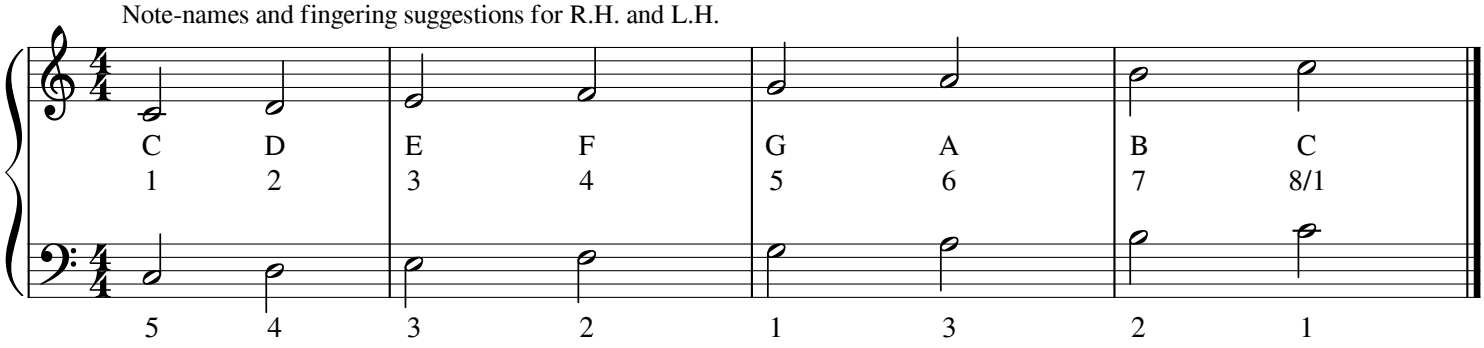
Scales: Learning Pages 1
Organizing Principles for Tonal Music

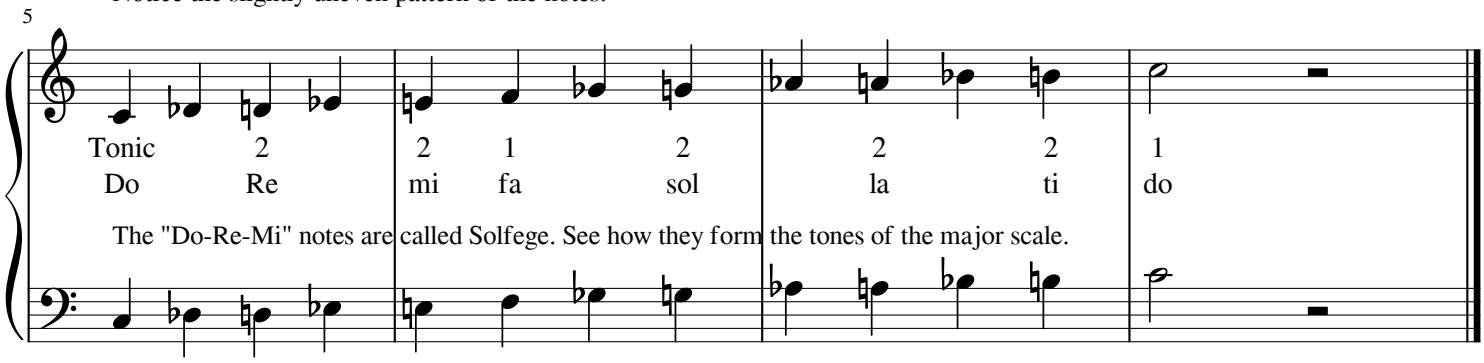
(Use this page as a template/reference for all 15 keys)

