

The 7 MAJOR MODES

by Gavin Meldrum

You can think of these patterns as being similar in nature to the first position of the minor pentatonic, which you already know...

But now we have 7 notes per octave instead of 5.

Symbols & Abbreviations:

INTERVALS: (from ROOT NOTE spanning ONE OCTAVE)

W= whole step (2 frets)

H= half step (1 fret)

NOTES:

Red = Root note

Black = Static notes COMMON to the last mode and the new mode

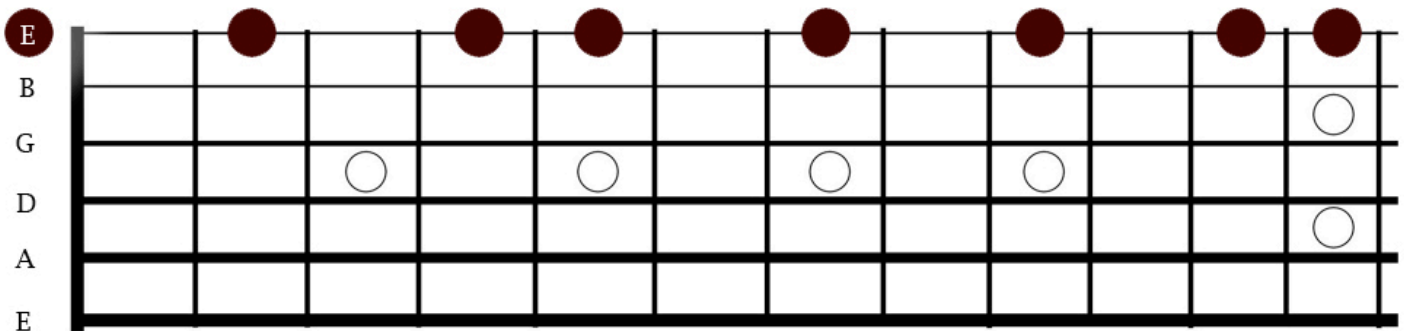
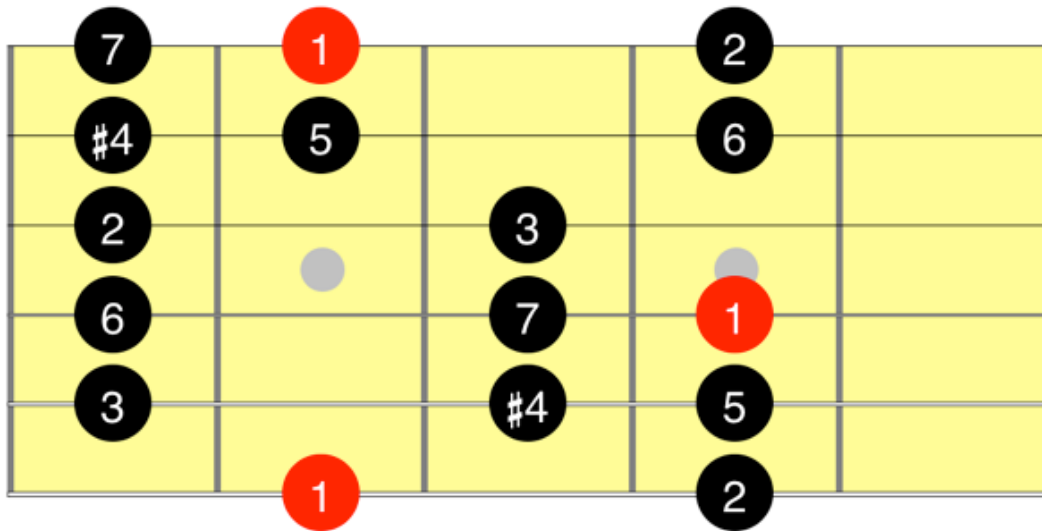
Blue = The ONE NOTE (per octave) that has been moved from the previous mode to form the new mode you are learning.

By starting on **Lydian** and lowering one note at a time, you can build and memorize **all seven modes** of the major scale on the guitar.

Also, you will be able to see and hear how **closely related** these modes are, which isn't always apparent when learning all seven fingerings on their own in the more traditional manner.

1 Lydian: W W W H W W H

Lydian mode contains **one sharp** in its construction, **the #4**. This pattern is going to be the base mode for all seven shapes, so you need to familiarise yourself with this scale shape before moving on to the next mode in the system.

