

Hi there, welcome to a short introduction to the modes. Now if you, think that the modes are the most confusing and complex sounding theory ever known to man, think again. Now if you are not already familiar with the pentatonic shapes and know your way around them, I suggest you leave this handy PDF for later use. Let's get started

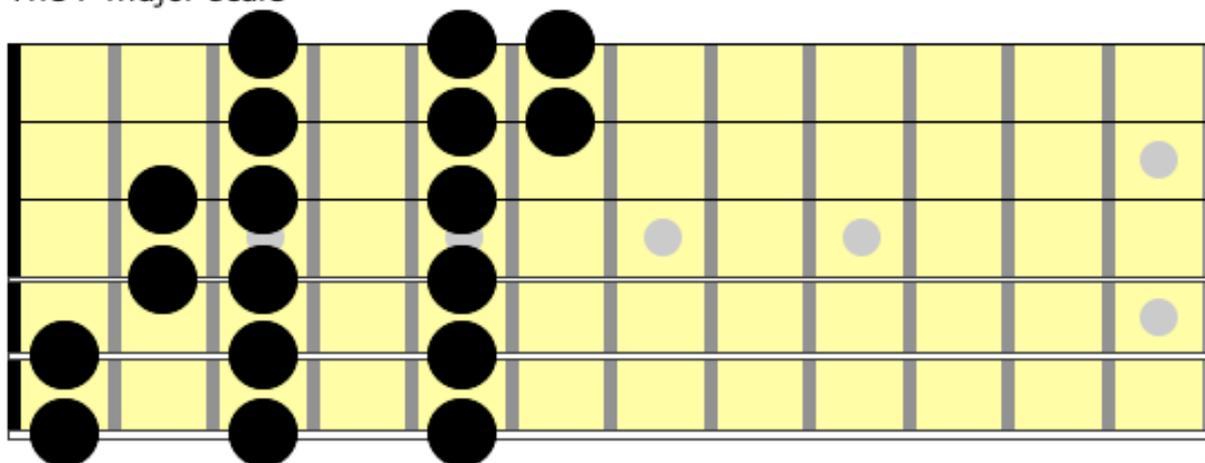
Okay, if we want to understand the modes, we must first take a look at the western music in which we play and live, and most importantly; listen (!!!). You see all western music is built upon a major scale, that consists of 7 notes (remember that song from Sound of Music? you got it ;) - now the easiest way to view a scale is in C-major on a piano. Try playing from a C-note to another C-note on the piano, well you just played the C-major scale!

You see this major scale consists of a series of half and whole steps it goes:

1-1-1/2-1-1-1-1/2

Yeah that's all might be fine but how do we apply this to our guitar playing? Here's how. You see, as we learn to play this major scale we can actually play all the "modes" within that very position. Here, is at first the major scale:

The F major scale



This is an F major scale played in the first position, now this scale starts (as we know from our pentatonics) on the root. Major scales starting at the root is called the Ionian mode. Major scales starting on the 2nd note of the scale is called Dorian, now this is where it becomes interesting because playing this very same major scale from G to G, it becomes a minor scale. (not a natural minor as we know it, but let's for now call the Dorian a minor scale). If we play our major scale starting on the third note we get a Phrygian (a minor scale). If we play our major scale from the fourth note, we get a Lydian (a major scale). If we play our major scale from the fifth note, we get a Mixolydian scale (a very popular major scale). If we play our major scale from the 6th note we get an Aeolian scale (a natural minor scale). If we play our major scale from the 7th (and last) note we get a Locrian scale (a minor scale)

Okay so basically that's what the modes are all about. So hopefully now you won't be as confused when you hear fancy fusion players talking about all their modes and stupid names. It isn't more complicated than a major scale played from different starting points!

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-0Jimihendrix0