JimO

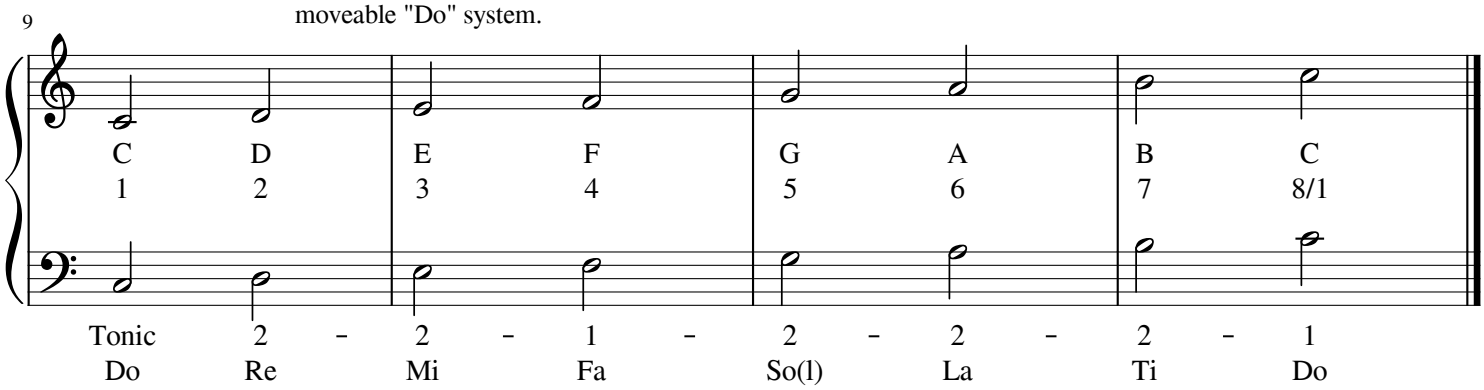
1. Begin with the scale. Here is the standard C major scale.
Note-names and fingering suggestions for R.H. and L.H.



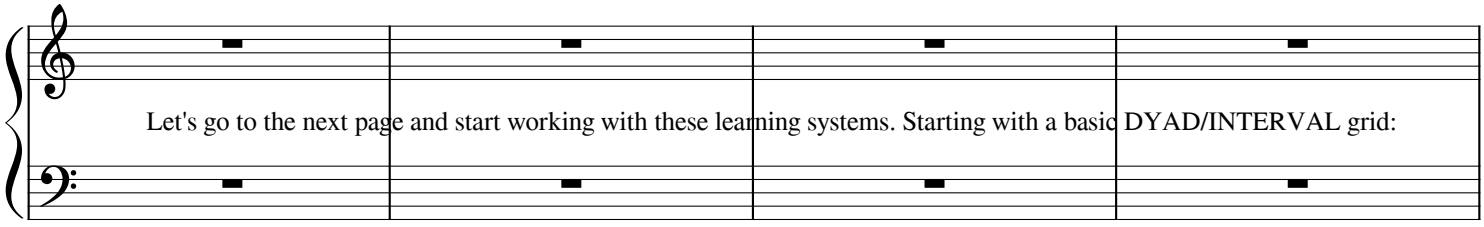
2. The half-step (1) whole-step (2) formula. Tonic-2-2-1-2-2-2-1.
Notice the slightly uneven pattern of the notes.



3.We now have 4 ways to describe the major scale: 1.Note-Names of a given key.
2. Simple numbers (1-8) 3.The Half-step/Whole-step formula and 4. Solfege moveable "Do" system.



4. Each of these learning/numbering/naming systems are used by musicians for various purposes. They help us "pick-out" the scales on the piano. The numbers are used in chord building and harmonizing. Solfege is used in voice-training. The half-whole math formula helps explain the underlying structure of our basic reference scale for Western tonal Music. Whew!!! Lots of words!



