



**C. BECHSTEIN**

*Digital*

**New C. BECHSTEIN VARIO system –  
Replacing a VARIO classic with a  
VARIO duet system**



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The latest version of this document, in German  
and other languages, is also available as a PDF

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## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS

VARIO duet is the updated version of the VARIO classic system installed between 2011 and 2019 exclusively on W.Hoffmann and Zimmermann pianos made by the C. Bechstein Group.

The VARIO classic model is easily identifiable by its display, which is only visible when it is pulled out.



The present document does not apply to VARIO models made before 2011, which have a different form.

## Similarities between VARIO classic and VARIO duet

Both systems allow you to mute an upright or grand piano and to hear the notes played through headphones.

- Muting is achieved by a bar tailored to the piano that stops the hammers just before they hit the strings (VARIO Premium hammer bar).
- The movements of the keys and pedals are recorded by optical sensors and converted into digital signals.
- The digitized notes are transmitted to headphones or a line output.
- A USB interface allows transmission of MIDI files to other devices.

The basic mechanical and electronic principles of the two systems are identical.

## **New features of the VARIO duet**

- The performance of the new model is superior to that of the old one. This applies in particular to the sound quality. Moreover, connection to other devices has been improved.
- The configuration procedure has been altered to accommodate new functions: all settings can be adjusted with just a push-button and the volume control knob, with details and initial settings configured using a smartphone or tablet.
- Connection to mobile devices is possible over Bluetooth (BT-MIDI LE) or a USB-C interface.
- The USB-C Power Delivery standard (PD) enables charging or continuous power supply of a smartphone, tablet or laptop.
- Software updates are user-controlled, including those that enhance the VARIO duet with new functions

Thanks to its extensive connectivity, the VARIO duet is perfectly compatible with third-party applications (lessons for beginners, score writing for professionals, etc.).

## **INSTALLING THE NEW SYSTEM**

### **Preliminary remarks**

The VARIO duet is available for purchase as an upgrade to the VARIO classic.

The upgrade involves replacing the electronic components while retaining the existing mechanical elements (VARIO Premium hammer bar).

This upgrade is available only to customers with a VARIO classic system made in 2011 or later (see above: “Differences between the two systems”). The upgrade is carried out by a specialist dealer and includes removal of obsolete components and installation of the following items:

- VARIO duet electronic components
- Other VARIO duet components (power supply, tablet holder, printed manual)
- Mounting accessories
- C. Bechstein VARIO headphones

## ORDERING THE NEW VARIO SYSTEM

The new VARIO system is offered at a preferential price and there is no minimum resale price, so you retain flexibility toward your customers.

**To place your order and take advantage of any available discounts, please use the form on the following web page:**

<https://service.bechstein-digital.com/login/>

(access with user name and password)

### **You need to provide us with the following information:**

- Brand, model and serial number of the piano to be modified.
- Serial number of the VARIO classic system to be replaced (printed on the underside of the sliding display module). Providing us with this number entitles you to a discount, which will be automatically included on the invoice.
- Color (black or white).

### **Would you like us to take back the old VARIO system?**

- **Yes:** – In this case, we will send you a return slip for bulky goods, valid for 30 days. Please send us the old system in the packaging of the new VARIO duet.
- **No:** – Please check whether you will need a VARIO Premium hammer bar for installation of the old VARIO classic in another piano from the C. Bechstein Group, as ordering a bar together with a new device reduces shipping costs.

### **Ordering from abroad**

Please contact your local C. Bechstein dealer for information.

## REPLACING THE VARIO SYSTEM

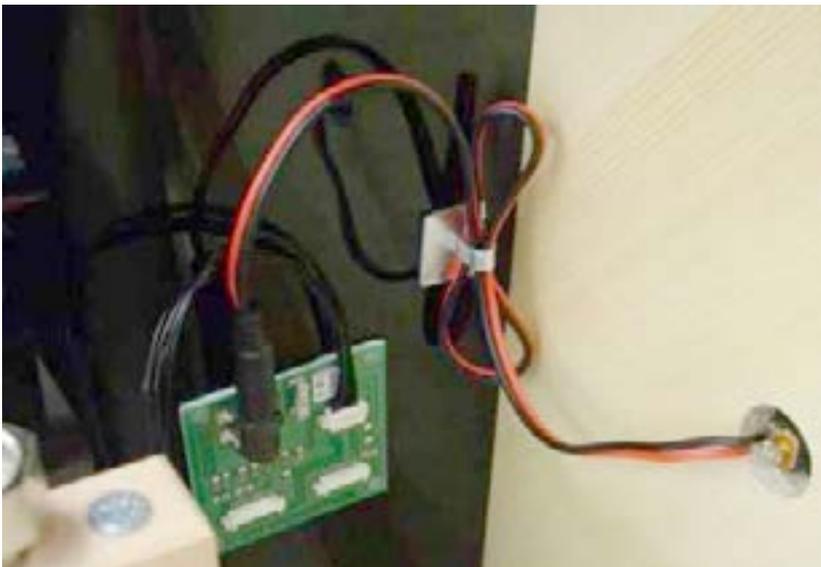
Replacing a VARIO classic with a VARIO duet system is not complicated and usually takes no more than one hour. The operation does not require any new woodwork on the cabinet and can be carried out on the customer's premises.

