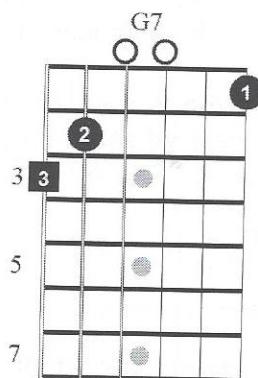
G B D **F**.

The note F is a whole tone below the root, (G). This is similar to the b7th note in a minor 7 chord. What we now have is a *major* chord with an added b7.

This chord is called a *dominant 7* and is simply written as a '7' after the chord root, e.g, G7 or A7. It has the formula 1 3 5 b7.

G7 can be played like this:

**Example 9c:**



Dominant 7 chords have a tense, unresolved sound, and often move to chord I of the key, in this case, C major.

Finally, when we harmonise the 7th note of the major scale, we generate a chord which is fairly uncommon in pop or rock music, but is used often in jazz.

You may remember from previous chapters that chord vii forms a *minor b5* or *diminished* chord. When we harmonise this chord up to four notes from the key of C, we get

B D F A

Again, we are adding a flattened 7th (b7) and so the chord is now described as a ‘minor 7b5’. It is often written as *m7b5*. In this case, you would see Bm7b5. This type of chord has the formula 1 b3 b5 b7.

It is played like this and has a dark, brooding quality:

**Example 9d:**



We can now complete the chart of the harmonised major scale.

Chord 1 (Imaj7)	C Major 7
Chord 2 (iim7)	D Minor 7
Chord 3 (iiim7)	E Minor 7
Chord 4 (IVmaj7)	F Major 7
Chord 5 (V7)	G7 or G <i>Dominant 7</i>
Chord 6 (vim7)	A Minor 7
Chord 7 (viim7b5)	B Minor 7 b5 or Bm7b5

7th chords can always be directly swapped for their 3 note alternatives. There is no reason why the chord progression

### Example 9e:

shouldn't be changed to:

### Example 9e part 2:

However in most forms of pop music (excluding jazz), the added colour of the 7th note on a major chord can be a bit too rich, although there are some great examples of major 7th chords in rock music.

Check out the F Major 7 in the fifth bar of Stairway to Heaven by Led Zeppelin in **example 9f**:

Another good example of a major 7th chord in rock is at 0:53 in *Under the Bridge* by the Red Hot Chili Peppers:

*Dominant 7* chords are used extremely frequently and can be used instead of the diatonic or ‘correct’ harmonisation of any note of the major scale. For example compare example 9g to example 9e part 2:

**Example 9g:**

The image shows four guitar chord diagrams labeled C7, F7, G7, and C7 from left to right. Each diagram is positioned above a musical staff in common time (4/4). The first three chords (C7, F7, G7) have small 'x' marks above them, while the last one (C7) has a small 'o' mark above it. The chords are played sequentially across the four measures of the staff.

By making all the original chords into dominant 7 chords the music sounds a lot more bluesy.

When you use a dominant 7 chord in its original place, i.e as a chord V in a major key, it serves to make the pull back to the I chord much stronger. Compare the following two examples:

**Example 9h:**

The image shows four guitar chord diagrams labeled Am, Dm, G, and C from left to right. Each diagram is positioned above a musical staff in common time (4/4). The first three chords (Am, Dm, G) have small 'x' marks above them, while the last one (C) has a small 'o' mark above it. The chords are played sequentially across the four measures of the staff.

**Example 9h (part 2):**

The image shows four guitar chord diagrams labeled Am, Dm, G7, and C from left to right. Each diagram is positioned above a musical staff in common time (4/4). The first three chords (Am, Dm, G7) have small 'x' marks above them, while the last one (C) has a small 'o' mark above it. The chords are played sequentially across the four measures of the staff.

Can you hear how the G7 in the second example adds more tension to the G major chord and therefore more pull back to the home chord of C major?

## Extensions

Extensions occur when we add notes from above the first octave of the scale to our original 7th chord. For example, study the following:

C Major Scale	C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Interval Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2/9	3	4/11	5	6/13	7

You will see that when we get into the second octave, some notes have different interval descriptions. If the note is a chord tone, i.e. 1 3 5 or 7, the names do not alter in the higher octave. This is because when you add a chord tone in a different octave, it does not affect the *quality* of the chord. In other words, a minor 7th chord which contains two b3rds still has the same fundamental characteristic as a minor 7th chord with only one b3.

However, when you add a non-chord tone or *extension* to the original 7th chord, it *does* add a different character or tension to the chord, and is therefore treated as an extension. Instead of being called 2, 4, or 6, they are now named 9, 11, or 13.

For example, if you take an A minor 7 chord, and add the 2nd/9th note, (B) it becomes an A minor 9.

#### Example 9i:

The image shows two guitar fretboards side-by-side. The left fretboard is labeled "A Minor 7" and the right one is labeled "A Minor 9". Both fretboards have dots at the 3rd, 5th, and 7th frets on the 5th, 3rd, and 2nd strings respectively. The "A Minor 9" fretboard also has a dot at the 9th fret on the 2nd string.

If you take a D7 chord and add the 2nd/9th note E, it becomes a D9.

#### Example 9j:

The image shows two guitar fretboards side-by-side. The left fretboard is labeled "D7" and the right one is labeled "D9". Both fretboards have dots at the 3rd, 5th, and 7th frets on the 5th, 3rd, and 2nd strings respectively. The "D9" fretboard also has a dot at the 9th fret on the 2nd string.

The same idea applies with 11ths and 13ths.

While this is by no means an exhaustive discussion of chords formed from the major scale, it does give you enough grounding in the fundamentals to understand the second part of the book where we deal with modes, melody and soloing concepts.

## How to Name Chords

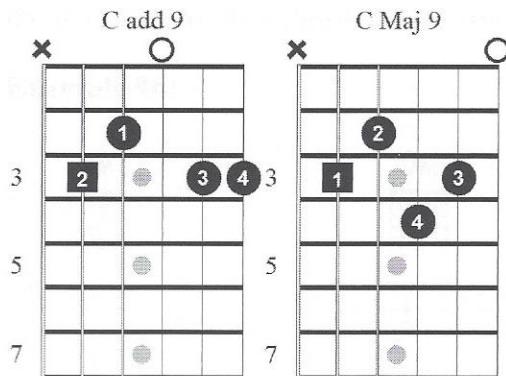
Naming chords can be a bit subjective, although the system that is taught in most universities and music schools revolves around whether the chord we are naming contains a 7th, and to a lesser extent, a third.

If a chord does **not** contain a 7th, then extensions are *generally* referred to by using the word ‘add’ in the name.

For example, a straight C major chord, (1 3 5) which has a 9th note added to it will be named Cadd9. This name implies that there is **no 7th included**.

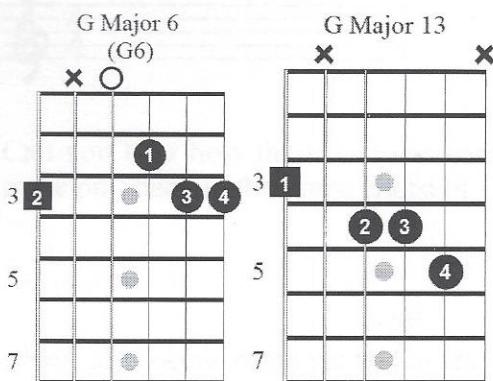
By contrast, if we took a C major 7th chord and added the 9th, the chord would be named C Major 9:

### Example 9k:



A G major chord (1 3 5) with the 6th added is named G6 or ‘G Major 6’ whereas a G major 7th chord (1 3 5 7) with the 6th (13th) added is named G major 13:

### Example 9l:



In the same way, any minor triad with the 9th added is named ‘minor add 9’ and a minor 7th chord with an added 9th is called minor 9:

### Example 9m:

Dominant 7 chords *must* already contain the b7 note (1 3 5 b7) so extensions are simply named ‘9’ ‘11’ or ‘13’, although often when we start adding higher extensions, some notes are omitted from the lower part of the chord to avoid undesirable clashes.

The most common note to be dropped is the 5th, but sometimes, especially in an ‘11’ chord the important 3rd may even be dropped. This dropping of the 3rd is more common on the guitar than other instruments due to fingering restraints. It is normally more desirable to drop the 5th or even the root than the 3rd.

### Example 9n:

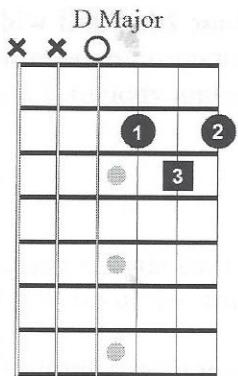
Remember the general rules:

If the 7th of a chord is included, then extensions are referred to as 9, 11 or 13.

If the 7th of a chord is not included, then extensions are referred to as ‘add 9’, ‘add 11’, or ‘6’.

Slight complications occur when the 3rd of a triad is *replaced* by a 2nd or 4th as you will now see.

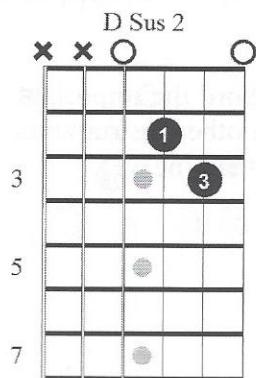
If we examine the chord of D major, we will see that the 3rd of the chord (F#) is played on the high E string:



If we *replace* the note F# with either the 2nd or 4th note from the scale, the D chord is said to be **suspended**. A suspended chord does **not** contain a 3rd.

If we replace the F# with an E (2nd) we form the chord Dsus2, (1 2 5):

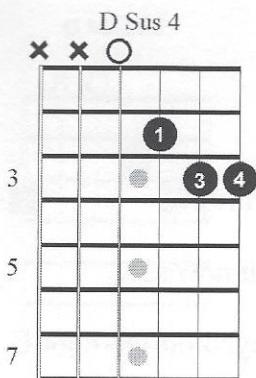
#### Example 9o:



(The E is played on the open 1st string)

If we replace the F# with a G (4th) we form the chord Dsus4, (1 4 5)

#### Example 9p:



Because of the lack of a 3rd, these chords sound unresolved or ‘suspended’

# Part Two: Scales, Arpeggios, Modes, Soloing and Substitutions

The first part of this book was a quick and necessary grounding in the basics, and this second part delves deeper into each of the *modes* of the major scale. You will learn how to use arpeggios and pentatonic scales to create new, interesting sounds, and five useful modern licks for each mode to get you playing appropriate sounding lead lines.

## What is a Mode?

A mode is a scale which has been generated or *derived* from a *parent scale*. In this book we focus on the 7 modes that are derived from the *major scale*.

To derive a mode from the major scale, you start on *any* note that isn't the root of the major scale, and make that the root of a new scale. You then play through the notes of the parent scale *beginning and ending* on the new root.

For example, if we take the scale of C major:

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

But begin on the note D:

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

We have created a new scale. In this case, we have created the *Dorian mode*.

We can start on each note of the major scale to begin a new mode:

E F G A B C D E is named the *Phrygian mode*.

F to F is the *Lydian mode*.

G to G is the *Mixolydian mode*.

A to A is the *Aeolian mode*.

B to B is the *Locrian mode*.

Sometimes the parent major scale, C to C is named the *Ionian mode*, however, that isn't particularly common these days.

An extremely important fact to remember is that most music for the past eight hundred years has been based around the *major scale* and its harmony. Western ears have been conditioned since birth to hear melodies in relation to this major scale. Because the modes we are now studying are *built* from this major scale, playing them in isolation will tend to make you hear them as wanting to resolve to the root of the parent major scale. This destroys the modal characteristics and the end result is that you simply *hear* the major scale starting from a different note.

For example, play and listen to example 10a. It is one octave of the D Dorian mode. When you get to the bottom of the scale, do your ears want to carry on one more note to the C, the root of the parent scale?

### Example 10a:

Musical notation for Example 10a. The top staff shows a melodic line with quarter notes on a treble clef staff. The bottom staff shows a bass line with quarter notes on a bass clef staff. Brackets above the staves indicate specific notes: the first bracket covers notes at positions 12, 10, and 9; the second bracket covers notes at positions 12, 10, 13, 12, and 10. Fret numbers are indicated below the bass staff.

Now try listening to example 10b where I play exactly the same thing. However this time there is a chordal backing track built from strong chords of the Dorian mode. Because your ears have *framed* the notes around these chords they will allow you to hear the notes in the context of the D root.