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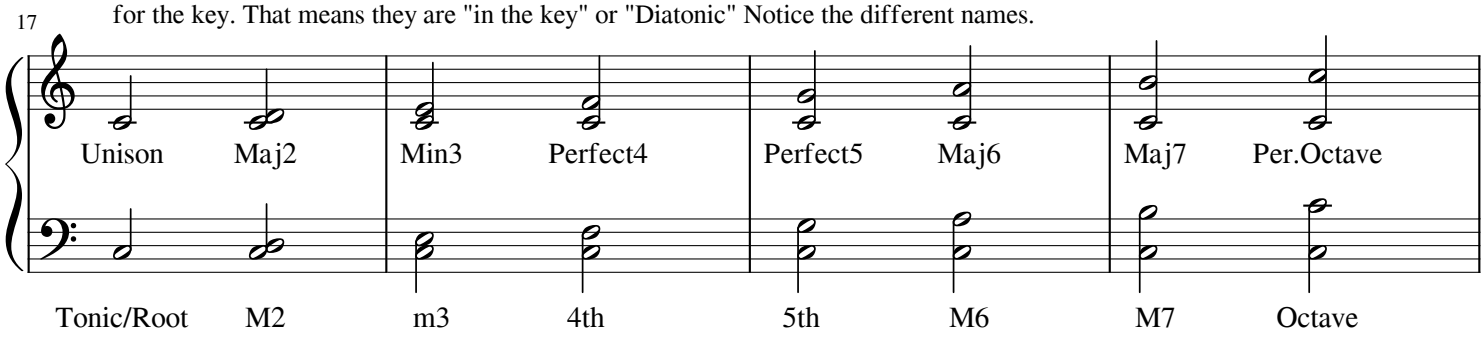
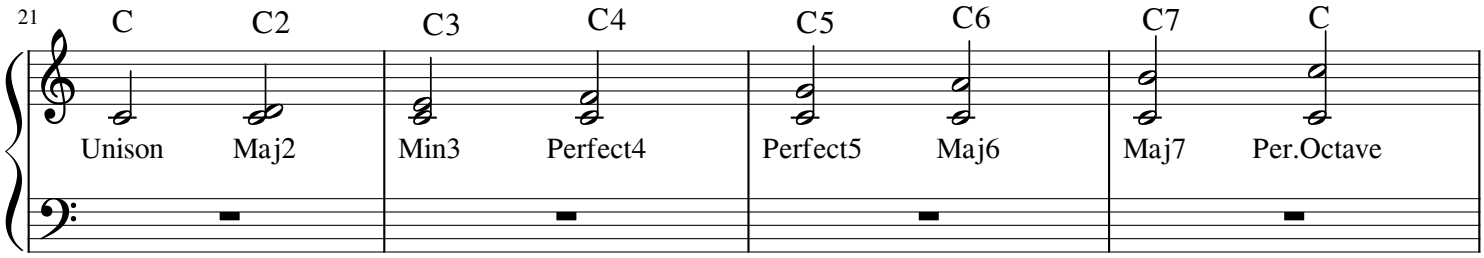
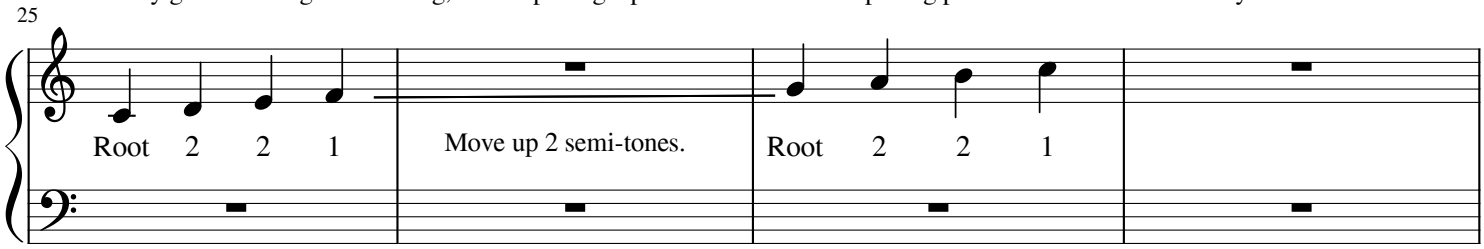
5. Starting with the "Tonic" or "Keytone" place an ascending scale next to a Tonic "partner." These are the "Tonal Dyads" for the key. That means they are "in the key" or "Diatonic" Notice the different names.



6. These "Intervals" are more correctly called "Dyads", or 2-Note chords. Sometimes also called "partials" or "Shells". Two-Part chords are beginning to show up on musical scores with the following names. They are not fully standardized yet.

