



Moveable do solfege

Solfege syllables are assigned to scale degrees, not specific pitches (or letter names). Since every scale degree has its own syllable, we can understand the sound and *function* of each scale degree.

MAJOR KEYS

C major (C is *do*)

ADD SHARPS
(circle of fifths)



G major (G is *do*)

ADD FLATS
(circle of fourths)



F major (F is *do*)

D major (D is *do*)

B \flat major (B \flat is *do*)

A major

E major

B major

F \sharp major

C \sharp major

E \flat major

A \flat major

D \flat major

G \flat major

C \flat major

Moveable do solfège MINOR KEYS



natural minor scale: a *minor 3rd* scale degree is always *me* (pronounced "may")
a *minor 6th* scale degree is always *le*
a *minor 7th* scale degree is always *te*

A minor (A is *do*)

do re **me** fa sol **le** **te** do do **te** **le** sol fa **me** re do

ADD SHARPS
(circle of fifths)



E minor (E is *do*)

do re **me** fa sol **le** **te** do do **te** **le** sol fa **me** re do

ADD FLATS
(circle of fourths)



D minor (D is *do*)

do re **me** fa sol **le** **te** do do **te** **le** sol fa **me** re do

B minor (B is *do*)

do re **me** fa sol **le** **te** do do **te** **le** sol fa **me** re do

G minor (G is *do*)

do re **me** fa sol **le** **te** do do **te** **le** sol fa **me** re do

F# minor
C# minor
G# minor
D# minor
A# minor

C minor
F minor
B♭ minor
E♭ minor
A♭ minor

The **harmonic minor scale** uses a *major 7th scale degree*, just like the major scale. So sing *ti*, just like in major.

A *harmonic minor scale*:

do re **me** fa sol **le** **ti** do do **ti** **le** sol fa **me** re do

The ascending **melodic minor scale** uses a *major 6th* and *major 7th scale degree*, just like the major scale. So sing *la* and *ti*, just like in major. The descending melodic minor scale is just like natural minor (*le* and *te*).

A *melodic minor scale*:

do re **me** fa sol **la** **ti** do do **te** **le** sol fa **me** re do

Moveable do solfege CHROMATICISM

Using "do-based minor" as outlined on page 2 has two distinct advantages:

1) syllables remain the same for scale degrees with the same function in major and minor keys. For example, the leading tone is always *ti*.

2) It trains the ability to alter (raise or lower) scale degrees, especially 3, 6, and 7. Altering scale degrees by a half step changes their function (when *te* is raised by a half step to *ti* it becomes the leading tone of the key).

All scale degrees may be raised or lowered by a half step to change their function, and a **new function means a new solfege syllable**. As a general rule, **chromatic pitches resolve in the direction of their inflection**. In other words, a pitch raised by a half step (say, *te* to *ti*) tends to resolve upwards (to *do*) and a pitch lowered by a half step tends to resolve downwards (for example, *le* pulls strongly down to *sol*).

First, observe this principle in the melodic minor scale. Then explore other altered scale degrees using the chart.

scale degree: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

C major: do di ra re ri me mi fa fi se sol si le la li te ti

Scale Degree	Solfege Name	Pronunciation
1	Do	/doʊ/
Raised 1	Di	/di/
Lowered 2	Ra	/rɑ/
2	Re	/rel/
Raised 2	Ri	/ri/
Lowered 3	Me	/mel/
3	Mi	/mi/
4	Fa	/fɑ/
Raised 4	Fi	/fi/
Lowered 5	Se	/sel/
5	So	/so/
Raised 5	Si	/si/
Lowered 6	Le	/lel/
6	La	/lɑ/
Raised 6	Li	/li/
Lowered 7	Te	/tel/
7	Ti	/ti/

PRACTICE:

chromatic scale, ascending

do di re ri mi fa fi sol si la li ti do

chromatic scale, descending

do ti te la le sol se fa mi me re ra do

Major scale with chromatic lower neighbor tones (sing ascending *and* descending).
Label all solfege and circle the syllables of chromatic notes.

do ti do

Natural minor scale with chromatic lower neighbor tones (sing ascending *and* descending).
Label all solfege and circle the syllables of chromatic notes.

do ti do



Moveable do solfege MODES

Once familiar with altered scale degrees in solfege, it is possible to sing all of the diatonic modes (also called "church modes") in parallel. You've already done this with two modes: Ionian (major) and Aeolian (natural minor)! Below are the 7 modes based on C, organized from "sharp" to "flat" (or "bright" to "dark").

Fill in the solfege for each mode, singing as you go. Singing the modes labeled in boldface should be familiar; look for alteration familiar from singing minor scales. The others will take more practice.

Lydian

Ionian (major)

do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do

Mixolydian

Dorian

Aeolian (nat. min.)

do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do

Phrygian

Locrian



Normally we sing scales starting on scale degree 1 (*do*). But since scales are *octave repeating* (meaning they have the same structure regardless of which octave they are in), you can actually start on *any* scale degree! Changing which note of a scale is scale degree 1, changes the *mode*. For example, if we sing "C major" from C to C, then C is "scale degree 1." But what if we sing the *same pitches* but from D to D, making D "scale degree 1?" It sounds quite different! And that's why they have different names, shown below.

There are two ways to sing the modes using solfege. First, is to use the solfege of the major key from which the modes are derived (C major in the examples below). This is a great way to find the notes and learn the sound of the modes. This solfege is written above the scales. The second method is much more powerful: treat the starting note of each mode as scale degree one. The second method is in **bold** below the scales

Modes of C major:

Ionian (major)	<p>do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do</p> <p>do re mi fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa mi re do</p>
Dorian	<p>re me fa sol la ti do re re do ti la sol fa mi re</p> <p>do re me fa sol la te do do te la sol fa me re do</p>
Phrygian	<p>mi fa sol la ti do re mi mi re do ti la sol fa mi</p> <p>do ra me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me ra do</p>
Lydian	<p>fa sol la ti do re mi fa fa mi re do ti la sol fa</p> <p>do re mi fi sol la ti do do ti la sol fi mi re do</p>
Mixolydian	<p>sol la ti do re mi fa sol sol fa mi re do ti la sol</p> <p>do re mi fa sol la te do do te la sol fa mi re do</p>
Aeolian (nat. min.)	<p>la ti do re mi fa sol la la sol fa mi re do ti la</p> <p>do re me fa sol le te do do te le sol fa me re do</p>
Locrian	<p>ti do re mi fa sol la ti ti la sol fa mi re do ti</p> <p>do ra me fa se le te do do te le se fa me ra do</p>

MODES of A (ascending) Melodic Minor



We can derive modes from any scale. Melodic minor is a relatively common one, though there are no standard names for the different modes. These modes are most often used as material for jazz improvisation and I've included both numbers of modes and possible naming conventions. The most common modes are in **bold**.

Fill in the solfège for each scale using *do* for the first note.

[exclusively use the "ascending" version for modes]

1. **Melodic minor (ascending)**
Am^{M7}

do re me fa sol la ti do do ti la sol fa me re do

2. **Dorian** $\flat 2$

do

3. **Lydian augmented**
C^{M7(#5)}

do

4. **Lydian dominant ("Acoustic scale")**
D^{7(#11)}

do

5. **Mixolydian** $\flat 6$

do

6. **Half-diminished (Locrain #2)**

do

7. **Super Locrian (Altered dominant)**
G^{#alt}

do

Write out other scales, modes, or patterns on the following pages.