### Example 10b:

Musical notation for Example 10b. The top staff shows a melodic line with quarter notes on a treble clef staff. The middle staff shows a bass line with quarter notes on a bass clef staff. The bottom staff shows a chordal backing track with four chords: Dm7, G9, Dm7, and G9. Chord diagrams are shown above each chord. Brackets above the staves indicate specific notes: the first bracket covers notes at positions 12, 10, and 9; the second bracket covers notes at positions 12, 10, 13, 12, and 10. Fret numbers are indicated below the bass staff.

It is not always necessary to build a complex chord progression from a mode to accurately hear its unique tonality: Often in rock music, power chords or simple riffs are used to outline a key centre with little more harmonic information than the root and 5th of each chord. However, in this book I will give you some specifically modal chord progressions which highlight the character of each mode.

## Why do Modes Sound Different to the Major Scale?

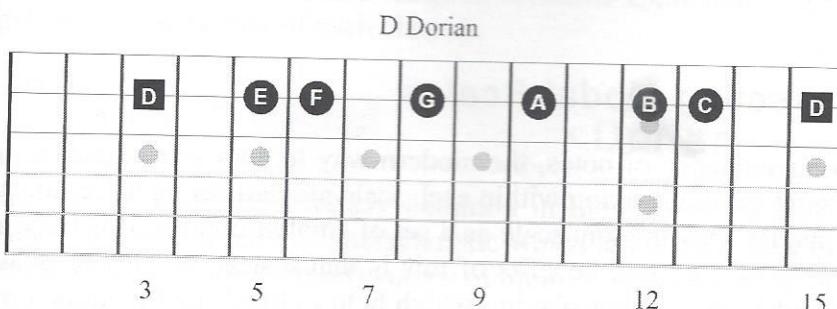
Going back to our analogy of a scale being a ladder with rungs set in a specific pattern, a *mode* is simply a different spacing of these rungs. Because the rungs are spaced differently, the mode has a different sound, especially when you consider that the chords built from harmonising the mode will be different. For example, chord I in the major scale was a major 7th, but when we harmonise the Dorian mode, chord I is now a minor 7. – Instantly we have created a different mood. By carefully selecting chords we can bring out the unique character of each modal sound.

Let us look at the scale pattern of tones and semitones formed by the D Dorian mode, and then compare it to the D Major scale. Remember, the equivalent major scale is always our point of comparison to describe any musical sound.

The notes of D Dorian are:

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

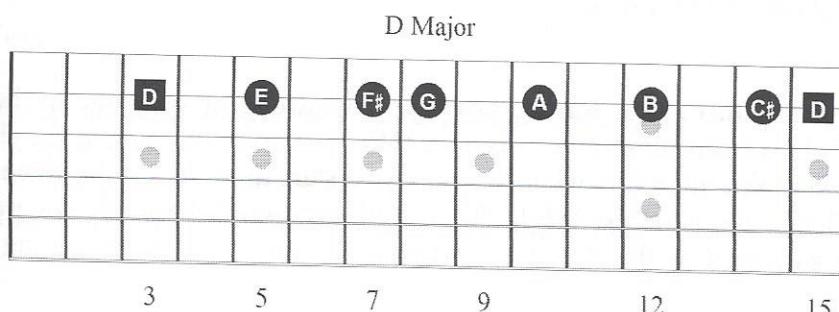
**Example 10c:**



Whereas the notes of D major are:

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

**Example 10d:**



It can be seen that instead of the F# note in the D major scale, D Dorian has an F Natural. In other words the 3rd note, F# has been *flattened*. This is written as 'b3'.

It can also be seen that instead of the C# note in the D major scale, D Dorian has a C Natural. In other words, the 7th note, C# has been *flattened*. This is written as 'b7'.

Remembering the simple formula for the major scale:

**1 2 3 4 5 6 7**

This means that the formula for the Dorian mode is:

**1 2 b3 4 5 6 b7**

If you remember that any minor *chord* always has a b3, you will already begin to realise that D Dorian will sound very different from D major. The first arpeggio, 1 b3 5 b7 outlines a minor 7 chord so this mode will have a fairly sad sounding quality.

To reiterate:

This new pattern of tones and semitones in a mode creates a different mood from the original major scale.

This mood is emphasised by playing the modal scale over chord progressions or riffs that strongly outline chords that are derived from the harmonised mode.

It is very important at first to allow the harmony (chord progression) to ‘set up’ the sound of the mode. The listener’s ear needs to accept the fact that the mode does not resolve to the root of the parent major scale. By ‘framing’ the modal context of the scale with chords, the listener will accept and hear the new interval structure of the mode you are using.

## Dissecting Modal Scales

Instead of viewing a scale as simply a long sequence of notes, the modern way to approach improvising with scales is to split them up into small subdivisions. *Hiding* within each scale are various melodic ‘units’ that we can use as unique soloing concepts. By viewing any scale as a set of smaller chunks, it is easy to find new ways to play and be creative. One of the main benefits of this is that instead of playing scale ideas, we automatically introduce jumps and leaps into our playing which help to break up the monotony of long step-wise lines.

Another important advantage of this is that we can ‘cherry pick’ the colourful notes of a scale and imply its unique colour by only playing a limited number of notes.

Each scale can be broken down into the following main structures:

### 2-Note Intervals

An interval is the distance between two notes. Just as we formed chords by leapfrogging one note in the major scale, e.g. C – E, (intervals of a 3rd) we can jump other distances, for example, two notes; C – F (4ths), three notes, C – G (5ths) etc. By skipping intervals when we play, we start to break up the linear nature of a scale. We introduce melodic leaps and patterns. While the overall *tonality* of the mode we are playing remains the same, you may be surprised at the different textures we can create by ‘thinking’ intervals instead of scales.

### 3-Note Triads

In Part One, we used triads to form chords. One triad is three skipped 3rds, e.g. C – E – G. However, we do not have to play them simultaneously as a chord. If we play the notes one after another we generate many melodic possibilities by leaving out most of the scale tones. A triad, as you know, can be formed on every note of a scale, e.g. C-E-G, D-F-A, E-G-B etc. *When we pick out specific triads instead of using full scales we can ‘cherry pick’ the scale degrees that we play in our solos.* By taking a triadic approach instead of a scalic one, we not only target the specific scale tones we want to hear, we automatically introduce melodic leaps into our playing and move away from predictable scale ‘runs’. Triads do not have to be played in order, for example, CEG is the same triad as EGC. This gives us a myriad of soloing possibilities.

### 4-Note Arpeggios

In a similar fashion to three note triads, four note arpeggios are simply triads that have an extra 3rd added on top, (in other words, a 7th chord). Instead of playing the triad C-E-G, we extend it so it becomes an arpeggio: C-E-G-B. Once again, we do not have to play these notes in order so the permutations now possible are immense. *There is an arpeggio choice built off every note of each scale* and again, we are being selective about the scale degrees we play.

### 5-Note Pentatonic Scales

Most players see a chord progression in the key of A, and immediately play an A minor pentatonic scale idea. In actual fact, you can build minor pentatonic scales on various degrees of any major mode, not just the root.

There are three minor pentatonic scales hiding within each mode of the major scale. Knowing where these are instantly allows us to use many of the pentatonic licks we already know to give a rich modal sound. As you can imagine, tripling your existing licks in this way is extremely useful.

I will give you all the available choices for each mode, however, these multiple possibilities can become overwhelming extremely quickly when you are just starting out. Most musicians, even very accomplished ones, normally have a limited range of favourite approaches. To help get you started, I will give you my first choices at the end of each chapter.

## Dorian

The Dorian mode is extremely common in most forms of rock, funk, jazz and fusion music. It has a ‘minor, but not too minor’ characteristic which lends itself well to bluesy jazz solos. It is common to play Dorian over static (one chord) vamps of minor 7, minor 9 or minor 11 chords.

Some important songs that use Dorian are:

**So What** – Miles Davies

**Billy Jean** – Michael Jackson

**Tender Surrender** – Steve Vai (with a few key changes to related modes)

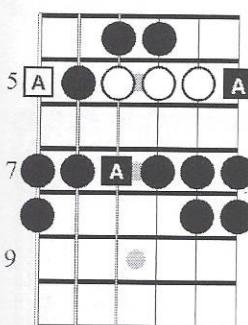
### Formula and Harmonisation

As already seen, the formula of the Dorian mode is:

**1 2 b3 4 5 6 b7**

And is played like this on the guitar: **Example 11a:**

A Dorian



(The hollow dots are the *tonic* minor 7 chord that you should visualise and hear when you play through the scale).

Harmonised to triads and 7ths, the Dorian mode generates the following set of chords:

TRIAD Type	Chord	SEVENTH Chord Types	Example in the key of A Dorian
I minor	i minor	i minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	A minor 7
ii minor	ii minor	ii minor 7 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	B minor 7
III major	III major	III major 7 (extensions 9, #11, 13)	C major 7
IV major	IV major	IV 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	D7
V minor	v minor	v minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, b13)	E minor 7
vi minor b5	vi minor b5	vi minor 7b5 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	F#m7b5
VII major	VII major	VII major 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	G major 7

You sometimes see extended chords used in a progression (9ths, 11ths and 13ths). By adding higher extensions you can define a particular modal sound more accurately.

For example, Dorian is the only mode to have a b3, natural 11 and natural 13. By playing a minor 13 chord with the 11th included you have completely defined the Dorian sound, *however* this density of harmony is often too great to be palatable to the listener. More often than not, minor 7 chords will be played with a maximum of one extension, and the other scale extensions are contained in different chords in the progression.

## Typical Dorian Chord Progressions

The following chord progressions clearly outline the unique character of the Dorian mode. For simplicity, they are all in the key of A. However I encourage you to transpose them into different keys using the system in Part One.

### Example 11b:

The musical score consists of a single staff with a treble clef and a '4' indicating 4/4 time. The staff is divided into five measures. Above the staff, the chords are labeled: Am7, Em9, Am7, Em9, and D9. Below each chord label is a guitar chord diagram. The first three chords (Am7, Em9, Am7) are followed by the text 'SFR' below the staff, while the last two chords (Em9, D9) are followed by 'SF'.

### Example 11c:

A sequence of guitar chords and a fretboard diagram. At the top, five chord diagrams are shown: Am<sup>11</sup>, Bm<sup>11</sup>, Am<sup>11</sup>, Bm<sup>11</sup>, and Am<sup>11</sup>. Below these are two blank fretboard diagrams. A treble clef and a '4' indicating common time are at the beginning of a staff. The staff has six empty measures.

### Example 11d:

A sequence of guitar chords and a fretboard diagram. At the top, seven chord diagrams are shown: A<sup>5</sup>, B<sup>5</sup>, C<sup>5</sup>, D<sup>5</sup>, G<sup>5</sup>, A<sup>5</sup>, and D<sup>5</sup>. Below these are two blank fretboard diagrams. A treble clef and a '4' indicating common time are at the beginning of a staff. The staff has six empty measures.

## 5 Useful Dorian Licks

The following five licks use the Dorian mode in its first position. They are all included as audio examples and the Dorian backing track has kindly been provided by Quist.

### Example 11e:

Two staves of musical notation. The top staff shows a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff shows a corresponding fretboard diagram with fingerings: 7, 8-7, 7, 7, 5-7-5, 7, 5, 5, 4. The staff ends with a vertical bar line.

### Example 11f:

Two staves of musical notation. The top staff shows a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff shows a corresponding fretboard diagram with fingerings: 4, 5, 4, 7, 4, 5, 4, 7, 7, 5, 4, 7, 4, 5. The staff ends with a vertical bar line.

### Example 11g:

**Example 11h:**

**Example 11i**

### Soloing Approaches to the Dorian Mode

The following pages analyse the approaches we use to dissect the Dorian Mode. Each approach (intervals, triads etc.), represents one ‘level’ of depth we can investigate to create melodic ideas. Think of each approach as a different layer of increasing melodic complexity. All of the ideas can be freely combined in order to make a solo. Try each idea over the Dorian backing track to get a feel for the texture of each melodic concept.

## 2-Note Intervals

**Example 12a:** A Dorian in 3rds:

Musical notation for Example 12a: A Dorian mode in 3rds. The top staff shows a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff shows a guitar neck with fingerings: 5-8-7-8, 5-7-5-7, 4-5-4-7-5-7, 4-5-4-7-5-7, 4-7-5-7, 5-7-5-8-7-5.

**Example 12b:** A Dorian in 4ths:

Musical notation for Example 12b: A Dorian mode in 4ths. The top staff shows a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff shows a guitar neck with fingerings: 5-5-7-8, 5-7-5-7, 4-5-5-7, 4-5-5-7, 4-5-5-7, 5-7-8-5-5.