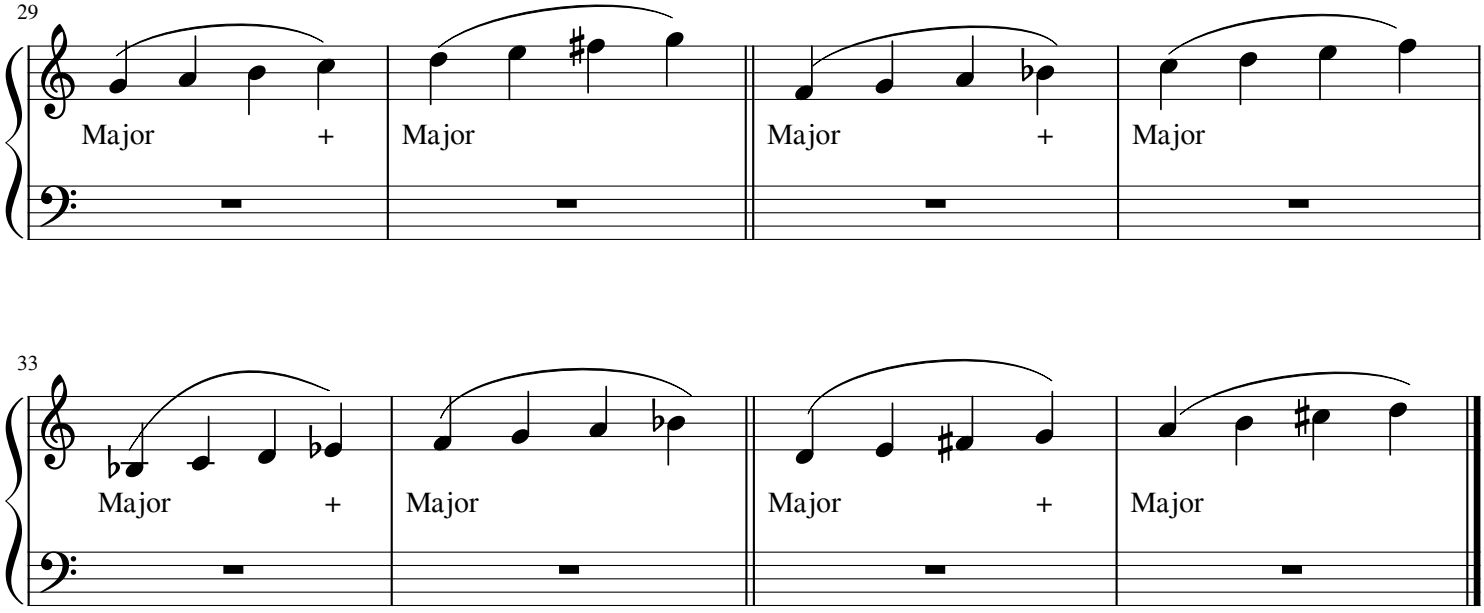


7 The Major Scale uses 2 "Resolving Patterns". They are called **Tetrachords**--4-Note scale fragments. They give a feeling of resolving, or completing a phrase. Listen to the opening phrase of the Adam's Family Theme.



These are the MAJOR Tetrachords, and they give a balanced and pleasing sound to the seven tones of the Ionian mode.

8. Here are four Major Scales. See how they are constructed by connecting Major Tetrachords.



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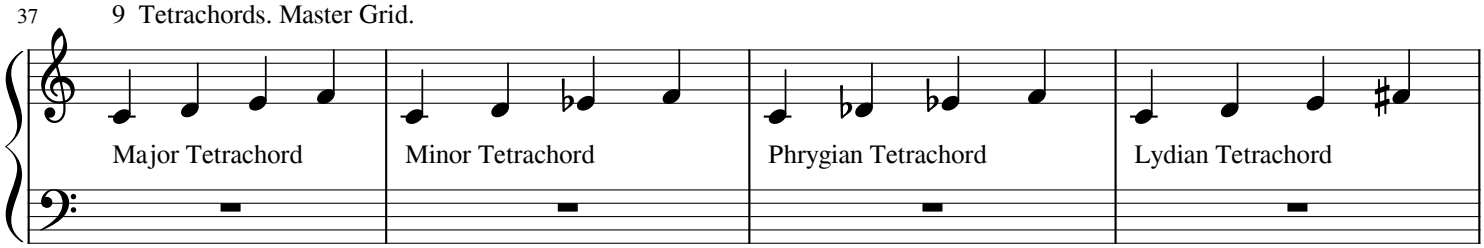
37 9 Tetrachords. Master Grid.



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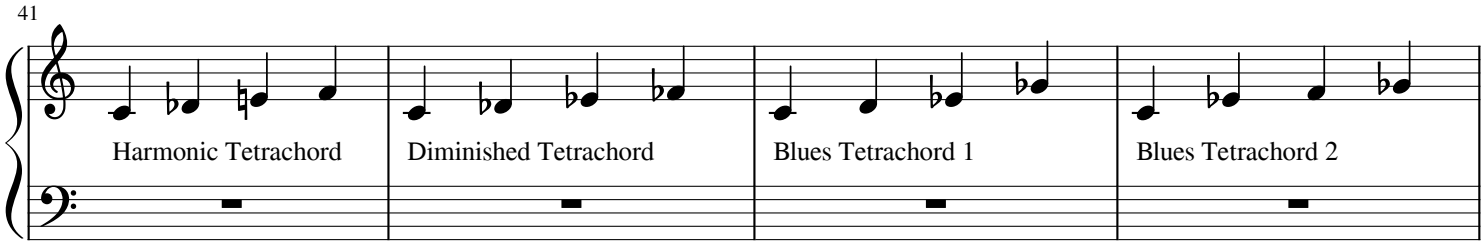

10. Now the fun begins. Each Major Scale generates 7 scales. Starting from each scale tone in order, here they are with their "real" names. Examples below in keys of C, G and F Major. These scales are called MODES. They are constructed with the Tetrachords listed across the lower staves.