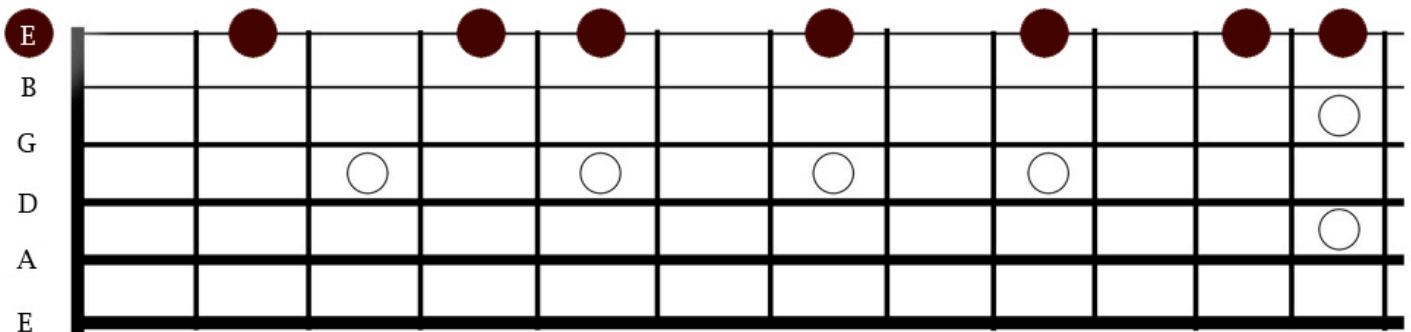
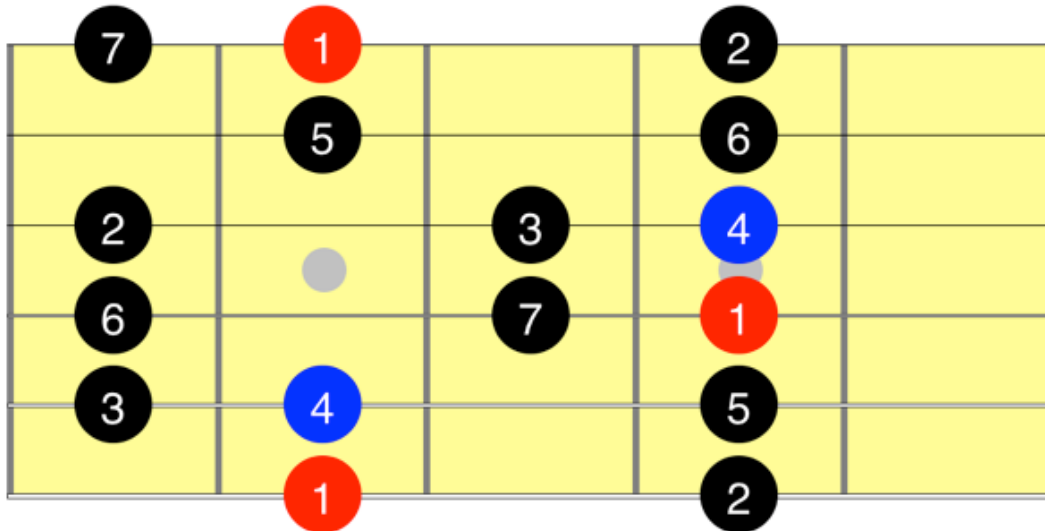


These are the notes & intervals for E Lydian, if they were placed on the B string then it would be B Lydian etc. The open string note is the root note.

It has an airy, floaty sound...happy (with a hint of evil), dreamy, manic, levitated, fantastical

2 Ionian: W W H W W W H (AKA the major scale)

Now you will take the Lydian mode you just learned and alter one note to form the Ionian mode. In this case, you simply lower the 4th note of Lydian to produce the Ionian scale pattern.



