MAJOR SCALE AND ITS MODES

The Major scale (DO-RE-MI-FA-SOL-LA-TI-DO) is the cornerstone of music theory- many of the concepts that we will explore from here on out will reference this in comparison. Here they are in the key of C... purposefully selected because it is all natural notes -more easily examined, explained, and understood. I cannot stress how helpful mastery of this scale is to building on future topics- memorization is mandatory!

1ST MODE:
C Ionian (C Major scale)

```
    W     W     H     W     W     W     H
 C     D     E     F     G     A     B     C
 1     2     3     4     5     6     7     8

 1st         3rd         5th                 => C major triad (C, E, G)
 1st         3rd         5th         7th     => Cmaj7         (C, E, G, B)

|-------------------------------------------|-------------------7--8-|
|-------------------------------------------|-----------8--10-------|
|-------------------------------------------|-7--9--10--------------|
|------------------------------7-----9----10-|----------------------|
|-------------7----8----10-------------------|----------------------|
|-8----10-----------------------------------|----------------------|
 (C     D     E    F     G     A     B     C)...
```

To reveal the 2nd mode of the major scale, which we call Dorian, we simply begin the same 7 note sequence but on the 2nd scale degree, which is D. Observe:

```
    W     W     H     W     W     W     H
 C     D     E     F     G     A     B     C              =   C Ionian
       |     |     |     |     |     |     |
          W     H     W     W     W     H     W
 =>    D     E     F     G     A     B     C     D        =   D Dorian
       |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
```

The pattern continues until we reach C again... *And so on...*

```
                H     W     W     W     H     W     W
       =>    E     F     G     A     B     C     D     E  =   E Phrygian...
             |     |     |     |     |     |     |
```

2ND MODE:

D Dorian

```
    W     H     W     W     W     H     W
 D    E    F    G    A    B    C    D
 1    2   b3    4    5    6   b7    8
            *                   *
```

Notice we are highlighting the tones that are altered when compared to a D major scale. This is a crucial piece of information that helps us remember the modes.

```
 1st        b3rd        5th                  => D minor (D, F, A)
 1st        b3rd        5th        b7th      => Dm7     (D, F, A, C)
```

```
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------10-|
|-----------------------------------------------|------------10--12--13-----|
|-----------------------------------------------|-9--10--12-----------------|
|--------------------------------9----10----12-|---------------------------|
|-------------------10----12-------------------|---------------------------|
|-10----12----13-------------------------------|---------------------------|
 ( D    E    F    G    A    B    C    D)...
```

3RD MODE:

E Phrygian

Phrygian (mostly because of the unusual b2 (or b9) is referred to as “Spanish Minor”

```
    H     W     W     W     H     W     W
 E    F    G    A    B    C    D    E
 1   b2   b3    4    5   b6   b7    8
```

```
 1st        3rd        5th                  => E minor (E, G, B)
 1st        3rd        5th        b7th      => Em7     (E, G, B, D)
```

```
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------12-|
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------12--13--15-----|
|-----------------------------------------------|-----12--14-----------------|
|--------------------------------------12---14-|-15-------------------------|
|-------------------12----14----15------------|---------------------------|
|-12----13----15-------------------------------|---------------------------|
 ( E    F    G    A    B    C    D    E)...
```

4TH MODE:
F Lydian

This mode is particularly interesting because compared to the original major scale, we have a sharp 4th, which actually gives us a "brighter" sound (so far all we have seen are flatted scale degrees)

```
    W     W     W     H     W     W     H
 F     G     A     B     C     D     E     F
 1     2     3    #4     5     6     7     8
                  #11                                          note: #4 = #11
 1st         3rd         5th                 => F maj  (F, A, C)
 1st         3rd         5th        b7th     => Fmaj7  (F, A, C, E) *add #11 (B)

|-----------------------------------------|----------------0--1-|
|-----------------------------------------|-------0--1--3-------|
|-----------------------------------------|-0--2----------------|
|-------------------------------0-----2-----3-|---------------------|
|-------------0-----2-----3-------------------|---------------------|
|-1-----3-------------------------------------|---------------------|
 (F     G     A     B     C     D     E     F)...
```

5TH MODE:
G Mixolydian

```
    W     W     H     W     W     H     W
 G     A     B     C     D     E     F     G
 1     2     3     4     5     6    b7     8

 1st         3rd         5th                 => G maj (G, B, D)
 1st         3rd         5th        b7th     => G7    (G, B, D, F)

|-----------------------------------------|-------------------3-|
|-----------------------------------------|----------3--5--6----|
|-----------------------------------------|-2--4--5-------------|
|-------------------------------2-----3-----5-|---------------------|
|-------------2-----3-----5-------------------|---------------------|
|-3-----5-------------------------------------|---------------------|
 (G     A     B     C     D     E     F     G)...
```

6TH MODE:

A Aeolian (Natural Minor)

This is our natural minor scale, and the relative minor of C major. Very common.

```
    W     H     W     W     H     W     W
 A     B     C     D     E     F     G     A
 1     2    b3     4     5    b6    b7     8

 1st        b3rd        5th                  => A minor  (A, C, E)
 1st        b3rd        5th        b7th      => Am7      (A, C, E, G)

|-----------------------------------------|-------------------5-|
|-----------------------------------------|----------5--6--8----|
|-----------------------------------------|-4--5--7-------------|
|-------------------------------------5-----7-|---------------------|
|-------------------5-----7-----8-------------|---------------------|
|-5-----7-----8-------------------------------|---------------------|
 (A     B     C     D     E     F     G     A)...
```

7TH MODE:

B Locrian

At this point you will recognize the shape as our Ionian mode from above, starting on B instead of C

```
    H     W     W     H     W     W     W
 B     C     D     E     F     G     A     B
 1    b2    b3     4    b5    b6    b7     8

 1st        b3rd        b5th                 => B diminished (B, D, F)
 1st        b3rd        b5th       b7th      => Bm7b5        (B, D, F, A)

|-----------------------------------------|----------------------7--8--10-|
|-----------------------------------------|---------------8--10-----------|
|-----------------------------------------|-----7--9--10------------------|
|-------------------------------------7-----9-|-10----------------------------|
|-------------------7-----8-----10------------|-------------------------------|
|-7-----8----10-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
 (B     C     D     E     F     G     A     B)...
```

MODE SUMMARY								TRIAD SUMMARY	CHORD SUMMARY
Ionian	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	I C major	Cmaj7
Dorian	1	2	b3	4	5	6	b7	ii D minor	Dm7
Phrygian	1	b2	b3	4	5	b6	b7	iii E minor	Em7
Lydian	1	2	3	#4	5	6	7	IV F major	Fmaj7
Mixolydian	1	2	3	4	5	6	b7	V G major	G7
Aeolian	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7	vi A minor	Am7
Locrian	1	b2	b3	4	b5	b6	b7	vii B diminished	Bm7b5

One very useful analysis of the modes happens when placing them in the order of brightest (most sharp or natural scale degrees) to darkest (most flatted scale degrees). I highly suggest playing each mode but with the same root- and listening carefully for the differences in how they sound, particularly focusing on the newly adjusted tone in each mode.

"Brightest" to "Darkest":

Lydian	1	2	3	#4	5	6	7
Ionian	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mixolydian	1	2	3	4	5	6	b7
Dorian	1	2	b3	4	5	6	b7
Aeolian	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7
Phrygian	1	b2	b3	4	5	b6	b7
Locrian	1	b2	b3	4	b5	b6	b7

These are incredibly useful compositional tools, each mode has its own 'MOOD', and musicians are constantly using the modes to help them achieve their emotional goals.