**Example 12c:** A Dorian in 5ths:

Musical notation for Example 12c: A Dorian mode in 5ths. The top staff shows a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff shows a guitar neck with fingerings: 5-7-8, 5-7-5-7, 4-4-5-7, 4-4-5-7, 5-7-5-7, 4-7-8-5-5.

**Example 12d:** A Dorian in 6ths:

Musical notation for Example 12d: A Dorian mode in 6ths. The top staff shows a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff shows a guitar neck with fingerings: 5-7-8, 5-7-5-7, 4-4-5-7, 4-4-5-7, 5-7-5-7, 4-8-5-5.

**Example 12e:** A Dorian in 7ths:

Musical notation for Example 12e. The top staff shows a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation consists of two measures. The first measure has six eighth-note strokes on the treble staff and six eighth-note strokes on the bass staff. The second measure has five eighth-note strokes on the treble staff and four eighth-note strokes on the bass staff. Below the staffs are two sets of horizontal bars with numbers indicating fingerings: 5-7-8-5-7-4-5 and 5-7-8-5-7-4-5. The bass staff also includes a 7th fret mark.

Try reversing certain interval patterns, for example, play one 3rd ascending and one 3rd descending:

**Example 12f:**

Musical notation for Example 12f. The top staff shows a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation consists of two measures. The first measure has six eighth-note strokes on the treble staff and six eighth-note strokes on the bass staff. The second measure has five eighth-note strokes on the treble staff and four eighth-note strokes on the bass staff. Below the staffs are two sets of horizontal bars with numbers indicating fingerings: 5-8-5-7-8-4-5 and 5-7-4-5-7-4-5. The bass staff also includes a 7th fret mark. The word "etc" is written at the end of the second measure.

Or ascending two 3rds and descending one third:

**Example 12g:**

Musical notation for Example 12g. The top staff shows a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom staff shows a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation consists of two measures. The first measure has six eighth-note strokes on the treble staff and six eighth-note strokes on the bass staff. The second measure has five eighth-note strokes on the treble staff and four eighth-note strokes on the bass staff. Below the staffs are two sets of horizontal bars with numbers indicating fingerings: 5-8-7-5-7-8-5-4-7 and 5-7-4-5-7-4-5-4-7. The bass staff also includes a 7th fret mark. The word "etc" is written at the end of the second measure.

This kind of 'permutation' approach can be of real benefit when you want to create new licks or lines and can be applied to any of the above interval distances.

I'm a big fan of using 4ths and 6ths in Dorian.

### 3-Note Triads

Triads (two stacked 3rds) can be constructed from each of the degrees of the A Dorian mode. By soloing using only one or two triads built from a mode, we can target specific intervals or ‘colour tones’ from a mode. For example, study **example 12h**. If you play a B minor triad over an A Dorian chord sequence, you are only playing the extensions 9, 11, and 13. This will sound very different from playing an E minor triad over the same backing, as you would then be targeting the 5th, b7 and 9th degrees of the scale.

Triads from each degree are shown here, first in one octave (12h), and then in two octaves (12i): **Example 12h:**

A minor Triad (1 b3 5)    B minor Triad (9 11 13)    C Major Triad (b3 5 b7)    D Major Triad (11 13 1)

E minor Triad (5 b7 9)    F# minor b5 Triad (13 1 b3)    G Major Triad (b7 9 11)

The notation consists of two staves. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. Both staves have vertical bar lines dividing them into four measures. The first measure contains notes 5, 8, and 7. The second measure contains notes 7, 5, and 4. The third measure contains notes 8, 7, and 5. The fourth measure contains notes 5, 4, and 7. The notes are represented by vertical stems with small horizontal dashes indicating pitch.

**Example 12i:**

A minor Triad (1 b3 5)    B minor Triad (9 11 13)    C Major Triad (b3 5 b7)    D Major Triad (11 13 1)

E minor Triad (5 b7 9)    F# minor b5 Triad (13 1 b3)    G Major Triad (b7 9 11)

The notation consists of two staves. The top staff shows a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The bottom staff shows a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. Both staves have vertical bar lines dividing them into four measures. The first measure contains notes 5, 8, and 7. The second measure contains notes 5, 4, and 7. The third measure contains notes 5, 8, and 8. The fourth measure contains notes 5, 4, and 7. The notes are represented by vertical stems with small horizontal dashes indicating pitch. Brackets above the notes group them into triads. The bass staff includes fingerings: (2) over the 5th string, (3) over the 5th string, and (5) over the 5th string.

Hopefully it is obvious that the triads that are formed from each scale tone are the same quality (type) as the chords formed on page 40. You will soon become accustomed to knowing which type of triad is formed from each degree of each mode. For reference, here is the list of triads formed from each degree of the Dorian mode:

Scale Degree	3 Note Triads Built in Dorian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	I minor	1, b3, 5
2	ii minor	9, 11, 13
b3	bIII major	b3, 5, b7
4	IV major	11, 13, 1
5	v minor	5, b7, 9
6	vi minor b5	13, 1, b3
b7	bVII major	b7, 9, 11

To begin with, it may seem overly complex to be thinking “OK I can play a minor triad off the 5th degree of Dorian” so first learn these triad approaches simply as shapes or patterns contained within the parent mode. Once you have improvised with each one in turn, pick your one or two favourite sounds and stick to them. Don’t worry about the ones you’re not learning, focus only on making new patterns and inversions out of a limited range of triadic material.

The triads I like to use in Dorian are:

Minor b5 off the 6th degree (F# minor b5 triad over A Dorian) (13, 1 and b3)  
 Major off the b7 (G major over A Dorian) (b7 9 and 11)

## 4-Note Arpeggios

Arpeggios (three stacked 3rds) for example, A-C-E-G can also be built from each degree of any mode. In Dorian we generate the following 4-note arpeggios:

Scale Degree	4 Note Arpeggios in Dorian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	i minor 7	1, b3, 5, b7
2	ii minor 7	9, 11, 13, 1
b3	bIII major 7	b3, 5, b7, 9
4	IV 7	11, 13, 1, b3
5	v minor7	5, b7, 9, 11
6	vi minor 7b5	13, 1, b3, 5
b7	bVII major 7	b7, 9, 11, 13

These have the same qualities as the chords discussed on page 40. As they contain one additional note than triads, they can give a richer quality than the triadic ideas in the previous chapter.

Arpeggios from each degree of A Dorian can be played in the following manner:

**Example 12j:**

A minor 7 Arp (1 b3 5 b7)   B minor 7 Arp (9 11 13 1)   C Major 7 Arp (b3 5 b7 9)   D7 arp (11 13 1 b3)

The first section of musical notation shows four arpeggio patterns for A Dorian mode. The top staff is a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff is a guitar neck diagram with fingerings. The patterns correspond to the chords listed above: A minor 7 Arp (1 b3 5 b7), B minor 7 Arp (9 11 13 1), C Major 7 Arp (b3 5 b7 9), and D7 arp (11 13 1 b3). Fingerings on the guitar neck include: 5-8, 5-7, 5; 4-7, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7.

E minor 7 Arp (5 b7 9 11)   F# mi7b5 Arp (13 1 b3 5)   G Major 7 Arp (b7 9 11 13)

The second section of musical notation shows three arpeggio patterns for different modes: E minor 7 Arp (5 b7 9 11), F# mi7b5 Arp (13 1 b3 5), and G Major 7 Arp (b7 9 11 13). The top staff is a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff is a guitar neck diagram with fingerings. The patterns correspond to the chords listed above. Fingerings on the guitar neck include: 5-8, 7-10; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7; 5-8, 7.

Again, play through these arpeggio ideas one at a time over a backing track. Note down any that you like the sound of and focus on only those arpeggios. Try to play the arpeggio notes in different orders and in different sequences. Instead of 1357, try 1537 or 17135. The possibilities are endless.

My favourite approaches are to play these arpeggios:

Major 7th on the b3 (C Major 7 over A Dorian) (b3 5 b7 9).

Major 7th off the b7 (G Major 7 over A Dorian) (b7 9 11 13).

## 5-Note Pentatonic Scales

One common, but often overlooked concept when soloing with modes, is to superimpose the minor pentatonic scales that you already know to highlight certain modal colour tones. Hiding inside each mode of the major scale are three different ‘standard’ minor pentatonic scales. Look at the following example:

**Example 12k:** A minor pentatonic over A Dorian:

A Dorian  
Min Pent on 1

A minor pentatonic

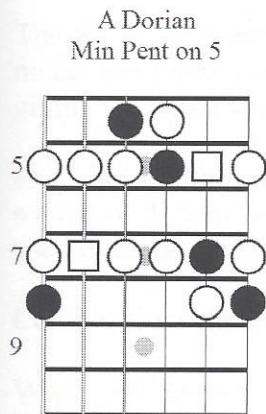
5 7 9

1 b3 11 5 b7 1 etc

The above diagram shows the scale of A Dorian with the scale of A minor pentatonic running through it. The hollow dots are the minor pentatonic scale, and the solid dots are the notes from Dorian. If we play an A minor pentatonic scale over an A Dorian chord progression, we highlight the scale tones **1 b3 11 5 b7**. This, as you might imagine, sounds fairly conventional and ‘bluesy’.

While this might be a fairly obvious approach, you may not realise that there are two more minor pentatonic scales contained within the parent mode. You can play a minor pentatonic scale from the 5th (E).

**Example 12l:** Minor Pentatonic on the 5th:



E minor pentatonic

1 9 11 5 b7 1 etc

When you play E minor pentatonic over A Dorian, you play the scale intervals **1, 9, 11, 5, b7**. This is a great sound and my favourite approach.

You can also play a minor pentatonic scale from the 9th (*or 2nd*) of the Dorian mode as shown in **example 12m**.

### Example 12m: Minor Pentatonic on the 9th (2nd)

A Dorian  
Min Pent on 9

B minor pentatonic

1 9 11 5 13 1 etc

This one is a little harder to handle over an A Dorian groove when played in isolation, but if you notice, you now have access to both A and B minor pentatonics. Any A minor idea you have played can be shifted up a tone and repeated to form sequences. This is an excellent approach towards developing longer lines.

In summary, when you are using the Dorian mode, you can play minor pentatonic scales on the root, 9th (2nd) and 5th. My favourite in isolation is to play **Minor pentatonic on the 5th of Dorian**.

## First Choice Soloing Summary for the Dorian Mode

Parent Scale: Dorian

Intervals: 4ths and 6ths

Triads: Minor b5 from the 6th degree / Major from b7

Arpeggio: Major 7th on the b3 / Major 7th off the b7

Pentatonic: Minor pentatonic on the 5th

## Phrygian

The Phrygian mode is less commonly used in pop music, but it is not unusual to find it in heavy rock, metal and flamenco. It has a uniquely dark yet palatable sound with the unusual b9th in its construction giving it a somewhat Spanish flavour.

Phrygian is often used as a soloing choice over power chords in rock music, but is not often used as a source of diatonic chord progressions. As it is similar in construction to the Aeolian mode, they are often used interchangeably with one another.

Compositions that make use of the Phrygian mode:

**War** – Joe Satriani

**Wherever I May Roam** – Metallica

### Formula and Harmonisation

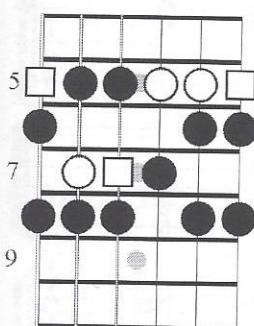
The formula for the Phrygian mode is:

**1 b2 b3 4 5 b6 b7**

It is played like this on the guitar in the key of A:

#### Example 13a:

A Phrygian



Visualise the Phrygian mode around the A minor chord highlighted.

When harmonised, Phrygian gives the following series of chords:

TRIAD Chord Type	SEVENTH Chord Types	Example in the key of A Phrygian
------------------	---------------------	----------------------------------

i minor	i minor 7 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	A minor 7
bII major	bII major 7 (extensions 9, #11, 13)	Bb major 7
biii major	biii 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	C7
iv minor	iv minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, b13)	D minor 7
v minor b5	V minor 7b5 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	E minor 7b5
bVI major	bVI major 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	F major 7
bvii minor	bvii minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	G minor 7

However because of Phrygian's very dark nature, writing chord progressions using only diatonic chords can sound somewhat awkward. As mentioned previously, in rock guitar we can get around this by using riff-based power chord backings and simply using the Phrygian mode over them, or we can use *upper structure triads* (slash chords) to imply the complex Phrygian over a simple bass pattern.

