

Modes - Cheat Sheet

Modes are scales that use the accidentals of a major scale, but start on a different tonic.

The modes are: Ionian (Major)
Dorian
Phrygian (helpful mnemonic - "I Don't Particularly Like Modes A Lot")
Lydian
Mixolydian
Aeolian (Minor)
Locrian

To find a mode, figure out what the original major key would be and start the scale on the appropriate scale degree.

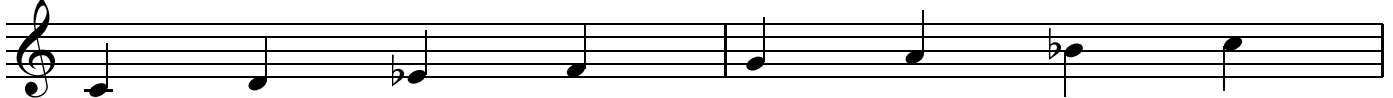
For example - C Dorian. We know Dorian starts on the second scale degree.

Step 1 - Figure out what C is the second scale degree of (answer - B \flat Major).

Step 2 - Write the pitches from C-C.

Step 3 - Fill in the correct accidentals.

C Dorian



A different way:

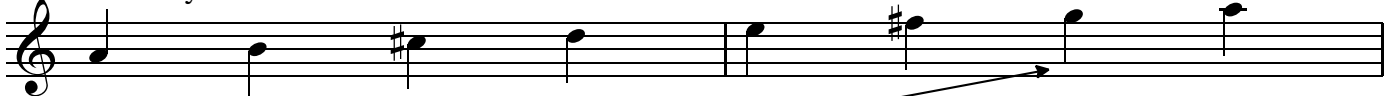
For Dorian and Phrygian start with the minor scale.

Dorian raises the 6th scale degree and Phrygian lowers the second.

For Lydian and Mixolydian start with the major scale.

Lydian raises the 4th scale degree and Mixolydian lowers the 7th.

A Mixolydian



Start with A Major Scale. Then lower the seventh scale degree.

B Phrygian



Start with the B minor scale.
Lower the second scale degree.

To figure out what mode a scale is in:

Step 1 - Look at the accidentals (F# and C#).

Step 2 - Figure out what key they belong to (D Major).

Step 3 - Look at the starting pitch.



G Lydian

You could also think about what this scale looks like (it's really close to being G Major) and see what's been done to it (raised 4th)...that tells us it's Lydian.

Do the same here: Think about what it looks like (C Minor) and see what's been done to it (raised 6th scale degree). Or think about what key has a B \flat and an E \flat (B \flat Major) and figure out what C is in relation to that (2nd scale degree).



C Dorian