

(Book 5) Lesson 60a.

The "Tonic" (1st) note of any scale is the "key" note. Thus, any scale beginning on the note "C" would be in the "key of C."

"Tonal Modes" (Extended Tonality)

The five "tonal modes" all contain the same Tonic (1st), Sub-Dominant (4th) and Dominant (5th) notes. These are called "tonal notes." The remaining notes (2,3,6 & 7) are called the "modal" notes.

Ionian (major)

Familiar "major" scale which is the backbone of the majority of popular music.

Dorian (minor)

The "Dorian" mode is minor because it has a minor Tonic triad. Notice that it contains a Major 6th which is its signature sound.

Phrygian (minor)

The "Phrygian" mode is also minor but contains a Minor 6th. Its strong identifying quality is the "minor 2nd".

Lydian (major)

The "Lydian" mode is major because of its Tonic major triad but contains a tri-tone between its Root and 4th. This scale is generally not used as a "home base" for melodies.

Mixo-Lydian (major)

The "Mixo-Lydian" mode is major because of its Tonic triad but contains a "minor 7th" which is its only departure from being same as the Ionian.

Aeolian (minor)

The "Aeolian" mode is the standard "natural minor".

Locrian (diminished)

The "Locrian" mode contains a diminished triad on its Tonic note. A diminished chord can not stand as a "final" chord so consequently, this scale is not used as a basis for melodies. Both "Lydian and Locrian" modes certainly are and can be used as melodic tools on a "Dominant 7th" chord.

Notice that the "modal" notes all exist in two forms.

In the above example, the five "tonal modes" of C can all be said to be in the "Key of C." These parallel modes are used for melodic and harmonic material to enrich the compositional soup.