### Typical Phrygian Chord Progressions

#### Example 13b:

Musical notation for Example 13b. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains six chords: a power chord (B7), a major 7th chord (D7), another power chord (B7), a major 7th chord (D7), a power chord (B7), and a major 7th chord (D7). The bottom staff shows a bass line with a bass clef, consisting of eighth-note patterns: B, D, B, D, B, D.

#### Example 13c:

Musical notation for Example 13c. The top staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains six chords: a power chord (B7), a major 7th chord (D7), another power chord (B7), a major 7th chord (D7), a power chord (B7), and a major 7th chord (D7). The bottom staff shows a bass line with a bass clef, consisting of eighth-note patterns: B, D, B, D, B, D. Below the staff, specific chords are labeled: Dmin/A, C/A, Bb/A, Gmin/A, Amin, Dmin/A, C/A, Bb/A, Gmin/A, Amin.

## 5 Useful Phrygian Licks

These licks are all included as audio examples and the Phrygian backing track has kindly been provided by Quist.

### Example 13d:

Musical notation for Example 13d. The top part shows a treble clef staff with sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with tablature below it. The tablature uses T (top string), A (middle string), and B (bottom string) as column headers. The notes are numbered 5, 6, 7, 8 from bottom to top. The pattern starts at the 5th fret of the B string, moves up to the 6th fret of the A string, down to the 7th fret of the B string, up to the 8th fret of the A string, and so on, repeating the sequence.

### Example 13e:

Musical notation for Example 13e. The top part shows a treble clef staff with sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with tablature below it. The tablature uses T (top string), A (middle string), and B (bottom string) as column headers. The notes are numbered 5, 6, 7, 8 from bottom to top. The pattern starts at the 5th fret of the B string, moves up to the 6th fret of the A string, down to the 7th fret of the B string, up to the 8th fret of the A string, and so on, repeating the sequence.

### Example 13f:

Musical notation for Example 13f. The top part shows a treble clef staff with sixteenth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with tablature below it. The tablature uses T (top string), A (middle string), and B (bottom string) as column headers. The notes are numbered 5, 6, 7, 8 from bottom to top. The pattern starts at the 5th fret of the B string, moves up to the 6th fret of the A string, down to the 7th fret of the B string, up to the 8th fret of the A string, and so on, repeating the sequence. An arrow labeled "FULL" points to the 8th fret of the A string.

**Example 13g:**

Musical example 13g consists of two staves. The top staff is a musical score for a six-string guitar in G minor (indicated by a G clef and a minor key signature). The bottom staff is a tablature for the same guitar, showing the fingerings for each note. The tablature uses the standard six-fret system, with the first fret being the nut. The notes are represented by vertical stems with horizontal dashes indicating pitch. An arrow labeled "FULL" points upwards from the tablature, indicating a full octave range.

**Example 13h:**

Musical example 13h consists of two staves. The top staff is a musical score for a six-string guitar in G minor. The bottom staff is a tablature for the same guitar, showing the fingerings for each note. The tablature uses the standard six-fret system, with the first fret being the nut. The notes are represented by vertical stems with horizontal dashes indicating pitch.

## Soloing Approaches to the Phrygian Mode

The following pages analyse the approaches we use to dissect the A Phrygian Mode. Each approach, (intervals, triads etc) represents one ‘level’ of depth we can investigate to create melodic ideas. Think of them as different layers of increasing complexity. All of the ideas can be freely combined in order to make a solo. Try each idea over the Phrygian backing track to get a feel for the texture of each melodic concept.

### 2-Note Intervals

**Example 13h1:**

Phrygian in 3rds

Musical example 13h1 consists of two staves. The top staff is a musical score for a six-string guitar in A Phrygian mode. The bottom staff is a tablature for the same guitar, showing the fingerings for each note. The tablature uses the standard six-fret system, with the first fret being the nut. The notes are represented by vertical stems with horizontal dashes indicating pitch. The title "Phrygian in 3rds" is written above the staff.

### Example 13i:

## Phrygian in 4ths

The image shows a musical score for a C major blues scale. The top staff is a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff is a bass clef staff with sixteenth-note patterns. The bass staff has a vertical bar line at the end of measure 4, indicating a repeat. The notes are numbered below the staff, corresponding to the fingerings shown in the image.

### Example 13j:

## Phrygian in 5ths

The Star-Spangled Banner

Treble clef, B-flat major (two flats), common time.

Top Staff (Melody):

Bottom Staff (Harmony):

### Example 13k:

## Phrygian in 6ths

### Example 13l:

Phrygian in 7ths

The music consists of two staves. The top staff is for the treble clef (G) and the bottom staff is for the bass clef (F). Both staves have a key signature of one flat. The music is in common time. The top staff has a 16th-note pattern starting on the first note. The bottom staff has a 16th-note pattern starting on the second note. Fingerings are indicated below the notes: 5, 7, 8, 5, 7, 8, 5, 7, 8, 5.

My first choice to play in Phrygian is usually **3rds and 6ths**, but as always spend time practicing the ideas which you most enjoy.

### 3-Note Triads

By isolating triads built from each degree of the Phrygian mode, we can be specific about the intervals of the mode that we target when soloing. The triads from each scale degree are shown below and the intervals formed against the root note (A) are given.

### Example 13m:

Triads in A Phrygian

The music consists of two staves. The top staff is for the treble clef (G) and the bottom staff is for the bass clef (F). The music is in common time. There are seven groups of three notes each. The first group is A minor (1 b3 5), the second is Bb Major (b9 11 b13), the third is C Major (b3 5 b7), the fourth is D minor (11 b13 1), the fifth is E minor b5 (5 b7 b9), the sixth is F Major (b13 1 b3), and the seventh is G minor (b7 b9 11). Each group is shown on both staves.

### Example 13n:

Triads in A Phrygian (two octaves)

A minor (1 b3 5)      B<sub>b</sub> Major (b9 11 b13)      C Major (b3 5 b7)      D minor (11 b13 1)

E minor b5 (5 b7 b9)      F Major (b13 1 b3)      G minor (b7 b9 11)

For reference, here is the list of triad chord types for Phrygian and the intervals they impose against the tonic:

Scale Degree	3 Note Triads Built in Phrygian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	i minor	1, b3, 5
b2	bII major	b9, 11, b13
b3	biii major	b3, 5, b7
4	iv minor	11, b13, 1
5	v minor b5	5, b7, b9
b6	bVI major	b13, 1, b3
b7	bvii minor	b7, b9, 11

As a starting point for your studies, my favourite triads to solo with are:

Minor on the b7 (G minor over A Phrygian) (b7, b9 b3).  
Major on the b2 (Bb major over A Phrygian) (b9, 11, b13).

Try making melodies using only one, or a combination of both of these triads.

## 4-Note Arpeggios

Adding another interval of a 3rd on top of a triad creates a 4-note arpeggio. By building arpeggios on each degree of the Phrygian mode and soloing *only* using these arpeggios, we can be selective about which intervals of the scale we play. The arpeggios and intervals formed from the root of the Phrygian mode are shown in this table:

Scale Degree	4 Note Arpeggios in Phrygian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	i minor 7	1, b3, 5, b7
b2	bII major 7	b9, 11, b13, 1
b3	biii 7	b3, 5, b7, b9
4	iv minor 7	11, b13, 1, b3
5	v minor 7b5	5, b7, b9, 11
b6	bVI major 7	b13, 1, b3, 5
b7	bvii minor 7	b7, b9, 11, b13

Some will sound better than others to your ears, so put on the Phrygian backing track and experiment by jamming with one of the following arpeggios each time. Here they are shown in two octaves:

### Example 13o:

Arpeggios in A Phrygian (2 8ves)

A minor 7 (1 b3 5 b7)

B $\flat$  Major 7 (b9 11 b13 1)

C7 (b3 5 b7 b9)

D minor 7 (11 b13 1 b3)

E m7b5 (5 b7 b9 11)

F Major 7 (b13 1 b3 5)

G minor 7 (b7 b9 11 b13)

My first choices are to play:

Dominant 7 Arpeggio on the b3 (C7 over A) (b3 5 b7 b9).

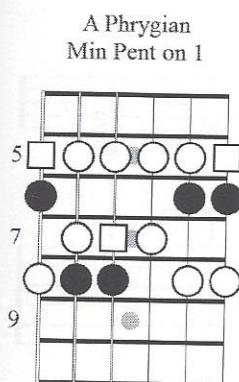
Minor 7 Arpeggio on the b7 (G minor 7 over A) (b7 b9 11 b13).

## 5-Note Pentatonic Scales

The three minor pentatonic scales we can derive from the Phrygian mode exist on the root, the b7 and the 11(4).

The following examples show how the pentatonic scales ‘fit’ inside the Phrygian shape:

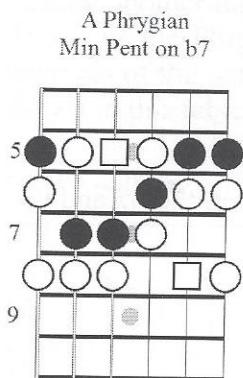
**Example 13p:** Minor pentatonic on the root:



Minor Pentatonic from the root (A minor Pentatonic over A)

Intervals played against the root of Phrygian: 1, b3, 11, 5, b7.

**Example 13q:** Minor pentatonic on the b7:

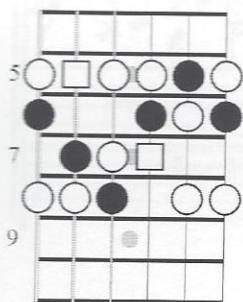


Minor Pentatonic from the b7 (G minor pentatonic over A)

Intervals played against the root: b3, 11, 5, b7, b9.

**Example 13r:** Minor pentatonic on the 11:

A Phrygian  
Min Pent on 11



Minor Pentatonic from the 11 (D minor pentatonic over A)

Intervals played against the root: **1, b3, 11, b13, b7**. I often use minor pentatonic scales played from the b7 and 11.

## First Choice Soloing Summary for the Phrygian Mode

Parent Scale: Phrygian.

Intervals: 3rds and 6ths.

Triads: Minor on the b7 / Major on the b2.

Arpeggio: Major 7th on the b3 / Major 7th on the b7.

Pentatonic: Minor pentatonic on the b7 and 11.

## Lydian

In my opinion, Lydian is one of the most beautiful, emotive tonalities. It contains only one note that is different from the major scale, but this small alteration completely changes its character. Lydian is used extensively in rock guitar ballads by players like Steve Vai and Joe Satriani.

Songs constructed around the Lydian mode:

- Flying in a Blue Dream** – Joe Satriani  
**How I Miss You** – Foo Fighters  
The introduction to **Hole Hearted** – Extreme  
**Answers** – Steve Vai  
**Shut up 'n Play Yer Guitar** – Frank Zappa

### Formula and Harmonisation

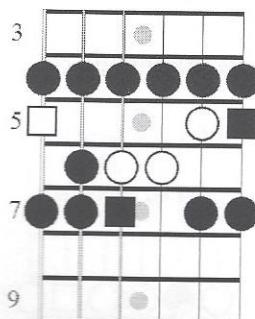
The formula for the Lydian mode is:

**1 2 3 #4 5 6 7** (Only one note different from the major scale).

It is played:

#### Example 14a:

A Lydian



A Lydian

A musical example consisting of a guitar solo and harmonic analysis. The solo is in A Lydian mode, indicated by the key signature of three sharps. The harmonic analysis below shows chords and their inversions. The bass line is also indicated with Roman numerals (I, II, III, IV) and note heads.

Learn to see and hear all the notes in this mode around the highlighted A Major 7th chord.

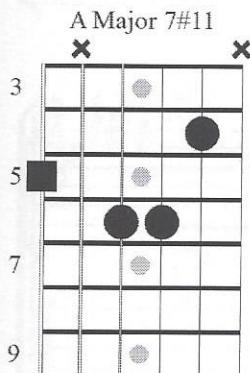
When harmonised, the Lydian mode gives the following sequence of chords:

TRIAD Chord Type	SEVENTH Chord Types	Example in the key of A Lydian
I major	I major 7 (extensions 9, #11, 13)	A major 7 (#11)
II major	II7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	B7
iii minor	iii minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, b13)	C# minor 7
#iv minor b5	#iv minor 7b5 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	D# minor 7b5
V major	V major 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	E major 7
vi minor	vi minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	F# minor 7
vii minor	vii minor 7 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	G# minor 7

## Typical Lydian Chord Progressions

When forming chord progressions to highlight the characteristics of the Lydian mode, some varying techniques are used. Often in rock it is played over a static vamp, and sometimes even the tonic Major 7#11 chord is sustained:

### Example 14b:



This chord accurately outlines the full harmony of the Lydian sound. It is worth noting that this chord voicing does *not* contain the 5th of the chord as the semitone clash between it and the #11/#4 is undesirable.