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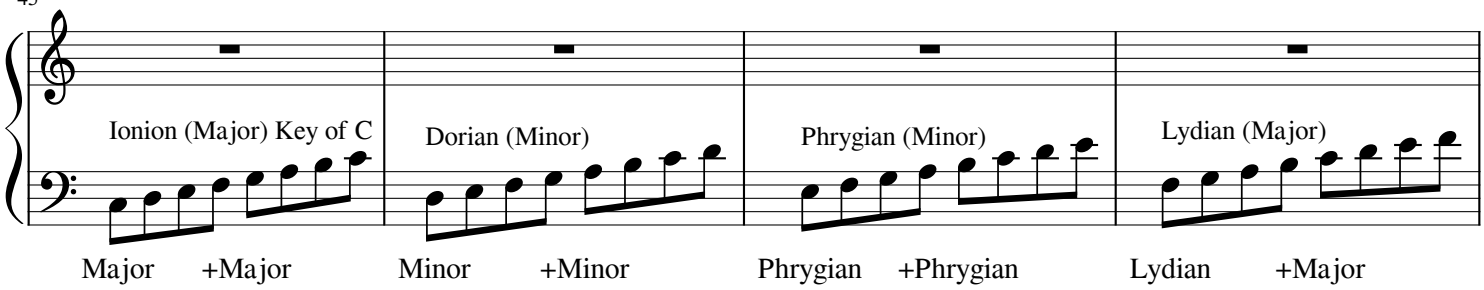

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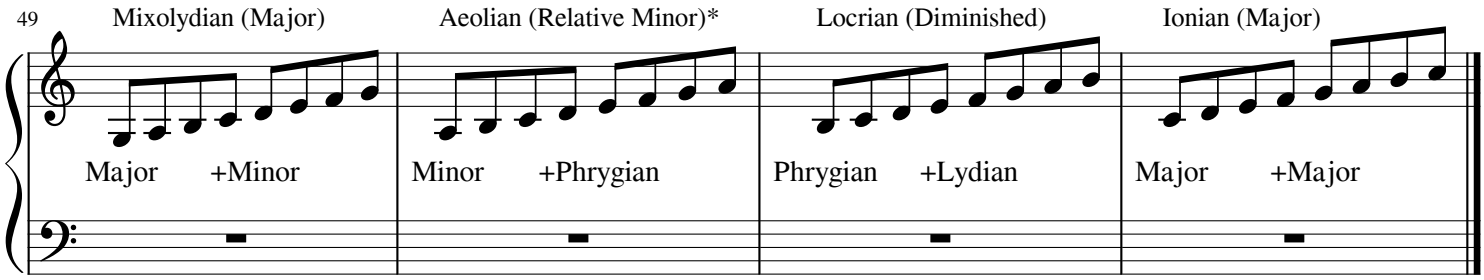

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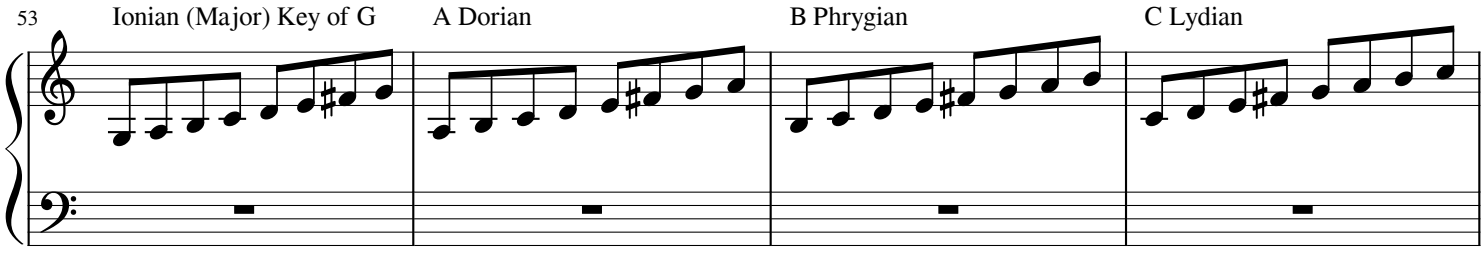

