

Musical terms, lingo and nicknames all 'musicians' should know !

Aeolian: The sixth note of a Major scale – also known as the 'natural' minor scale.

Bi-Tonal / Bi-Tonality: The playing of two (or more) chords at the same time. (Also referred to as 'Polytonal or 'Polytonality')

Bridge: The 'B' section of a tune. Usually on an AABA or ABA tune.

Cadenza: An improvised section (usually an ending) of indetermined length, played by a soloist while the rhythm section lays out.

Changes: The chords to a tune

Chart: An arrangement or 'lead' sheet of a tune.

Cycle (or Circle) of Fourths: A circular arrangement of all 12 notes of the chromatic scale. When viewed counterclockwise each note is 4th higher than the preceding note. When viewed clockwise each note is 4th lower than the preceding note

Cycle (or Circle) of Fifths: (see above)

Deceptive Cadence: A V chord resolving to anything other than a 5th down.

Diatonic: Usually refers to chords within a particular key (no alterations) or 'scalewise' as opposed to 'CHROMATIC'

Diminished Scale: A Scale composed of alternating whole steps and half steps (or vice-versa) there are only 3 diminished scales.

Enharmonic: Two notes that are 'spelled' differently!
C#=Db, E#=F, Gb=F# etc.

Extensions: The 9th, 11th and 13th of a chord.

Half-Diminished: (I personally HATE this term!) A minor chord with a flatted 5th!

Interval: Space between two notes

Lead Sheet: A piece of music that contains only the melody notes (and sometimes the lyrics) and the chord symbols above these written notes.

Mode: A seven note scale starting on any of the seven steps or a major or minor scale. (See Last Page)

Pedal (or Pedal Point): A note (usually in the Bass) which remains the same while other chords or series of chords are played against it. (creates 'tension').

Slash Chord(s): Usually Triads played above a singular bass note. Sometimes one triad played on top of another triad. (As in Bi-Tonal or Polytonality).

Standard: Any song from the American Song Book – Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Ellington, etc., (usually) NON jazz composers.

Substitute Chords: Chords which replace the original chords of a tune.

Tritone: An interval of an Augmented 4th or Diminished 5th.

Turnaround: A progression of harmony at the end of a section (either the 'A' section OR at the end of a tune) that takes you bak to the 'top' (beginning of the tune. (Think of 'We Want Cantor' I, Vlmin, Ilmin7, V7)

Vamp / (Vamp Till Cue): A repeated section (or series of chords) to be played until signaled, told or **CUED** to continue with the tune.

Verse: The specially composed intro to a tune – often sung or played rubato. (Stardust is a good example)

Voicing: The arrangement of notes in a chord. Sometimes called 'Closed' Voicing (where no other chordal tone can be inserted between chord notes) or 'Open' voicing where chordal notes COULD be inserted.

The Modes

Ionian – Major Scale

Dorian- Scale Starting on the 2nd step of a major scale

Phrygian – Scale Starting on the 3rd step of a major scale

Lydian – Scale Starting on the 4th step of a major scale

Mixolydian – Scale starting on the 5th step of a major scal

Aeloian – Scale starting on the 6th step (Natural, Minor & Melodic

Locrian – Scale Starting on the 7th step of a major scale