

G Mixolydian mode 5 of the C major scale

G Mixolydian is the sound of a major key that traded its pull toward resolution for a relaxed, bluesy glow. It is sunny but grounded, the sound of a dominant chord that is happy to stay right where it is.

[Open this scale in the fretboard explorer](#)

THEORY

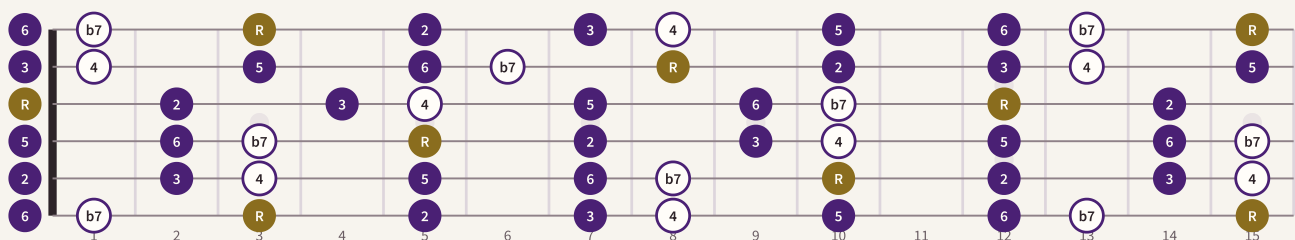
Formula: 1 2 3 4 5 6 b7

Degree	1	2	3	4	5	6	b7
Note	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
In skeleton	yes	yes	yes		yes	yes	

Mixolydian is mode 5 of the major scale, so G Mixolydian uses the notes of C major (G A B C D E F) but treats G as home. Compare it to plain G major and exactly one note changes: F sharp becomes F natural, giving the formula 1 2 3 4 5 6 b7. That single change does a lot. The major 3rd (B) keeps the scale bright, while the b7 (F) removes the leading tone, so the music loses its urge to cadence and settles into a groove instead. Stack the scale on the root and you get G7, which is why Mixolydian is the default choice over dominant 7th chords. You hear it constantly in blues-based rock, funk, folk and Celtic tunes, and jam-band vamps, anywhere a song sits on one dominant-flavored chord for a long time.

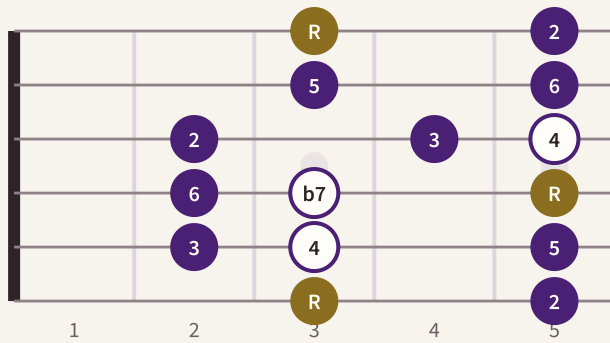
To hear it, loop two chords: G7 to C/G, two bars each, or even simpler, G to F and back. Record a minute of that vamp on your phone and every note of this page will suddenly have context. For reference recordings in this mode, listen to Norwegian Wood by The Beatles, Fire on the Mountain by the Grateful Dead, and Cinnamon Girl by Neil Young. In each one, notice how the melody feels major but never leans on a leading tone.

WHOLE NECK (FRETS 0 TO 15)

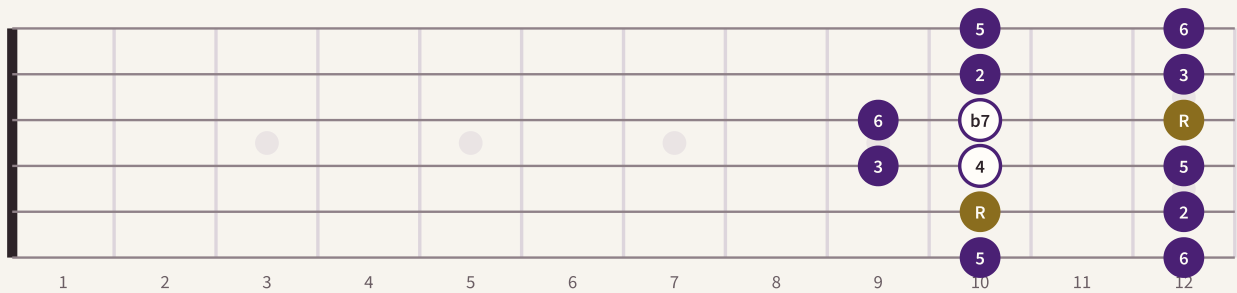


Gold dot = root. **Solid** = G major pentatonic, the skeleton you already know. **Hollow** = the color tones this mode adds.