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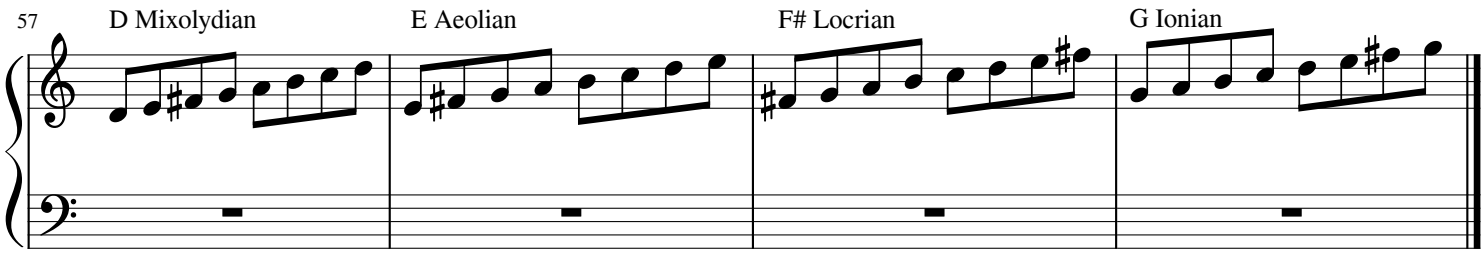
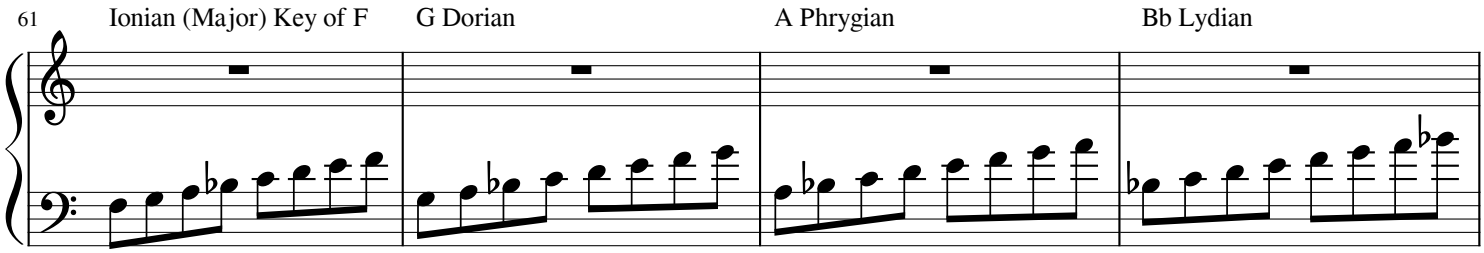
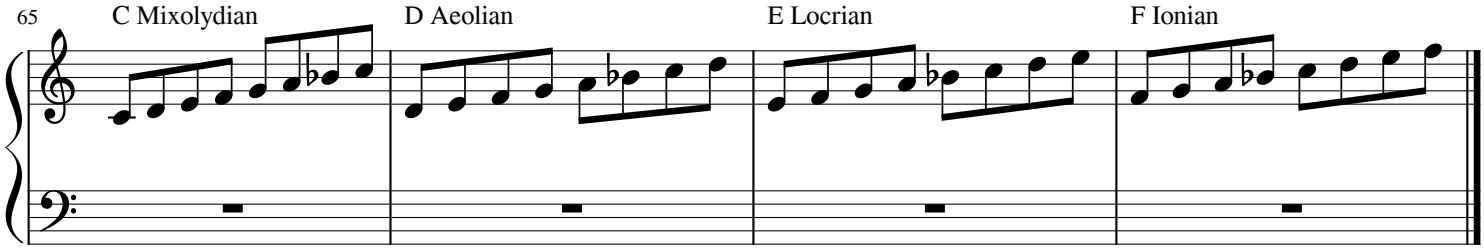
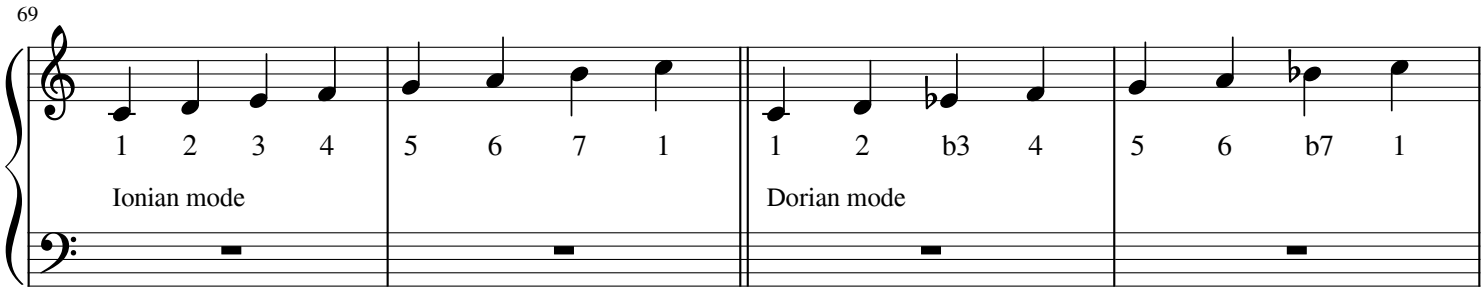
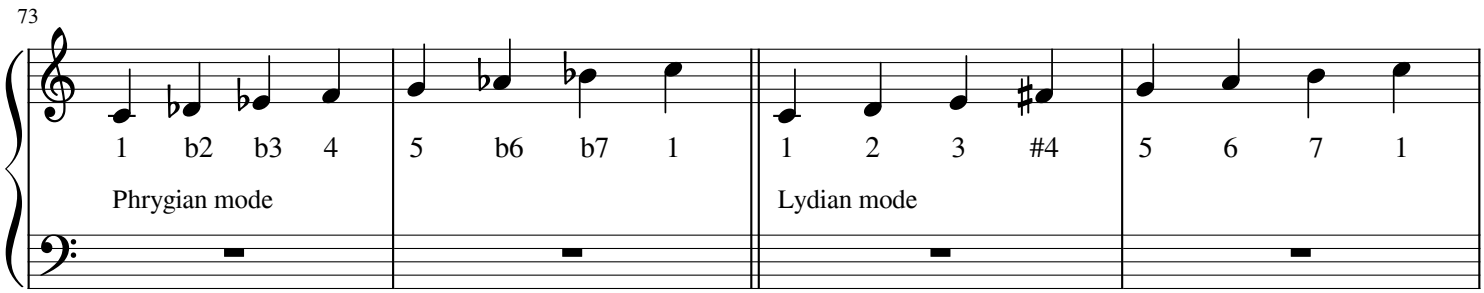






