

Modes and diatonic 7ths

This discussion about how to use modes begins at the level of 7th type chords. Once we can understand what to do over 7ths (individually and collectively) then we are in a better position to tackle anything else harmonically speaking.

So, let's be clear on what the diatonic 7ths are for the three most important scales:

- **Major scale:**

I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii	VIII
Maj7	m7	m7	Maj7	Dom7	m7	m7b5	Maj7

- **Harmonic Minor scale:**

i	ii	III	iv	V	VI	vii	viii
minmaj7	m7b5	Maj7#5	m7	Dom7	Maj7	Dim7	minmaj7

- **Melodic Minor Scale:**

i	ii	III	IV	V	vi	vii	viii
minmaj7	m7	Maj7#5	Dom7	Dom7	m7b5	m7b5	minmaj7

Remember this: that each chord on every scale degree has its own mode; that is the scale best suited to that particular chord. Due to the fact that various chord types exist in more than one place in regard to the above scales and scale degrees, the correct mode to use depends on your perception of its function in relation to the chord progression/tune. And the answer to this question depends upon your abilities to harmonically analyse said progression or tune.

Here is a summary of the possibilities. A good exercise is to play the different modes against each individual chord type so one can hear how the mode sounds and how each of its notes sounds against the chord type in question. More than that, one should be able to theorise about each note's relationship to said chord; whether it is a chord tone or not and what its relationship is in terms of spellings...More on that later.

Summary:

- **Major 7th:**
 - I of Major
 - IV of Major
 - VI of Harmonic Minor
- **Dominant 7th:**
 - V of Major
 - V of Harmonic Minor
 - IV of Melodic Minor
 - V of Melodic Minor
- **Minor 7th**
 - ii of Major
 - iii of Major
 - vi of Major
 - iv of Harmonic Minor
 - ii of Melodic Minor
- **Half Diminished 7th**
 - vii of Major
 - ii of Harmonic Minor
 - vi of Melodic Minor
 - vii of Melodic Minor
- **diminished 7th**
 - vii of Harmonic Minor
- **minmaj7**
 - i of Harmonic Minor
 - i of Melodic Minor
- **Major 7th sharpened 5th**
 - iii of Harmonic Minor
 - iii of Melodic Minor

