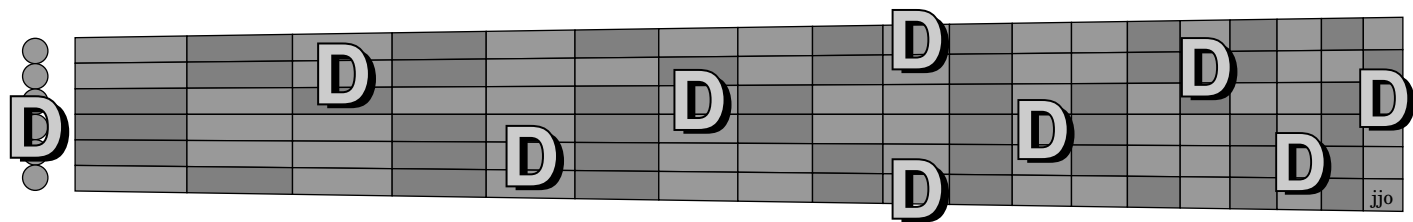


# November Fretboard Exercises

## Sightreads in D Dorian



*A mode for gray skies ...*

**Exercise 1:** I 1 II 1 III 4 IV 5 V 1 ⑤

$\text{♩} = 120$

**Exercise 2:** I 0 II 0 III 4 IV 3 V 1 VI 5 VII 0 VIII 5 ⑤

$\text{♩} = 108$

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Dorian mode in modern music theory is simply the major diatonic scale but starting with the tonic at the second degree. In the key of C, it would be the scale of white notes starting on D (specifically “D Dorian”) or in the key of G it would start on A (“A Dorian”) and include one sharp.

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mode\\_\(music\)#Modern\\_modes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mode_(music)#Modern_modes)

While mode names, like Dorian and Ionian, come from ancient Greece, the modern modes differ from the music modes of ancient Greece. Yet the stereotypical ethnic differences from that period come through in the music and architecture. Think of militaristic Dorians, Doric columns and Sparta in contrast to the philosophical Ionians, Ionic columns and Athens. Dorian mode just sounds more austere.

- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorians>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical\\_order#Doric\\_order](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_order#Doric_order)

This usage of “Dorian” and the gray November fretboard theme are unrelated to Oscar Wilde's 1891 despicable, narcissistic character who sells his soul just to retain his youthful appearance while his painted portrait ages with each evil act he commits.

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Picture\\_of\\_Dorian\\_Gray](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Picture_of_Dorian_Gray)

Perhaps the most famous musical example of Dorian mode is the Medieval *Dies Irae* from the Mass for the Dead, depicting Judgement Day as the “day of wrath and doom impending.” Its Gregorian chant theme has been quoted heavily by classical composers, horror movies and even Disney's “Frozen II.”

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dies\\_irae](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dies_irae)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kokzpbTjBc&t=36s> (The Return of Dracula, 1958)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pylfy\\_L6Bjs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pylfy_L6Bjs) (The Shining, 1980, main theme)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIOyB9ZXn8s> (Into The Unknown, 2019, Disney)

But here as Exercise 1, it makes an excellent sightread on guitar. It has a simple rhythm with no sharps or flats, and on the guitar (unlike the horror movies) its repeated resolutions to the tonic can have a peaceful mesmerizing effect, like reciting a mantra or walking a labyrinth. It's easy to play in three positions (I, II, and V) and even fun to try on the fifth string alone. May it bring you peace when skies are gray.

Exercise 2 is very different, though still in Dorian mode. It's a lively old sea shanty with endless verses that conjure up creative ways to punish bad behavior aboard ship. Modern renditions address the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, the 1991 Tailhook scandal and the 2021 Suez Canal obstruction. Have fun with your own lyrics.

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drunken\\_Sailor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drunken_Sailor)

*These exercises are from the yet to be released book “Diatonic Fretboard Exercises”, which contains over a thousand such exercises and will be made available for free on IMSLP. The contents may be freely copied and modified, but with the condition that they be attributed to J. J. Olson (CC-BY license).*

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