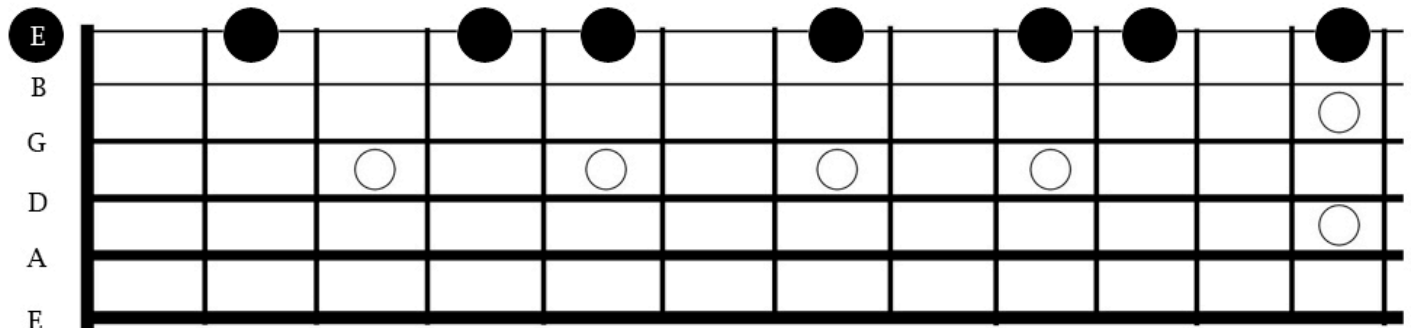
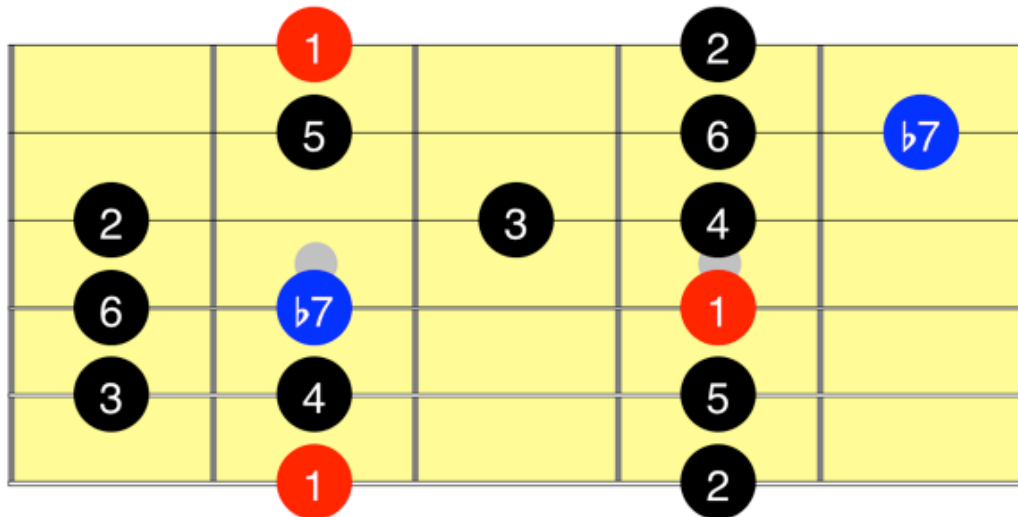
These are the notes & intervals for E Ionian, if they were placed on the B string then it would be B Ionian etc. The open string note is the root note.

This mode would be described as sounding happy, optimistic basic, naive

3 Mixolydian

W W H W W H W

Continuing on to the final major-based mode, you will now alter the Ionian mode by one note to form a Mixolydian mode fingering. When doing so, you lower the 7th of Ionian to form the Mixolydian mode.