Another approach is to use upper structure triads over a bass note. Notice that chords I and II are both major. We can use those two chords together over the tonic bass note to create a rich, compelling harmony. For example:

**Example 14c:**

The notation shows two staves. The top staff is for the treble clef guitar, with chords B/A and A indicated above the staff. The bottom staff is for the bass clef guitar, with fingerings 7-5-5, 6-6, 7-7, 9-7, 7-7, 6-6, 5-5, and 7-7 shown above the strings. Both staves show a repeating pattern of eighth-note chords.

This is the approach that Joe Satriani takes in Flying in a Blue Dream; he simply arpeggiates the same chord sequence but in the key of C Lydian.

Due to the open, ‘spacey’ nature of the Lydian mode, it is often played over suspended chord vamps. For example:

**Example 14d:**

The notation shows two staves. The top staff is for the treble clef guitar, with chords Asus2, Asus2, C#sus2, and C#sus2 indicated above the staff. The bottom staff is for the bass clef guitar, with fingerings 0-0, 0-0, 4-4, and 4-4 shown above the strings. Both staves show a repeating pattern of eighth-note chords.

## 5 Useful Lydian Licks

They are all included as audio examples and the Lydian backing track has kindly been provided by Quist.

**Example 14e:**

The notation shows two staves. The top staff is for the treble clef guitar, with a melodic line consisting of eighth and sixteenth notes. The bottom staff is for the bass clef guitar, with fingerings 6-4-5-4, 6-4, 6, 7-6, 7-6, 7-4 shown above the strings.

**Example 14f:**

**Example 14g:**

**Example 14h:**

**Example 14i:**

## Soloing Approaches to the Lydian Mode

The following pages once again discuss the various ‘layers’ of the Lydian mode, from two-note intervals through to five-note pentatonic scales. Any idea in the following section can be used as an isolated approach, or in combination with any other concept.

### 2-Note Intervals

Example 14j:

Lydian in 3rds

4 6 4 7 6 4 6 4 7 6 4 6 4 5 4 7 5 4 7 5 4 7

Example 14k:

Lydian in 4ths

6 7 4 6 6 7 4 6 6 7 4 6 4 5 7 4 5 5 7 4 5 7

Example 14l:

Lydian in 5ths

7 4 6 7 4 6 7 4 6 7 4 5 7 4 5 5 7

### Example 14m:

Lydian in 6ths

### Example 14n:

Lydian in 7ths

To begin with, I would advise you to study **3rds and 5ths**. Don't forget to try making patterns out of groups of intervals. A common idea is to ascend two intervals and descend the third. Also, each interval pair can be played backwards.

## 3-Note Triads

As discussed, we can isolate the individual triads that are built on each degree of the Lydian mode. By soloing with specific triads we can target or isolate particular scale tones while avoiding others. The triads built from the Lydian mode are:

Scale Degree	3 Note Triads Built in Lydian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	I major	1, 3, 5
2	II major	9, #11, 13
3	iii minor	3, 5, 7
#4	#iv minor b5	#11, 13, 1
5	V major	5, 7, 9
6	vi minor	13, 1, 3
7	vii minor	7, 9, #11

As one octave shapes in the *first position*, they are played:

**Example 14o:**

Triads in A Lydian

A Major (1 3 5)      B Major (9 #11 13)      C# Minor (3 5 7)      D# Minor b5 (#11 13 1)

E Major (5 7 9)      F# Minor (13 1 3)      G# Minor (7 9 #11)

These can be played in two octaves in the following manner. (The lowest note in each shape is not always the root).

**Example 14p:**

Triads in A Lydian (two octaves)

A Major (1 3 5)      B Major (9 #11 13)      C# Minor (3 5 7)      D# Minor b5 (#11 13 1)

E Major (5 7 9)      F# Minor (13 1 3)      G# Minor (7 9 #11)

My favourite approaches are to play:

Minor triad on 7 (G# minor over A Lydian) (7, 9, #11).

Minor triad on 3 (C# minor over A Lydian) (3, 5, 7).

## 4-Note Arpeggios

When we extend the triad to become a 4-note arpeggio, we have another level of texture and intervallic selection we can use over the modal key centre. By using 4-note arpeggios we can be extremely articulate about which notes we choose to play from a mode. The arpeggios built from the Lydian mode are:

Scale Degree	4 Note Arpeggios in Lydian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	I major 7	1, 3, 5, 7
2	II7	9, #11, 13, 1
3	iii minor 7	3, 5, 7, 9
#4	#iv minor 7b5	#11, 13, 1, 3
5	V major 7	5, 7, 9, #11
6	vi minor 7	13, 1, 3, 5
7	vii minor 7	7, 9, #11, 13

These can be played in 2 octaves in the following manner. The lowest note in each shape is not always the root. **Example 14q:**

Arpeggios in A Lydian

A Major 7 (1 3 5 7)    B7 (9 #11 13 1)    C# Minor 7 (3 5 7 9)    D# Minor 7 b5 (#11 13 1 3)

E Major 7 (5 7 9 #11)    F# Minor 7 (13 1 3 5)    G# Minor 7 (7 9 #11 13)

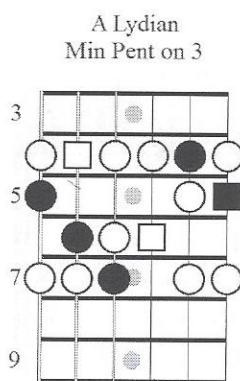
Two great choices are

Minor 7b5 on the #11th. (D#m7b5 over A Lydian) (#11, 13, 1, 3).  
Minor 7 on the 3rd (C# minor 7 over A Lydian) (3, 5, 7, 9).

## 5-Note Pentatonic Scales

It is extremely common to superimpose minor pentatonic scales over the Lydian mode. They can be built from the 3rd, 7th and 13th. To really highlight the Lydian #11 use a minor pentatonic scale build from the 7th degree of the mode. The options are

**Example 14r:** Minor pentatonic on 3:

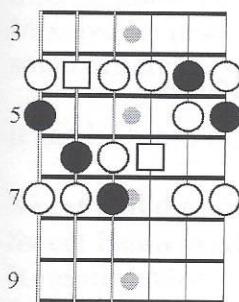


G# Minor Pentatonic over A Lydian

Intervals played against the root of Lydian: **3, 5, 13, 7, 9.**

**Example 14s:** Minor pentatonic on 7:

A Lydian  
Min Pent on 7

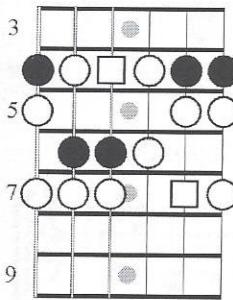


C# Minor Pentatonic over A Lydian

Intervals played against the root of Lydian: 3, 7, 9, #11, 13.

**Example 14t:** Minor pentatonic on 13/6:

A Lydian  
Min Pent on 6



F# Minor Pentatonic over A Lydian

Intervals played against the root of Lydian: **1, 3, 5, 9, 13.**

My first choice is to play the minor pentatonic on the 7th (G# minor pentatonic over A Lydian) ( 7, 9, 3, #11, 13).

### First Choice Soloing Summary for the Lydian Mode

Parent Scale: Lydian

Intervals: 3rds and 5ths

Triads: Minor triad on 7 / Minor triad on 3

Arpeggio: Minor 7b5 on #11th / Minor 7 on 3

Pentatonic: Minor pentatonic on the 7

## Mixolydian

Mixolydian is built on the 5th degree of the major scale and is one of the most commonly used modes in modern guitar playing. It is used to construct chord sequences and solos in a variety of musical styles. The Mixolydian mode, just like Lydian, contains only one note that is different from the major scale, but that small difference creates a very different feel. Mixolydian is in the roots of modern blues, rock, and funk.

It can be heard in a wide variety of popular music:

**Sweet Child of Mine** – Guns and Roses  
**Sweet Home Alabama** – Lynyrd Skynyrd  
**Ramblin' Man** – The Allman Brothers Band  
**Summer Song** – Joe Satriani  
**Freeway Jam** – Jeff Beck

### Formula and Harmonisation

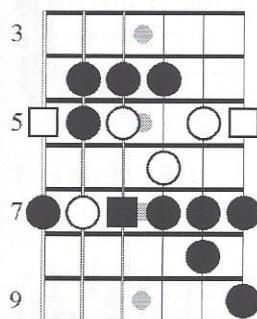
The formula for the Mixolydian mode is

**1 2 3 4 5 6 b7**

It is played like this in the key of A:

#### Example 15a:

A Mixolydian



A Mixolydian

A musical example consisting of a solo and a harmonic progression. The top part shows a melodic line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bottom part shows a harmonic progression on a bass clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The bass staff includes a staff line for the 12th fret. Below the staff are fingering numbers: 5-7, 4-5-7, 4-6-7, 5-7-8-8, 7-5, 7-6-4, 7-5-4, 7-5-4, and 7-5. The progression consists of chords: A (5-7), D (4-5-7), G (4-6-7), C# (5-7-8-8), F# (7-5), B (7-6-4), E (7-5-4), A (7-5-4), and D (7-5).

You should visualise the Mixolydian mode around the Dominant 7 chord highlighted by hollow dots.

Mixolydian is harmonised to generate the following sequence of chords:

TRIAD Chord Type	SEVENTH Chord Types	Example in the key of A Mixolydian
I major	I7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	A7
ii minor	ii minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, b13)	B minor 7
iii minor b5	iii minor 7b5 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	C# minor 7b5
IV major	IV major 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	D major 7
v minor	V minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	E minor 7
vi minor	vi minor 7 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	F# minor 7
bVII major	bVII major (extensions 9, #11, 13)	G major 7

One of the most important things to know about the Mixolydian mode is that the tonic, (Chord I) forms a Dominant 7 (7) chord when it is harmonised to 4 notes. In traditional classical music this is *always* seen as a point of tension which would need to be resolved, however over about the last 100 years, the dominant chord has been accepted as a chord that can remain static indefinitely. For example, the first four bars of a blues may often be played as a dominant 7 chord, before moving to chord IV which is also played as a '7' chord. More often than not, the V chord is played as a '7' chord too. This idea can be seen in the following section.

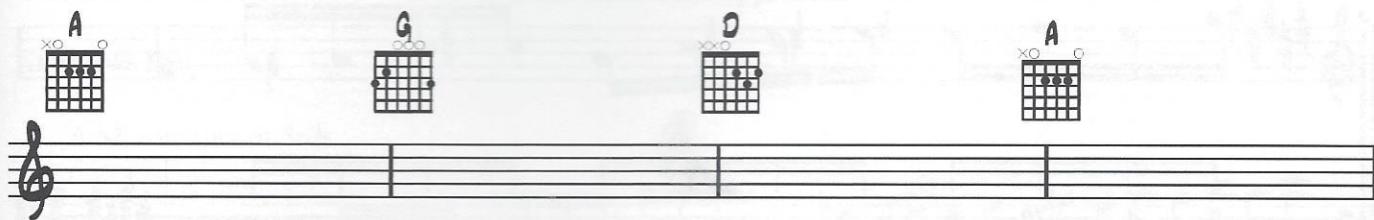
A quick way to spot a Mixolydian riff is to see if it plays a bVII major chord at any point. If the riff is major sounding and it contains a bVII chord it is generally Mixolydian.

## Typical Mixolydian Chord Progressions

### Example 15b:

The image displays three staves of musical notation, each consisting of a treble clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a staff line. Above each staff, a guitar chord diagram is shown with its corresponding letter name (A7, D7, E7, etc.) above it. Below each staff, the key signature is indicated as 'A Mixolydian', 'D Mixolydian', or 'E Mixolydian'. The first staff shows a progression from A7 to D7 to A7. The second staff shows a progression from D7 to A7. The third staff shows a progression from E7 to D7 to A7 to E7.

### Example 15c:



## 5 Useful Mixolydian Licks

Mixolydian is more often than not combined with the minor pentatonic and blues scales to give a slightly happier, major lift to a blues based solo. This is reflected in many of the licks in this section. They are all included as audio examples and the Mixolydian backing track has kindly been provided by **Quist**.

### Example 15d:

A musical example consisting of a treble clef staff with a key signature of F# and a bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various note heads and stems. The bass staff contains a guitar tab with fret numbers (8, 5, 7, 5) and a 'FULL' marking above the first measure. Brackets indicate fingerings for the bass tab.

### Example 15e:

A musical example consisting of a treble clef staff with a key signature of F# and a bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various note heads and stems. The bass staff contains a guitar tab with fret numbers (4, 7), (5, 4, 6, 4), (5, 7), (5, 4, 6), (5, 8), (7, 5, 8), (5, 5), and (7). Brackets indicate fingerings for the bass tab, and a '1/4' marking is present above the last measure.