11. Now the REAL fun begins. Here are the seven Modes of Major
built from one root-tone. This is the best way to visualize the modal variations.
Most Contemporary Musicians use a simple Arabic number system to learn these patterns.





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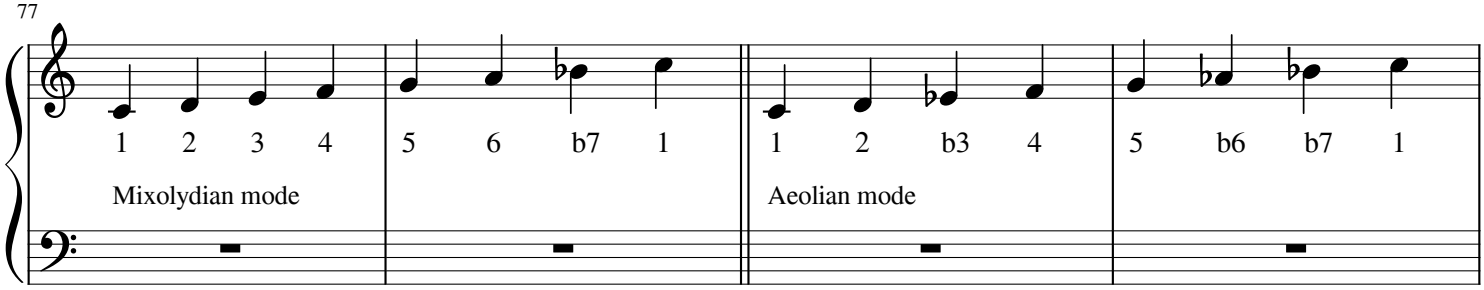

