

Modes

A **mode** is a group of notes (or scale) that we use to create melodies and harmonies for music. Each **mode** has a different feeling.

The **mode** we use most often today is the **Ionian** mode – the same as the **major scale**.

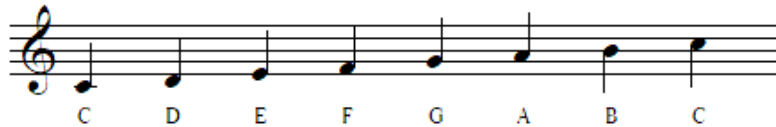


The next most common **mode** heard today is the **Aeolian** mode – the same as the **natural minor**.

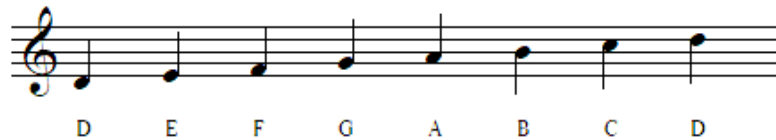


The **modes** are defined by the **intervals** (distances) between each of the notes. The **modes** we use most today, **Ionian** and **Aeolian**, have become the most popular only in the last 400 or so years. Before that other **modes** were more popular. Many old folk songs are based on scales that do not include 7 different notes. Many old folk songs are **pentatonic** – meaning based on a scale of only 5 notes. Keep in mind that we are talking about “Western” music which is music based on European music. Other cultures share some Western scales and also have many more scales some of which include different **intervals**.

Ionian
(major)



Dorian



Phrygian



Lydian



Mixolydian



Aeolian
(natural minor)



Locrian