**Example 15f:**

Musical notation for Example 15f. The top staff shows a melodic line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of A major (no sharps or flats). The bottom staff is a guitar tablature (A string at the top) with note heads corresponding to the notes in the melody. The tablature shows a sequence of notes: 8-5-7-5, 8-7-5, 7-5-6, 7-5-4.

**Example 15g:**

Musical notation for Example 15g. The top staff shows a melodic line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of A major. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature. The tablature shows a sequence of notes: 5-8-7, 5-8-5-6-7-5, followed by a measure with a 1/2 note head and a 7-7 bend.

**Example 15h:**

Musical notation for Example 15h. The top staff shows a melodic line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of A major. The bottom staff is a guitar tablature. The tablature shows a sequence of notes: 5-6-7-5-4-7, followed by a measure with a 5-6-5-8-5-7 sequence.

## Soloing Approaches to the Mixolydian Mode

The following pages analyse the approaches we can use to dissect the A Mixolydian mode. Each approach, (intervals, triads etc.) represents one ‘level’ of depth we can investigate to create melodic ideas.

Think of them as different layers of increasing complexity. All of the ideas can be freely combined in order to make a solo. Try each idea over a slow Mixolydian backing track to get a feel for the texture of each melodic concept.

## 2-Note Intervals

You should be comfortable with all of these intervallic approaches to playing Mixolydian

### Example 15i:

A Mixolydian in 3rds

Fretboard diagram for Example 15i:  
5-4, 5-4, 7-5, 4-7, 5-4, 7-5, 4-7, 6, 4-7-6, 5-7, 7-5-8-7, 8, 5-7, 5-9

### Example 15j:

A Mixolydian in 4ths

Fretboard diagram for Example 15j:  
5-5, 7-4, 4-5, 5-7, 7-4, 4-5, 6-7, 4-6, 5-7, 4-5-6-7, 7-8-5-5, 7-7-8, 9

### Example 15k:

A Mixolydian in 5ths

Fretboard diagram for Example 15k:  
5-7, 4-4, 5-5, 7-7, 4-4, 6-5, 7-7, 5-5, 4-7, 6-5, 7-7, 4-5-7, 5-5-7, 7-7, 9

### Example 15l:

A Mixolydian in 6ths

Fretboard diagram for Example 15l:

4	5	7	4	6	7	5	7	4	8	6	7	5	9
5	7	4	5	7									

### Example 15m:

A Mixolydian in 7ths

Fretboard diagram for Example 15m:

5	7	4	6	7	5	7	8	5	7	9			
5	7	4	5	7	4	5	7	4	6	7	9		

## 3-Note Triads

Once again, we can take the approach of singling out specific triads that are formed on each degree of the Mixolydian mode. The triads that are formed from each scale tone are:

Scale Degree	3 Note Triads Built in Mixolydian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	I major	1, 3, 5
2	ii minor	9, 11, 13
3	iii minor b5	3, 5, b7
4	IV major	11, 13, 1
5	v minor	5, b7, 9
6	vi minor	13, 1, 3
b7	bVII major	b7, 9, 11

These are played in the following manner in one and two octaves:

### Example 15n:

Triads in A Mixolydian (one octave)

A Major (1 3 5)      B minor (9 11 13)      C# Minor b5 (3 5 b7)      D Major (11 13 1)

The notation shows four measures of music. The first measure contains an A major triad (notes 1, 3, 5). The second measure contains a B minor triad (notes 9, 11, 13). The third measure contains a C# minor triad with a b5 (notes 3, 5, b7). The fourth measure contains a D major triad (notes 11, 13, 1). Below the staff is a guitar neck diagram with fingerings: 5-4-7, 7-5-4, 4-7-5, and 5-4-7.

E minor (5 b7 9)      F# minor (13 1 3)      G Major (b7 9 11)

The notation shows three measures of music. The first measure contains an E minor triad (notes 5, b7, 9). The second measure contains an F# minor triad (notes 13, 1, 3). The third measure contains a G major triad (notes b7, 9, 11). Below the staff is a guitar neck diagram with fingerings: 7-5-4, 4-7-6, and 5-4-7.

### Example 15o:

Triads in A Mixolydian (two octaves)

A Major (1 3 5)      B minor (9 11 13)      C# Minor b5 (3 5 b7)      D Major (11 13 1)

The notation shows four measures of music. The first measure contains an A major triad (notes 1, 3, 5). The second measure contains a B minor triad (notes 9, 11, 13). The third measure contains a C# minor triad with a b5 (notes 3, 5, b7). The fourth measure contains a D major triad (notes 11, 13, 1). Below the staff is a guitar neck diagram with fingerings: 5-4-7, 7-5-9, 4-7-7, 4-7-5-8, and 5-4-7-7.

E minor (5 b7 9)      F# minor (13 1 3)      G Major (b7 9 11)

The notation shows three measures of music. The first measure contains an E minor triad (notes 5, b7, 9). The second measure contains an F# minor triad (notes 13, 1, 3). The third measure contains a G major triad (notes b7, 9, 11). Below the staff is a guitar neck diagram with fingerings: 7-5-8, 5-4-7, 6-7-5-9, and 3-7-5-4-7-8.

Playing a minor triad on the 5th degree of the Mixolydian mode is a great sound. (E minor over A Mixolydian) (5, b7, 9).

## 4-Note Arpeggios

Building a 4-note arpeggio from each degree of Mixolydian generates the following soloing options:

Scale Degree	4 Note Arpeggios in Mixolydian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	I7	1, 3, 5, b7
2	ii minor 7	9, 11, 13, 1
3	iii minor 7b	3, 5, b7, 9
4	IV major 7	11, 13, 1, 3
5	V minor 7	5, b7, 9, 11
6	vi minor 7	13, 1, 3, 5
b7	bVII major	b7, 9, 11, 13

### Example 15p:

Arpeggios in A Mixolydian

A7 (1 3 5 b7)      B minor 7 (9 11 13 1)      C# m7b5 (3 5 b7 9)      D Major 7 (11 13 1 3)

E minor 7 (5 b7 9 11)      F# minor 7 (13 1 3 5)      G Major 7 (b7 9 11 13)

Common approaches include playing a minor 7b5 arpeggio from the 3rd. (C# minor 7b5 over A Mixolydian) (3, 5, b7, 9).

Also playing a minor 7 arpeggio from the 5th (E minor 7 over A Mixolydian) (5, b7, 9, 11).

## 5-Note Pentatonic Scales

Minor pentatonic scales are often combined with the Mixolydian mode to create a rocky, bluesy feel. Despite the Mixolydian mode being a *major* type mode (it has a major 3rd), the most common minor pentatonic scale to combine it with is built from the *root* and would contain a *minor* 3rd. For example, you would often use an A minor pentatonic scale in conjunction with the A Mixolydian mode. A big part of blues vocabulary is bending the minor 3rd in the pentatonic towards the major 3rd in Mixolydian.

Many rock guitar licks begin as minor pentatonic lines and then ‘borrow’ notes from Mixolydian to give a slightly happier vibe.

Examine the following line:

### Example 15q:

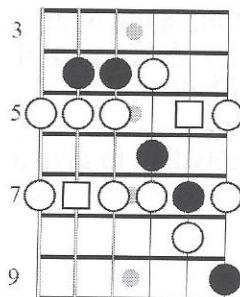
This line begins clearly as an A minor lick, but borrows some notes from A Mixolydian in beats two and three. Joe Satriani, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Jimi Hendrix are great players to listen to in order to hear this idea.

While the minor pentatonic scale from the root is not an ‘organic’ derivative of the Mixolydian mode, it is probably the most commonly used approach when soloing in a rock/blues context.

The minor pentatonic scales that exist naturally in the Mixolydian mode are built on the 5th, 6th (13th) and 2nd (9th).

**Example 15r:** Minor Pentatonic on 5:

A Mixolydian  
Min Pent on 5



E Minor Pentatonic over A Mixolydian

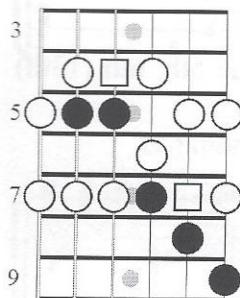
Fretboard positions shown below the staff:

- 1st measure: 5-7
- 2nd measure: 5-7 | 4-7
- 3rd measure: 5-8 | 5-7 | 5-8-5
- 4th measure: 7 | 4-7-5 | 7-5
- 5th measure: 7-5

Intervals played against the root of Mixolydian: 1, 5 b7, 9, 11.

**Example 15s:** Minor Pentatonic on 6/13:

A Mixolydian  
Min Pent on 6



F# Minor Pentatonic over A Mixolydian

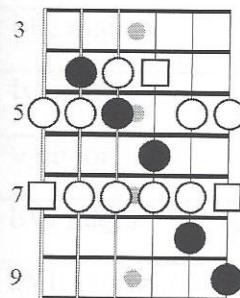
Fretboard positions shown below the staff:

- 1st measure: 5-7
- 2nd measure: 4-7 | 4-6
- 3rd measure: 5-7 | 5-7 | 5-7-5 | 6
- 4th measure: 4-7-4 | 7-4 | 7-4
- 5th measure: 7-5

Intervals played against the root of Mixolydian: **1, 3, 5, 9, 13.**

**Example 15t:** Minor Pentatonic on 9:

A Mixolydian  
Min Pent on 9



B Minor Pentatonic over A Mixolydian

Intervals played against the root of Mixolydian: **1, 5, 9, 11, 13.**

It is worth knowing that if we include the minor pentatonic scale from the root (A minor pentatonic), the *Mixolydian mode contains 2 pairs of minor pentatonic scales, both one tone apart.*

We have: A minor and B minor pentatonics. (Minor pentatonic on root and 9)

And E minor and F# minor pentatonics. (Minor pentatonic on 5 and 6)

In other words, you can shift any E minor pentatonic lick or idea up one tone to F#, or vice versa, and the same with an A minor pentatonic idea.

### First Choice Soloing Summary for the Mixolydian Mode

Parent Scale: Mixolydian.

Intervals: 3rds and 6ths.

Triad: Minor triad on 5.

Arpeggio: Minor 7b5 on 3 / Minor 7 on 5.

Pentatonic: Minor pentatonic on 5 / Minor pentatonic on the 1.

## Aeolian

The Aeolian mode is formed by building a scale from the 6th degree of the major scale. It is identical to the *natural* or *relative* minor scale. It is a dark and foreboding sound and is used extremely frequently in rock and metal guitar solos. Some notable compositions that use Aeolian are:

**Still Got the Blues** – Gary Moore

**Europa** – Carlos Santana

**All Along the Watchtower** – Bob Dylan

**Losing my Religion** – R.E.M.

**Fear of the Dark** – Iron Maiden

### Formula and Harmonisation

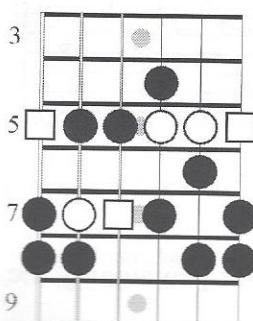
The formula for the Aeolian mode is

**1 2 b3 4 5 b6 b7**

It is played like this in the key of A:

#### Example 16a:

A Aeolian



It is useful to visualise this scale around the tonic minor chord highlighted by hollow dots.

The Aeolian mode, when harmonised forms the following sequence of chords:

TRIAD Chord Type	SEVENTH Chord Types	Example in the key of A Aeolian
i minor	i minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, b13)	A minor 7
ii minor b5	ii minor 7b5 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	B minor 7b5
bIII major	III major 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	C major 7
iv minor	iv minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	D minor 7
v minor	v minor 7 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	E minor 7
bVI major	bVI major7 (extensions 9, #11, 13)	F major 7
bVII major	bVII 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	G7

Notice that the important and key-defining i, iv and v chords are all minor. This lends a dark quality to the mode.

A chord progression that includes a shift to the bVI (major) chord is typically Aeolian.

Often chord bVII will be played as a simple major triad and not as a dominant 7, because the extra tension pulls the chord progression strongly towards the relative major key, (in this case C major).

## Typical Aeolian Chord Progressions

### Example 16b:

A guitar chord progression in A Aeolian. The progression consists of four chords: Am, Dm, Am, and Em. The chords are shown with their respective fingerings above the guitar neck diagrams. The progression starts with Am (index finger on 3rd string), followed by Dm (index finger on 2nd string), then Am again, and finally Em (index finger on 1st string). The progression ends with a repeat sign and a colon, indicating it can be repeated.

