

Modal Harmony

To create the sound of a specific tonic mode—a single modal color—it's important to limit your harmonic and melodic activity. Keep the harmony simple. Use tonic and cadence chords (chords which contain the characteristic pitch). Chords to be avoided are the diminished triads and $-7^b(5)$ chords. Dominant seventh chords may be used carefully depending on Roman numeral function and harmonic rhythm / placement. Other diatonic chords in a specific mode may be used sparingly. They most often move by step to a cadence chord.

The *characteristic pitch* is the note that distinguishes one mode from another. For the major modes (ionian, mixolydian, lydian) the *model* is ionian whose characteristic pitch is scale degree 4. The characteristic pitch for mixolydian is _____ and the characteristic pitch for lydian is _____.

For the minor modes that we study in Harmony 4 (dorian, aeolian, phrygian) the *model* is the aeolian mode whose characteristic pitch is b6 . For dorian the characteristic pitch is _____. For phrygian the characteristic pitch is _____.

- Fill in the characteristic pitch (by note name) for each of the following tonic modes:

1. E dorian _____

2. G aeolian _____

3. D mixolydian _____

4. C phrygian _____

5. A^b aeolian _____6. E^b mixolydian _____7. B^b mixolydian _____

8. B dorian _____

9. G^b lydian _____10. D^b lydian _____11. $G^\sharp$ aeolian _____12. $D^\sharp$ phrygian _____13. $F^\sharp$ phrygian _____14. E^b dorian _____15. B^b dorian _____16. D^b lydian _____

17. B lydian _____

18. A mixolydian _____

19. F phrygian _____

20. B^b aeolian _____