POSITION 1 (FRETS 2 TO 5)

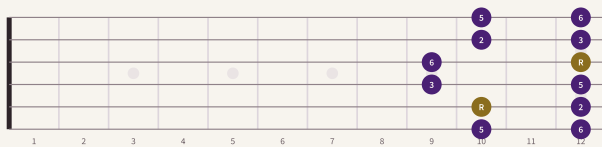


POSITION 2 (FRETS 9 TO 12)

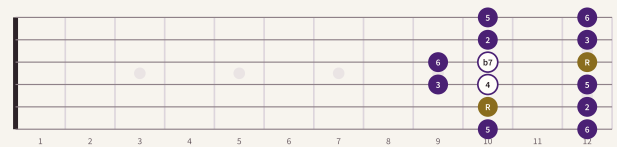


THE PENTATONIC INSIDE

Inside G Mixolydian sits a skeleton you almost certainly already know: G major pentatonic (G A B D E), plus the G7 arpeggio (G B D F) as its harmonic frame. The mode adds only two notes to the pentatonic shape: C, the 4th, a passing color best kept on weak beats, and F, the b7, the money note that defines the whole sound. A practical way to think while playing: run your familiar major pentatonic boxes, then deliberately reach for F on a strong beat and let it fall to E or push up to G. That one habit turns generic major-pentatonic lines into unmistakable Mixolydian.



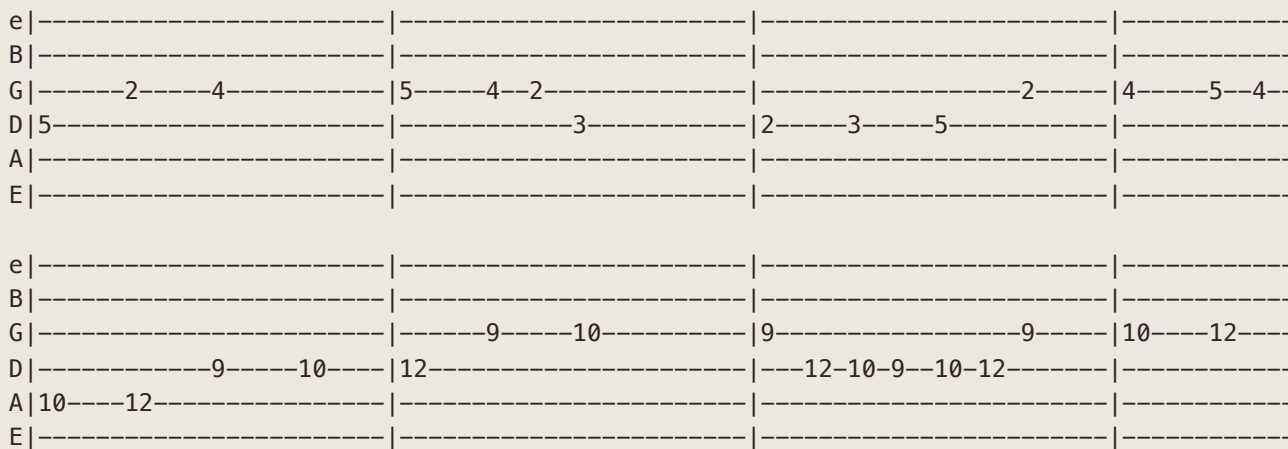
G major pentatonic alone



G Mixolydian: the skeleton plus the color tones

ETUDE (72 BPM)

Also generated as `5-mixolydian-etude.gp` : open it in the course player for playback, tempo control, and looping.



PRACTICE PLAN

1. Learn the etude slowly

Set the metronome to 60 bpm and learn the etude one bar at a time, counting eighth notes out loud. Bars 1 to 4 sit in frets 2 to 5 and bars 5 to 8 sit in frets 9 to 12, with the shift landing on the same G pitch, so practice the seam between bars 4 and 5 on its own. Move on when you can play all eight bars from the chart at 60 bpm, three times in a row without stopping.

2. Memorize the two positions

Play the full G Mixolydian scale in the low position (frets 2 to 5, root on string 6 fret 3) and the high position (frets 9 to 12, root on string 5 fret 10), saying each note name as you go. Then quiz yourself: stop on B, then stop on F, on demand in each shape. Move on when you can play both positions from memory, ascending and descending in eighth notes at 80 bpm, and can find B and F instantly.

3. Sequences and speed

Run each position in sequences: groups of four (G A B C, A B C D, and so on) and diatonic thirds (G B, A C, B D), ascending and descending, starting at 70 bpm. In parallel, push the etude itself from 60 to 90 bpm in steps of 6 to 8 bpm, only raising the tempo after two clean passes. Move on when the sequences are even at 90 bpm and the etude is clean at 104 bpm.

4. Improvise over the vamp

Loop or record four minutes of G7 to C/G at 80 bpm, two bars per chord. Improvise using only G Mixolydian in the two positions: start phrases on B, end phrases by landing F on a strong beat and resolving it to G, and steal small fragments from the etude when you run out of ideas. You are done when you can solo for a full loop and hit the b7 on purpose, not by accident, in every phrase.