### Example 16c:

A guitar chord progression in A Aeolian. The progression consists of four chords: Am, Fmaj7, G, and Dm. The chords are shown with their respective fingerings above the guitar neck diagrams. The progression starts with Am (index finger on 3rd string), followed by Fmaj7 (index finger on 2nd string), then G (index finger on 1st string), and finally Dm (index finger on 2nd string). The progression ends with a repeat sign and a colon, indicating it can be repeated.

**Example 16d:**

Diagram showing five guitar chords: A<sup>5</sup>, C<sup>5</sup>, F<sup>5</sup>, E<sup>5</sup>, D<sup>5</sup>, and C<sup>5</sup>. Below the chords is a musical staff with a treble clef and a common time signature (indicated by a '4'). The staff consists of six vertical bar lines.

## 5 Useful Aeolian Licks

They are all included as audio examples and the Aeolian backing track has kindly been provided by **Quist**.

**Example 16e:**

Musical notation for Example 16e. The top part shows a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with fingerings: 7-5-8-7-5-8-7-5-6-5-7-5-7-7. A vertical bar line separates the two parts.

**Example 16f:**

Musical notation for Example 16f. The top part shows a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with fingerings: 8-7-5-8-5-6-7-5-4-5-4-5-7-9-9. A vertical bar line separates the two parts.

**Example 16g:**

Musical notation for Example 16g. The top part shows a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with fingerings: 5-7-7-5-8-6-5-7-5-5-4-5-7-5. A vertical bar line separates the two parts.

**Example 16h:**

**Example 16i:**

### Soloing Approaches to the Aeolian Mode

The following section dissects the Aeolian mode into various different soloing approaches; from soloing using 2 note intervals, right through to the 5 minor pentatonic scales which exist on various degrees of the scale. By studying these ideas you will fuel your own improvisational fluency while securing important theoretical concepts.

#### 2-Note Intervals

**Example 16j:**

A Aeolian in 3rds

**Example 16k:**

A Aeolian in 4ths

Fingerings below the bass staff:

5	7	8	5	7	4	5	7	5	6	7	8
5	7	8	5	7	8	5	7	5	6	7	8

**Example 16l:**

A Aeolian in 5ths

Fingerings below the bass staff:

5	7	8	5	7	4	5	7	5	6	8	5	7	6	8
5	7	8	5	7	8	5	7	5	6	5	7	5	6	7

**Example 16m:**

A Aeolian in 6ths

Fingerings below the bass staff:

5	8	7	8	5	7	4	5	7	5	6	4	8	5	7	5	8
5	7	8	5	7	8	5	7	5	7	5	6	4	8	5	7	5

**Example 16n:**

A Aeolian in 7ths

Fingerings below the bass staff:

5	7	8	5	7	4	5	7	5	6	8	5	7	8		
5	7	8	5	7	8	5	7	5	7	5	6	4	5	7	4

While all these intervallic options sound good, I tend to play a lot of ideas based around **3rds and 4ths**.

### 3-Note Triads

When we form triads on each degree of the Aeolian mode, the following soloing opportunities are presented:

Scale Degree	3 Note Triads Built in Aeolian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	i minor	1, b3, 5
2	ii minor b5	9, 11, b13
b3	bIII major	b3, 5, b7
4	iv minor	11, b13, 1
5	v minor	5, b7, 9
b6	bVI major	b13, 1, b3
b7	bVII major	b7, 9, 11

Each individual triad, when played in isolation imposes a different set of extensions over the tonal centre. One and two octave patterns are shown in the following examples along with the extensions they form against the tonic.

#### Example 16o:

A Aeolian in triads (one octave)

The musical example shows four one-octave triad patterns for the Aeolian mode. The patterns are:

- A minor (1 b3 5):** Notes 1, 3, and 5 of the A Aeolian scale.
- B minor b5 (9 11 b13):** Notes 9, 11, and b13 of the A Aeolian scale.
- C Major (b3 5 b7):** Notes b3, 5, and b7 of the A Aeolian scale.
- D minor (11 b13 1):** Notes 11, b13, and 1 of the A Aeolian scale.

The patterns are shown on a treble clef staff with corresponding fingerings below the staff. The first pattern (A minor) has fingerings 5-8-7. The second (B minor b5) has 7-5-8. The third (C Major) has 8-7-5. The fourth (D minor) has 5-8-7.

E minor (5 b7 9)

F Major (b13 1 b3)

G Major (b7 9 11)

The musical example shows three one-octave triad patterns for the Aeolian mode. The patterns are:

- E minor (5 b7 9):** Notes 5, b7, and 9 of the A Aeolian scale.
- F Major (b13 1 b3):** Notes b13, 1, and b3 of the A Aeolian scale.
- G Major (b7 9 11):** Notes b7, 9, and 11 of the A Aeolian scale.

The patterns are shown on a treble clef staff with corresponding fingerings below the staff. The first pattern (E minor) has fingerings 5-4-7. The second (F Major) has 8-7-5. The third (G Major) has 5-4-7.

#### Example 16p:

A Aeolian in triads (two octaves)

A minor (1 b3 5)

B minor b5 (9 11 b13)

C Major (b3 5 b7)

D minor (11 b13 1)

E minor (5 b7 9)

F Major (b13 1 b3)

G Major (b7 9 11)

There are plenty of good options here, but I would suggest that you start by playing a **major triad on the b6**, (F Major over A) (1, b3, b13).

### 4-Note Arpeggios

The arpeggios derived from each scale tone are as follows:

Scale Degree	4 Note Arpeggios built in Aeolian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	i minor 7	1, b3, 5, b7
2	ii minor 7b5	9, 11, b13, 1
b3	III major 7	b3, 5, b7, 9
4	iv minor 7	11, b13, 1, b3
5	v minor 7	5, b7, 9, 11
b6	bVI major7	b13, 1, b3, 5
b7	bVII 7	b7, 9, 11, b13

### Example 16q:

Arpeggios in A Aeolian (two octaves)

A minor 7 (1 b3 5 7)    B m7b5 (9 11 b13 1)    C Major 7 (b3 5 b7 9)    D minor 7 (11 b13 1 b3)

E minor 7 (5 b7 9 11)

F Major 7 (b13 1 b3 5)

G Major (b7 9 11 b13)

Two great arpeggios you can use to outline the Aeolian tonality are

Major 7th arpeggio on the b3 (C major 7 over A) (b3, 5, b7, 9).

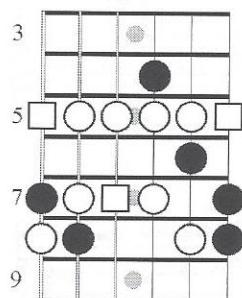
Minor 7th arpeggio on the 4th/11th (D minor 7 over A) (1, b3, 11, b13).

## 5-Note Pentatonic Scales

Minor pentatonic scales can be formed on the root, 4th/11th and 5th of the Aeolian mode and are shown here.

**Example 16r:** Minor Pentatonic on 1:

A Aeolian  
Min Pent on 1



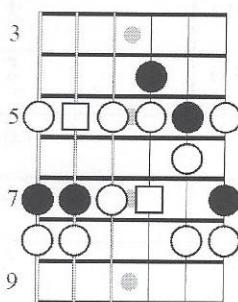
A minor pentatonic over A Aeolian

Musical example 16r showing a melody and its tablature. The top part is a treble clef musical staff with a eighth-note melody. The bottom part is a six-string guitar tablature. The tablature shows a sequence of notes with intervals labeled below them: 5-8, 5-7, 5-8, 8-5, 7-5, 7, 5-7, 5, 8-5.

Intervals played against the root of Aeolian: **1, b3, 4, 5, b7.**

**Example 16s:** Minor Pentatonic on 11/4:

A Aeolian  
Min Pent on 11



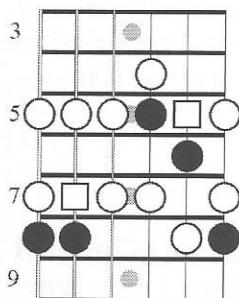
D minor pentatonic over A Aeolian

The top part shows a treble clef musical staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with five-fret segments. Fret numbers 5, 7, 8, and 9 are marked. Fingerings indicate specific notes: 5-8, 5-7, 5-7, 6-8-8-6, 7-5, 7-5, 7-5, 8-5, and 8-5.

Intervals played against the root of Aeolian: **1, b3, b7, 11, b13.**

**Example 16t:** Minor Pentatonic on 5:

A Aeolian  
Min Pent on 5



E minor pentatonic over A Aeolian

The top part shows a treble clef musical staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom part shows a guitar neck with five-fret segments. Fret numbers 5, 7, 8, and 9 are marked. Fingerings indicate specific notes: 5-7, 5-7, 4-7, 5-8-8-5, 7-4, 7-4, 7-5, and 7-5.

Intervals played against the root of Aeolian: **1, 5, b7, 9, 11.**

Playing minor pentatonic scales from the 4th and 5th are both good options.

### First Choice Soloing Summary for the Aeolian Mode

Parent Scale: Aeolian.

Intervals: 3rds and 4ths.

Triad: Major triad on b6.

Arpeggio: Major 7th arpeggio on the b3 / Minor 7th arpeggio on the 4th.

Pentatonic: Minor pentatonic on 4 and 5.

## Locrian

Locrian is a very rarely (read “never”) used mode in pop and rock music although it is fairly common in jazz<sup>1</sup>. In jazz, it is almost exclusively played over minor 7b5 chords. As the tonic (i) chord in Locrian harmonises to become a minor 7b5 chord, the mode can sound extremely dark and unsettled. Pure Locrian as a key centre for soloing is also fairly unusual, - you do hear it occasionally played but it’s generally implied by combining a Phrygian scale with a b5 ‘blues’ note.

### Formula and Harmonisation

The formula for the Locrian mode is

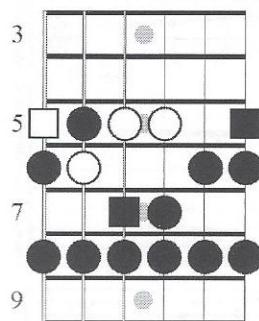
**1 b2 b3 4 b5 b6 b7**

(Every note except for the IV is flattened)

It is played like this in the key of A:

#### Example 17a:

A Locrian



A Locrian

Musical example for A Locrian mode. The top staff shows a melodic line in eighth notes. The bottom staff shows a harmonic progression with a bass line and a guitar-like part. The bass line consists of eighth notes. The guitar part shows chords with fingerings: 5-6-8, 5-6-8, 5-7, 8, 5-7-8, 6-8-8, 5, 6, 8-7-5, 8-7-5, 8, 6-5, 8-6-5. The highlighted chord is Am7b5.

The highlighted chord is an A minor 7b5 (Am7b5).

When harmonised, the Locrian mode generates the following sequence of chords:

<sup>1</sup> If you have any suggestions of a rock tune, or solo that exclusively uses the Locrian mode, please write and tell me.

TRIAD Chord Type	SEVENTH Chord Types	Example in the key of A Locrian
i minor b5	i minor 7b5 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	A minor 7b5
bII major	bII major 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	Bb major 7
biii minor	biii minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	C minor 7
iv minor	iv minor 7 (extensions b9, 11, b13)	D minor 7
bV major	bV major7 (extensions 9, #11, 13)	Eb major 7
bVI major	bVI 7 (extensions 9, 11, 13)	F7
bvii minor	bvii minor 7 (extensions 9, 11, b13)	G minor 7

Locrian does *not* have a natural 5th degree. The V to I movement in music is normally very important in stabilising a key centre, so the very fact that it is not present in the Locrian mode helps us to understand why this mode is so unsettled.

### Typical Locrian Chord Progressions

Because of its rarity there is no such thing as a *typical* Locrian chord progression, however if I had to write one, I would certainly take the approach of using *upper chord structures* over a bass note (slash chords) to imply the modality as acceptably as possible. In its simplest form this approach involves taking major or minor triads or 7th chords from the harmonised scale and playing them over a static bass note (normally the *root* of the key).

#### Example 17b:

The tablature shows a sequence of four chords over a static bass note (the root of the key). The chords are: Cm/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string), Eb/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string), Cm/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string), and Eb/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string). Each chord is preceded by its name and a slash, followed by the letter 'A' indicating the bass note.

#### Example 17c:

The tablature shows a sequence of four chords over a static bass note (the root of the key). The chords are: Eb/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string), F/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string), Eb/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string), and F/A (with a 'x' in the 5th string). Each chord is preceded by its name and a slash, followed by the letter 'A' indicating the bass note.