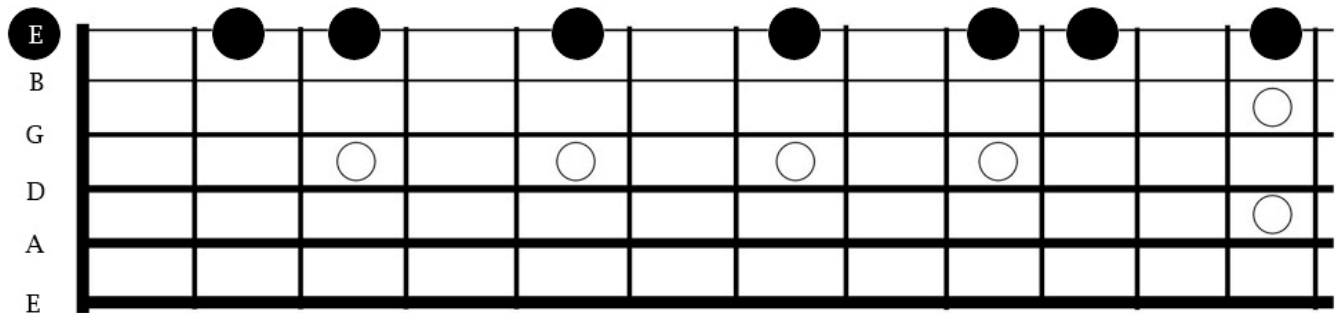
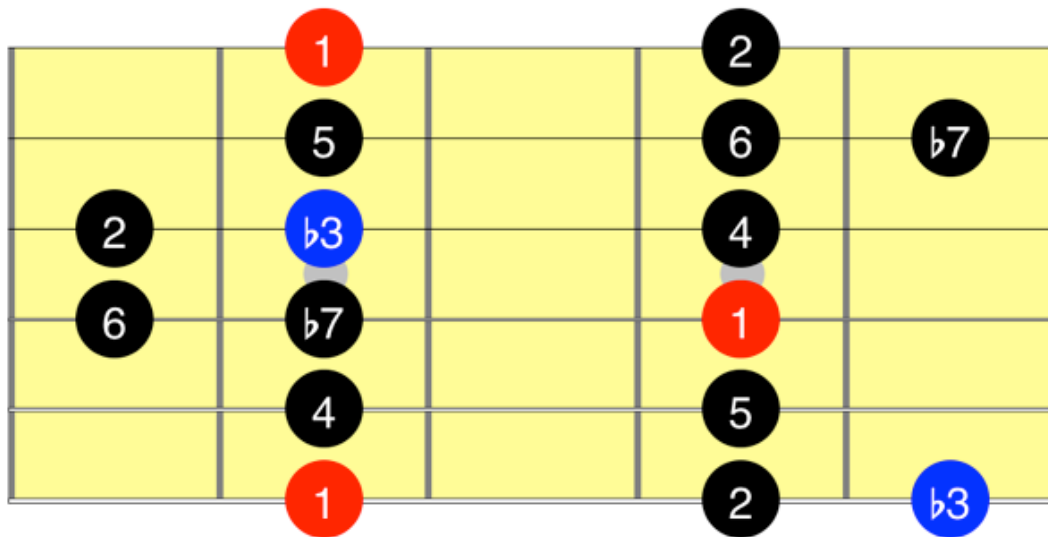


These are the notes & intervals (ascending up one string) for E Mixolydian, if they were placed on the B string then it would be B Mixolydian etc. The open string note is the root note.

This mode is described as sounding heroic, wandering, delicate, floaty

4 Dorian: W H W W W H W

We can progress to the minor modes now as you alter one note of Mixolydian to form the Dorian mode. Here, you will lower the 3rd of Mixolydian to form the Dorian mode fingering.