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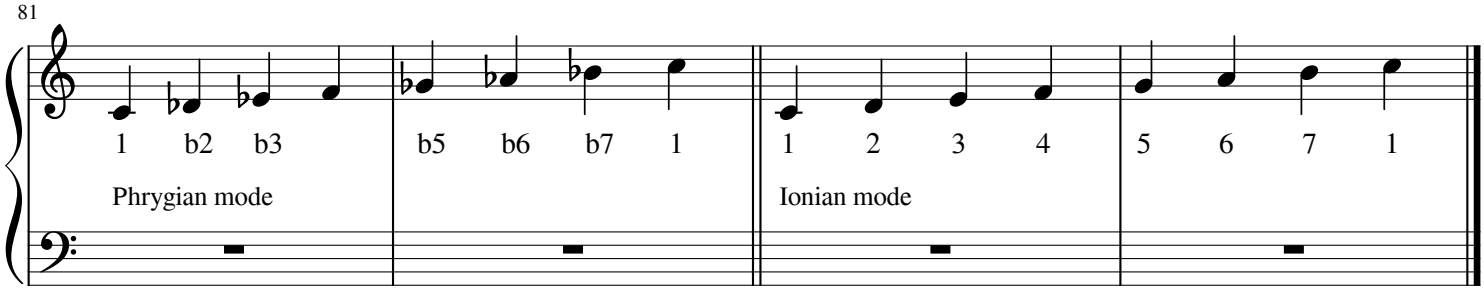
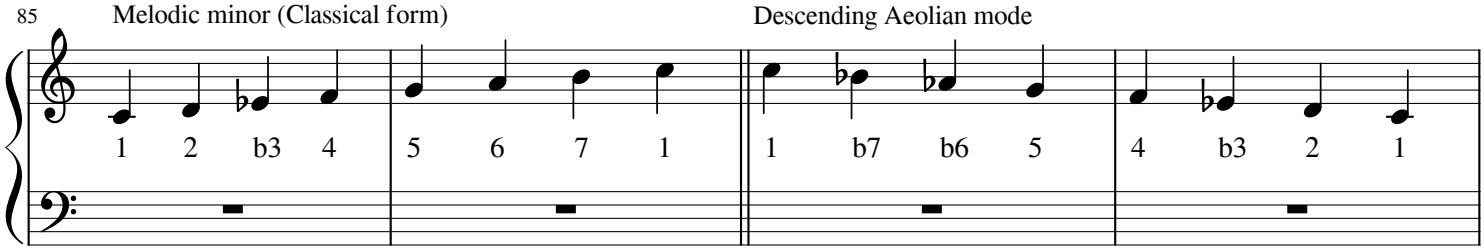
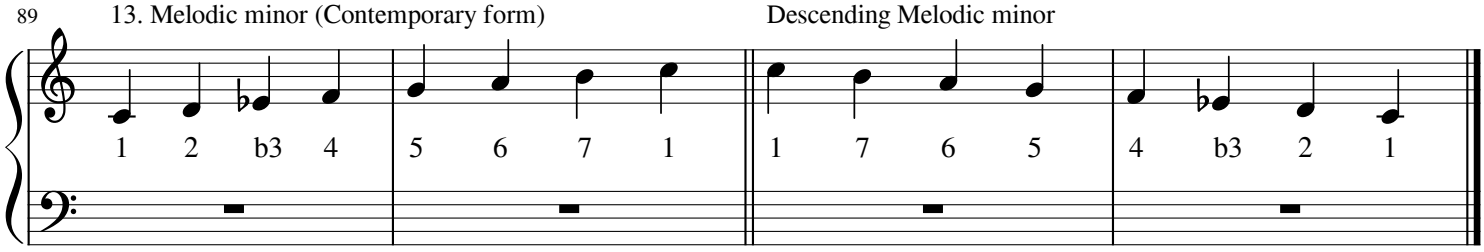


12. Additional "Altered" scales used in Classical and Contemporary music.

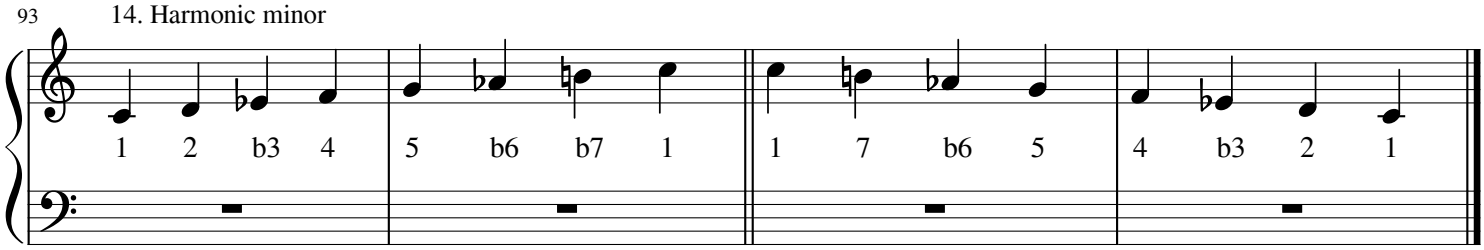
85 Melodic minor (Classical form) Descending Aeolian mode



89 13. Melodic minor (Contemporary form) Descending Melodic minor



93 14. Harmonic minor



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