For more of a ‘metal’ feel, you can use power chords, but notice chord I is played with a b5, rather than a natural 5 for a more ‘pure’ Locrian sound.

**Example 17d:**

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is in A minor (A°) and the bottom staff is in E♭ major (E♭⁵). Both staves are in common time (indicated by '4'). The top staff shows a sequence of power chords: A°, C⁷, and G⁷. The bottom staff shows a sequence of power chords: E♭⁵, A⁷, and D⁷. Each staff has a corresponding guitar chord diagram above it. The top diagram shows a standard A chord (A, C#, E) with 'xxx' markings over the 3rd and 5th strings and 'b5e' over the 5th string. The bottom diagram shows an E♭⁵ chord (E♭, G, B, D) with 'x' markings over the 1st and 3rd strings and 'b5e' over the 5th string.

## 5 Useful Locrian Licks

These licks are all included as audio examples and the Locrian backing track has kindly been provided by Quist.

**Example 17e:**

This example shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (F major or D minor). Below the staff is a guitar tablature. The tab shows a sequence of notes on the 6th, 5th, and 4th strings, followed by a bar line. The notes correspond to the fret positions: 5, 6, 5, 8, 7, 8, 5, 7, 8, 8, 8, 5, 6, 8.

**Example 17f:**

This example shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (F major or D minor). Below the staff is a guitar tablature. The tab shows a sequence of notes on the 6th, 5th, and 4th strings, followed by a bar line. The notes correspond to the fret positions: 6, 8, 6, 7, 8, 6, 7, 7, 8, 5, 7, 5, 7, 8, 5, 6, 5, 7, 7, 5, 7, 8.

**Example 17g:**

Musical notation for Example 17h. The top staff is a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff is a bass staff with corresponding fingerings: 5, 7, 5; 6, 5, 6; 5, 7, 5; 6, 5.

**Example 17h:**

Example 17h

Musical notation for Example 17h. The top staff is a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff is a bass staff with corresponding fingerings: 5, 6; 5, 7; 5, 6; 5, 7, 8; 7, 8.

**Example 17i:**

Musical notation for Example 17i. The top staff is a treble clef staff with eighth-note patterns. The bottom staff is a bass staff with corresponding fingerings: 8, 5, 6; 7, 5, 7, 8; 6, 7, 5; 7, 5.

### Soloing Approaches to the Locrian Mode

Once again, by extracting individual intervals, triads, arpeggios and pentatonic scales from the Locrian mode, we can target specific scale degrees and really articulately outline the Locrian sound.

## 2-Note Intervals

### Example 17j:

A Locrian in 3rds

5-8-6    5-8-6    5-8-6    5-8-7    5-8-7    5-8-7    5-8-7    5-8-6  
5-8-6    5-8-6    5-8-6    5-8-7    5-8-7    5-8-7    5-8-7    5-8-6

### Example 17k:

A Locrian in 4ths

5-5-6-8    5-5-6-8    5-5-6-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-6-6  
5-5-6-8    5-5-6-8    5-5-6-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-7-8    5-6-6-6

### Example 17l:

A Locrian in 5ths

5-6-8-5    5-6-8-5    5-6-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-6-6-8  
5-6-8-5    5-6-8-5    5-6-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-7-8-5    5-6-6-8

### Example 17m:

A Locrian in 6ths

### Example 17n:

A Locrian in 7ths

Because of its dark nature, there are no bad options here. Use your ears and experiment. I tend to stick to 3rds and 4ths.

## 3-Note Triads

When you harmonise each note of the Locrian mode to the triad level, you create the following sequence of permutations:

Scale Degree	3 Note Triads Built in Locrian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	i minor b5	1, b3, b5
b2	bII Major	b9, 11, b13
b3	biii minor	b3, b5, b7
4	iv minor	11, b13, 1
b5	bV Major	b5, b7, b9
b6	bVI Major	b13, 1, b3
b7	bvii minor	b7, b9, 11

They are shown here with the Locrian scale degrees they give access to.

### Example 17o:

Triads in A Locrian (one octave)

A minor  $\flat 5$  (1  $\flat 3 \flat 5$ )    B $\flat$  Major ( $\flat 2 11 \flat 13$ )    C Minor ( $\flat 3 \flat 5 \flat 7$ )    D Minor (11  $\flat 13 1$ )

5 - 8 - 6      6 - 5 - 8      8 - 6 - 5      5 - 8 - 7

E $\flat$  Major ( $\flat 5 \flat 7 \flat 9$ )

F Major ( $\flat 13 1 \flat 3$ )

G Minor ( $\flat 7 \flat 9 11$ )

6 - 5 - 8      8 - 7 - 5      5 - 8 - 7

### Example 17p:

Triads in A Locrian (two octaves)

A minor  $\flat 5$  (1  $\flat 3 \flat 5$ )    B $\flat$  Major ( $\flat 2 11 \flat 13$ )    C Minor ( $\flat 3 \flat 5 \flat 7$ )    D Minor (11  $\flat 13 1$ )

5 - 8 - 6      6 - 5 - 8 - 7      8 - 6 - 5 - 8      5 - 8 - 7 - 6

E $\flat$  Major ( $\flat 5 \flat 7 \flat 9$ )

F Major ( $\flat 13 1 \flat 3$ )

G Minor ( $\flat 7 \flat 9 11$ )

(6) - 5 - 8 - 8      (8) - 7 - 5 - 6      6 - 5 - 8 - 7 - 6

As any Locrian chord progression is going to be pretty dark anyway, you might choose to let the harmony do some of the work for you and stick to relatively ‘safe’ chord tones. Playing a minor triad from the b3 (C minor over A) would give you a fairly safe set of chord tones (b3, b5, b7) but some good choices to re-emphasise the darkness of the mode would be

Major triad on the b5 (Eb major over A) (b5, b7, b9).

Minor triad on the the b7 (G minor over A) (b7, b9, 11).

## 4-Note Arpeggios

Extending the triads built on each scale degree to 4 note arpeggios generates the following soloing possibilities:

Scale Degree	4 Note Arpeggios built in Locrian	Intervals Against Tonic
1	i minor 7b5	1, b3, b5, b7
b2	bII major 7	b9, 11, b13, 1
b3	biii minor 7	b3, b5, b7, b9
4	iv minor 7	11, b13, 1, b3
b5	bV major 7	b5, b7, b9, 11
b6	bVI 7	b13, 1, b3, b5
b7	bvii minor 7	b7, b9, 11, b13

Over two octaves they can be played in the following way: **Example 17q:**

Arpeggios in A Locrian (two octaves)

A minor 7 b5 (1 b3 b5 b7)    Bb Major 7 (b2 11 b13 1)    C Minor 7 (b3 b5 b7 b9)    D Minor (11 b13 1 b3)

The top staff shows a continuous sequence of eighth-note arpeggios across four measures. The bottom staff shows a continuous sequence of sixteenth-note arpeggios across four measures. Fingerings are indicated below the bass staff.

Eb Major 7 (b5 b7 b9 11)

F7 (b13 1 b3 b5)

G Minor 7 (b7 b9 11 b13 )

The top staff shows a continuous sequence of eighth-note arpeggios across four measures. The bottom staff shows a continuous sequence of sixteenth-note arpeggios across four measures. Fingerings are indicated below the bass staff.

Again, with Locrian, you may choose to play it safe and stick with an arpeggio that is mainly chord tones of the key centre. For example, playing a **minor 7 arpeggio from the b3 (C minor 7 over A)** gives you 3 chord tones, the b3, b5, b7, and one of the typically ‘Locrian’ scale degrees, the b9. If you want to highlight the darker extensions, you may like the sound of a **minor 7 arpeggio on the b7 (G minor 7 over A) (b7, b9, 11, b13)**.

## 5-Note Pentatonic Scales

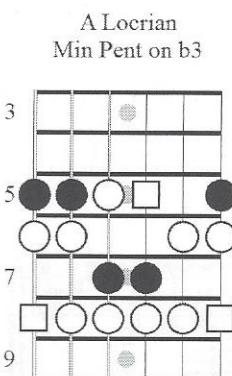
Minor pentatonic scales can be built on the b3, the b7 and the 11 of the Locrian mode. They are often my first choice for soloing in Locrian as they help me to build strong melodic ideas over the unsettled harmony.

Minor pentatonic scales pick out five notes of any mode, so almost by definition you will get more of the ‘true’ Locrian sound in your playing.

Playing a minor pentatonic on the b3 highlights the scale degrees **b3, b5, b7, b9, b13**. I think this is a good choice because it sticks closely to the tonic m7b5 arpeggio and adds in just two other Locrian scale tones. In this case we’re playing C minor pentatonic over A.

It can be played in the following way, however you might want to play another C minor pentatonic fingering you’re very comfortable with in order to stay musical while trying out these ideas.

### Example 17r: Minor Pentatonic on b3:

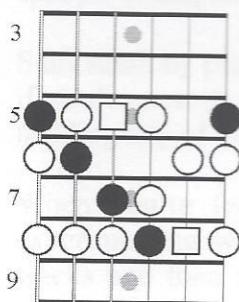


C minor pentatonic over A Locrian

Playing a minor pentatonic scale from the b7 targets the scale degrees b3, b5, b7, b9 and 11. This also works well.

**Example 17s:** Minor Pentatonic on b7:

A Locrian  
Min Pent on b7

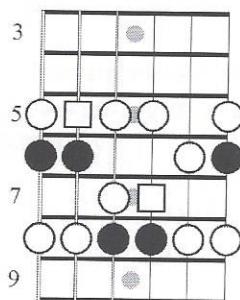


G minor pentatonic over A Locrian

Finally, a minor pentatonic scale on the 11/4 targets the intervals **1, b3, b7, 11, b13**.

**Example 17t:** Minor Pentatonic on 11/4

A Locrian  
Min Pent on 11



D minor pentatonic over A Locrian

## First Choice Soloing Summary for the Locrian Mode

It's hard to give first choices for the Locrian mode. The harmony is so unsettled that my best advice is to try everything and if you like it, stick with it. For the sake of completeness my first choices are:

Parent Scale: Locrian.

Intervals: 3rds and 4ths.

Triad: Major triad on the b5 / Minor triad on the b7.

Arpeggio: minor 7 arpeggio on the b7.

Pentatonic: Minor pentatonic on b3 and b7.

## Conclusions and Practice Tips

There is a great deal of conceptual information in this book which I have tried to make practical with specific examples and licks. However, the only way to begin to internalise this information is to play it.

Start small by picking just one mode you'd like to experiment with. I'd recommend Dorian or Mixolydian if you're new to these ideas. Learn the licks in the book and improvise over the backing tracks before tackling any of the theoretical approaches.

When you're feeling comfortable, and making melodies with the scale over a backing track, try experimenting with the first choice interval patterns that I suggest. Stay with these intervals for a few weeks and then move on to the pentatonic ideas before finally isolating individual triad and arpeggio approaches.

The important thing is to hear the different sounds that each conceptual approach will generate. You will be surprised how the textures of your solos will change with each different approach. Even in some of the 'common' modes like Dorian, a wide intervallic approach is ear catching and will sound very different than, for example, a pentatonic approach.

You may well have favourite approaches that are different than mine. That's great and it sets us apart as musicians.

One beneficial practice idea is to take a single concept, for example, playing the diatonic arpeggio from the 3rd of a scale and literally *writing* ten licks with just that idea. How can you combine that arpeggio approach with other scale notes to create a cohesive musical line? When you have done that, try isolating two arpeggios over a backing track and trying to move between them musically. The possibilities are endless, but stay focused on one small idea at a time.

It is important to experiment with rhythm too. There are thousands of different ways to approach just three notes. Once again, take one concept and try playing it in different rhythms and in different positions on the guitar. You will find something unique to your own voice.

The important thing is not to spread yourself too thinly in your studies, and think that you have to do *everything* in *every* mode. It really is better to play two or three ideas well, rather than twenty three ideas poorly.

I really hope the ideas in this book help to inspire your improvisations in new and exciting ways. Go slow and have fun.

Joseph.

# Other Books from Fundamental Changes

*The Complete Guide to Playing Blues Guitar Book One: Rhythm Guitar*

*The Complete Guide to Playing Blues Guitar Book Two: Melodic Phrasing*

*The Complete Guide to Playing Blues Guitar Book Three: Beyond Pentatonics*

*The Complete Guide to Playing Blues Guitar Compilation*

*The CAGED System and 100 Licks for Blues Guitar*

*Fundamental Changes in Jazz Guitar: The Major ii V I*

*Minor ii V Mastery for Jazz Guitar*

*Jazz Blues Soloing for Guitar*

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*Guitar Chords in Context Part One*

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