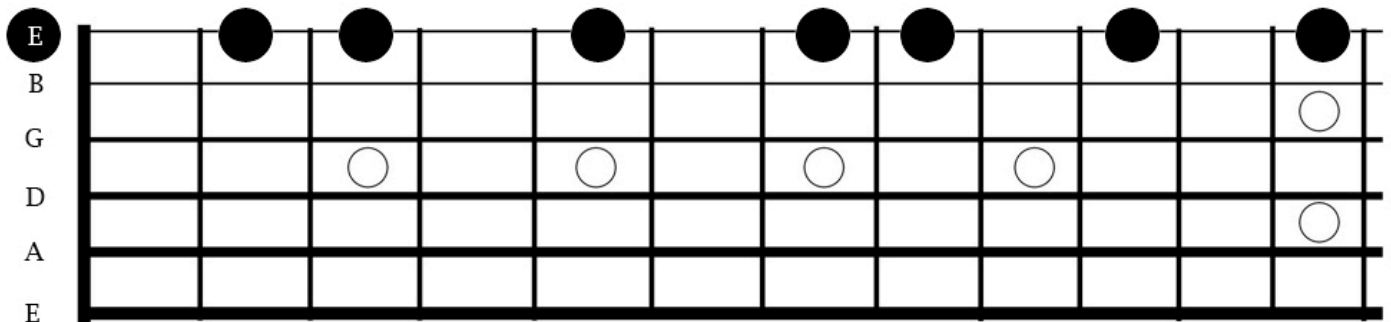
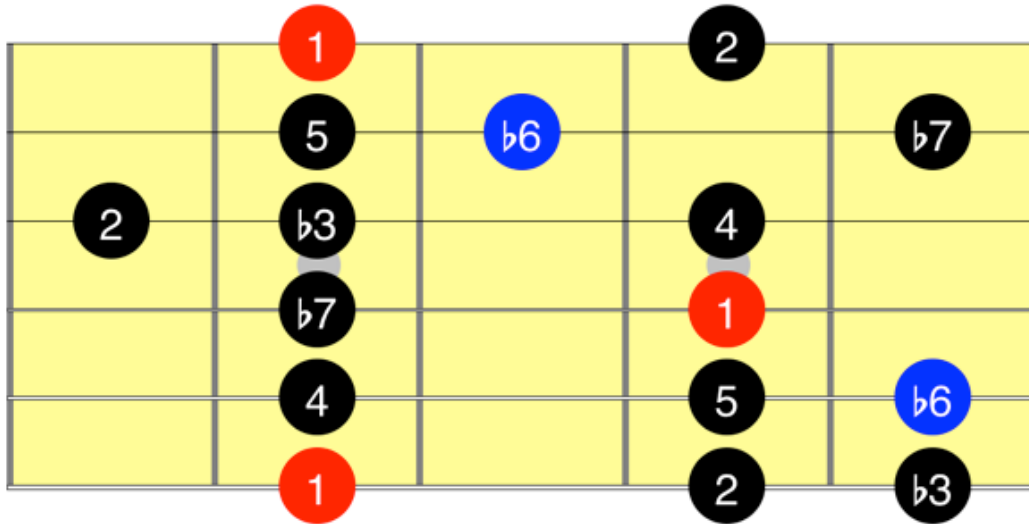


These are the notes & intervals (ascending up one string) for E Dorian, if they were placed on the B string then it would be B Dorian etc. The open string note is the root note.

Described as sounding serious, curious, dreamy

5 Aeolian: W H W W H W W

To form the second minor mode, you will lower one note of Dorian to produce the Aeolian mode on the fretboard. To do so, you will lower the 6th of Dorian to form the Aeolian fingering.

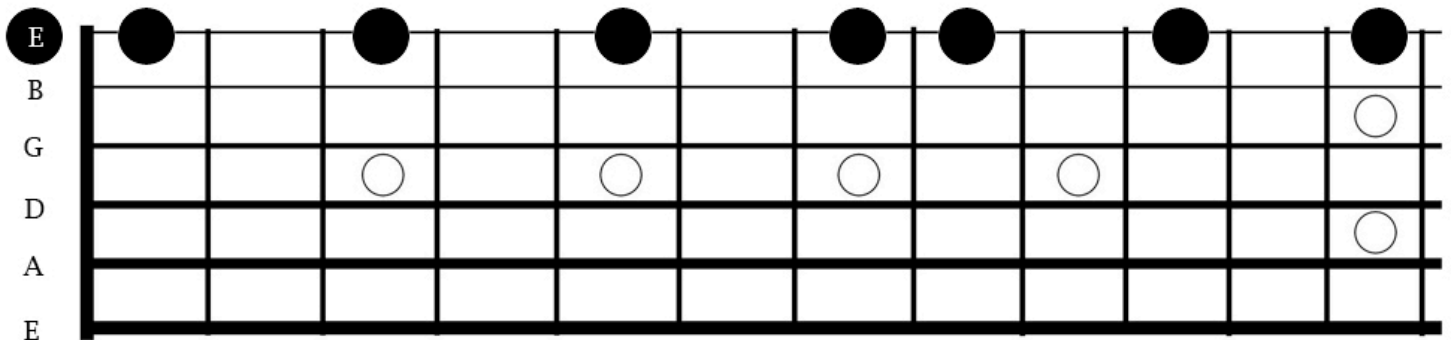
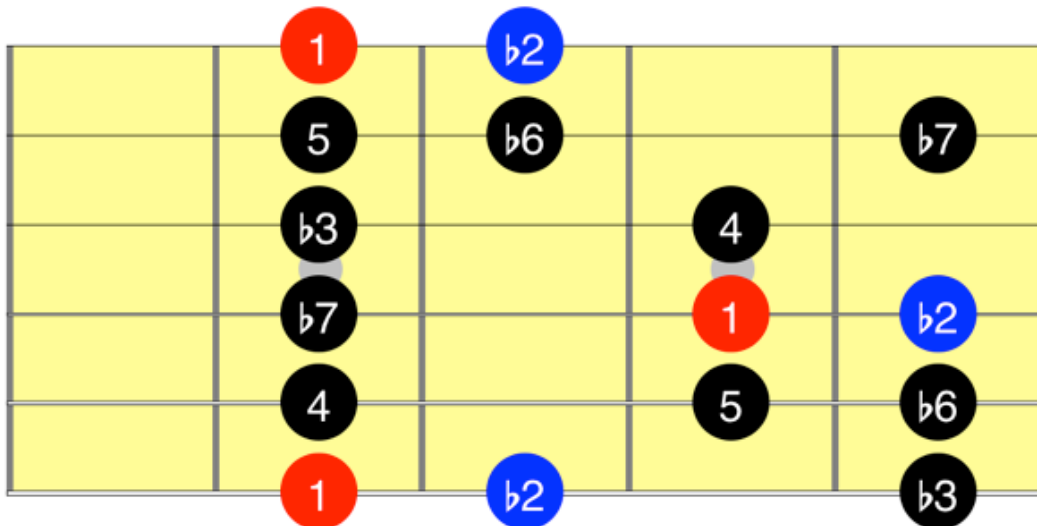


