

Phrygian Mode

Phrygian mode is sometimes called the “Spanish Gypsy” mode or scale because it is similar to scales common in flamenco music.

The Scale of the Phrygian Mode

Solfege	<i>re</i>		<i>me</i>		<i>fa</i>		<i>so</i>		<i>la</i>		<i>ti</i>		<i>do</i>	
E-Phrygian	E		F		G		A		B		C		D	
B-Phrygian	B		C		D		E		F#		G		A	
F#-Phrygian	F#		G		A		B		C#		D		E	
Step		<i>half</i>		<i>whole</i>		<i>whole</i>		<i>whole</i>		<i>half</i>		<i>whole</i>		<i>whole</i>

Chords Characteristic of the Phrygian Mode

Primary harmonic definition is given by this rule of thumb: *The important chords of a mode are the tonic chord (the one that names the mode) and any chord that includes the most recently added altered tone of the mode. But not any diminished chords, please.*

The most recently altered tone in Phrygian mode is b2nd. So the characteristic chords are im(chord built on the tone that names the mode), bII and bviim which contain the b2nd.

E-Phrygian

The key signature is the same as “C”. The most recent altered tone of this mode is the b2nd. So any chords that contain F natural are characteristic of this mode. The characteristic chords are: Em, F and Dm

B-Phrygian

The key signature is the same as “G”. The most recent altered tone of this mode is the b2nd. So any chords that contain F natural are characteristic of this mode. The characteristic chords are: Bm, C and Am

F#-Phrygian

The key signature is the same as “D”. The most recent altered tone of this mode is the b2nd. So any chords that contain F natural are characteristic of this mode. The characteristic chords are: F#m, G and Em

Mode Relations

The relative major of the Phrygian mode is the Mixolydian Mode.