These are the notes & intervals (ascending up one string) for E Aeolian, if they were placed on the B string then it would be B Aeolian etc. The open string note is the root note.

Described as sounding sad, uncertain, melancholy, nostalgic

6 Phrygian: H W W W H W W

Next, you will lower one note of Aeolian to form the Phrygian mode. When doing so, you lower the 5th of Aeolian to form the Phrygian fingering on the fretboard.



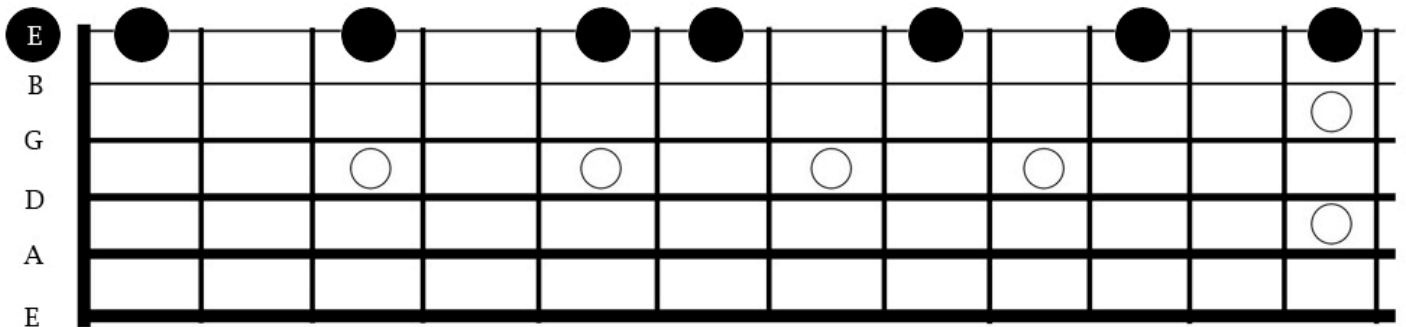
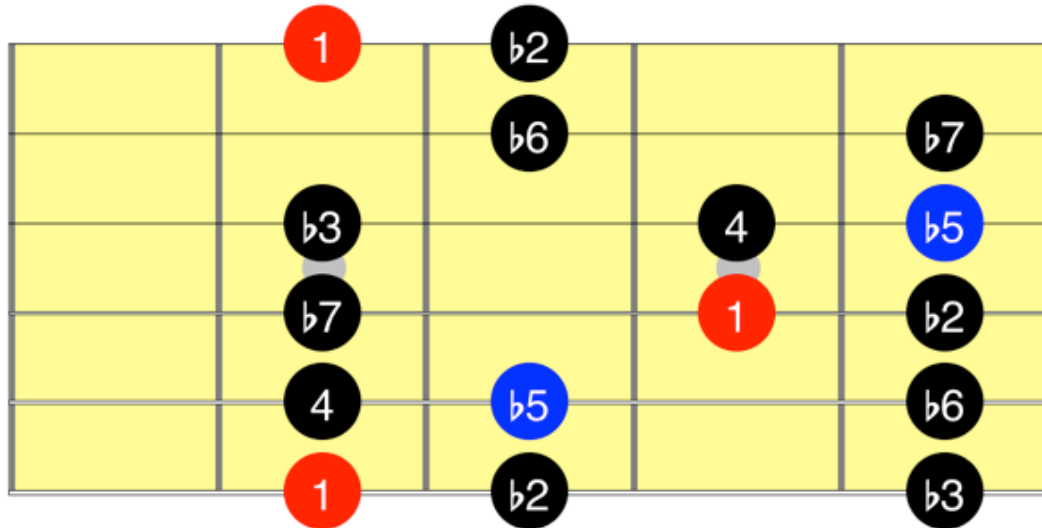
These are the notes & intervals (ascending up one string) for E Phrygian, if they were placed on the B string then it would be B Phrygian etc. The open string note is the root note.

Phrygian is described as mysterious, serpentine, Egyptian/Eastern sounding

7 Locrian: H W W H W W W

Lastly, you will take the Phrygian mode and lower one note to produce the Locrian mode. Here, you lower the 2nd note of Phrygian to produce the Locrian fingering.

Not the nicest sounding mode really ☺

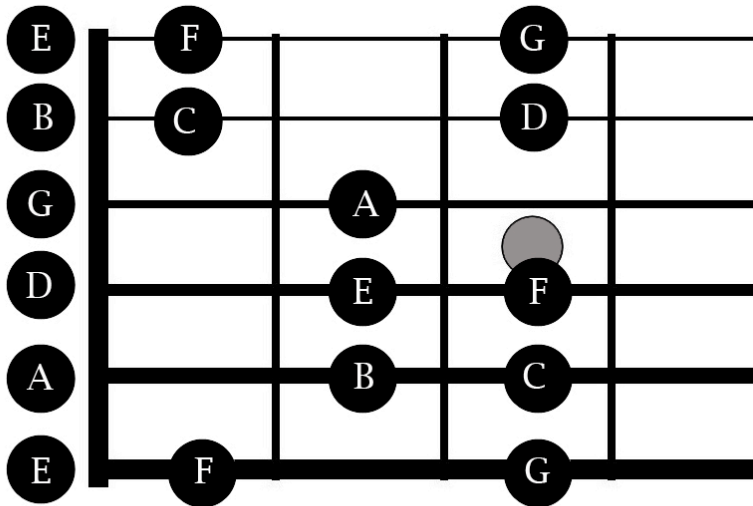


These are the notes & intervals (ascending up one string) for E Locrian, if they were placed on the B string then it would be B Locrian etc. The open string note is the root note.

Sounds like insane jazz, unstable, *demented*...

C Major scale modes

You can play **all these notes** in the modes below, try to emphasize the ROOT note and Halftone/Semitone Intervals (E&F, B&C) and you will hear the Modal Magic!



The **C** Ionian mode (Major scale) (C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C)
Goes with a Cmaj7 chord. Start on a **C** root note.

Backing track: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oMzZ2FeV8q4>

The **D** Dorian mode (D-E-F-G-A-B-C-D)
Goes with a Dm7 chord. Start on a **D** root note.

Backing track: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7gU6ToaKDbQ>

The **E** Phrygian mode (E-F-G-A-B-C-D-E)
Goes with an Em7 chord. Start on an **E** root note.

Backing track: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wA_uua6dvs

The **F** Lydian mode (F-G-A-B-C-D-E-F)
Goes with an Fmaj7 chord. Start on an **F** root note.

Backing track: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUC5W7ocjPE>

The **G** Mixolydian mode (G-A-B-C-D-E-F-G)
Goes with a G7 chord. Start on a **G** root note.

Backing track: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieAK9LaNNVw>

The **A** Aeolian mode (A-B-C-D-E-F-G-A)
Goes with an Am7 chord. Start on **A** root note.

Backing track: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoeCX-bzlUs>

The **B** Locrian mode (B-C-D-E-F-G-A-B)

Goes with Bm7b5 chord. (Doesn't sound great) Start on a B

Backing track: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-f-HHbwg_k

To use the yellow mode patterns above, remember to place the
(red, 1) **root note** on the **top E string**, i.e:

Open E string = E

1st fret = F

3rd fret = G

5th fret = A

7th fret = B

8th fret = C

10th fret = D

12th fret = E

More to follow soon!

Have fun,

Gavster