It is not necessary to replace the hammer bar, which would entail a more complicated procedure.

### Removing the old system

**Remove** the following VARIO classic components:

- (1) Distribution board with cable and DC socket
- (2) DC connection plate or bracket
- (3) Ground cable and fastener (if applicable)
- (4) Key sensor rail with screws and spacers
- (5) Ribbon cable connecting the sensor rail
- (6) Cable connecting the control module
- (7) Control module with touch screen  
(in sliding drawer, secured with four Phillips screws)

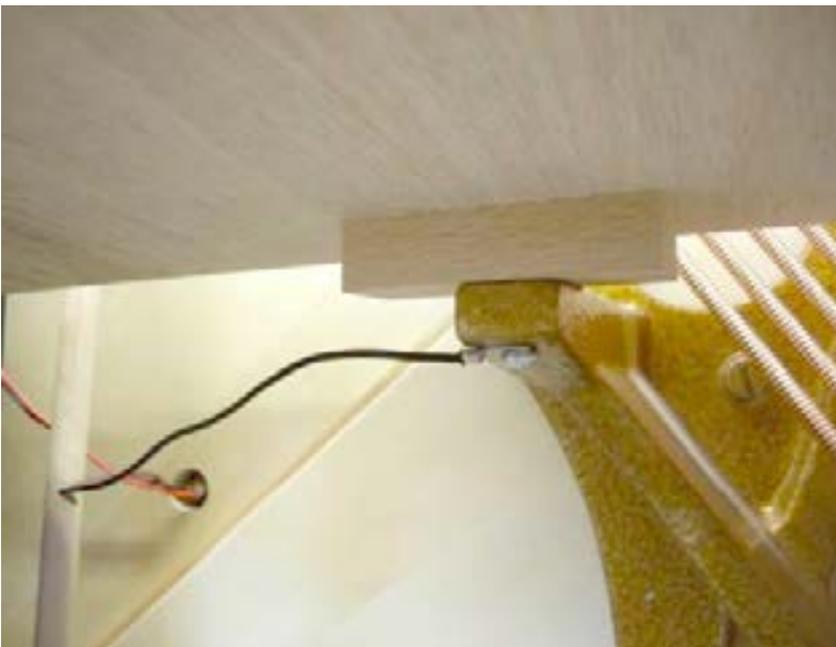


*(1) Distribution board with cable and DC socket*

**C. BECHSTEIN** VARIO · REPLACING VARIO CLASSIC WITH VARIO DUET



*(2) DC connection plate or bracket*



*(3) Ground cable and fastener (if applicable)*



*(4) Key sensor rail with screws and spacers*



*(5) Ribbon cable connecting the sensor rail*



*(6) Cable connecting the control module*



*(7) Control module with touch screen  
(in sliding drawer, secured with four Phillips screws)*

**Please note: The 19 V power supply unit and the DC connection plate for the new VARIO duet system must be installed.**

To remove the old distribution board, we recommend that you carefully insert a chisel between the cabinet and the board, then lift it by placing a piece of wood under the chisel. Use acetone to remove any remaining traces of adhesive.

## Components that do not need to be replaced

- Hammer bar
- Handle and Bowden cable for operating the hammer bar
- Pedal sensors and cable

Please note: Remove the pedal sensors of the VARIO classic if you wish to reuse the old system on another piano. The VARIO duet sensors are compatible with the VARIO classic system, but not vice versa.

Check the adjustment of the VARIO Premium hammer bar according to the instructions.

Also check the adjustment of the piano action to ensure optimal operation of the new VARIO digital system.

Do not use the VARIO duet with a hammer bar from another manufacturer, as optimal adjustment of the piano's touch requires a C. Bechstein bar.

## CONTINUATION OF THE VARIO CLASSIC WARRANTY

The warranty card that comes with the VARIO duet officially states that the new system was installed by a specialist.

**Please fill in the new card as usual (date of purchase, customer address, etc.).**

## VARIO CLASSIC WIRD WEITER GENUTZT

If the old VARIO classic is installed on another piano, make a note of the serial number of the piano from which the VARIO classic was removed and inform either the C. Bechstein production site in Seifhennersdorf ([service@bechstein.de](mailto:service@bechstein.de)) or C. Bechstein Europe ([service@bechstein-europe.com](mailto:service@bechstein-europe.com)), depending on the origins of the two pianos in question, once the re-installation is completed.

Please provide the following information to ensure that the warranty on the VARIO classic (if still valid) is not lost and that the instrument can be traced:

- a) Serial number of the VARIO classic
- b) Serial number of the piano on which the system was previously installed
- c) Serial number of the piano on which the system is now installed.

## FAQ: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***Are the hammer bar and the electronic components of the VARIO system separate items?***

Yes. This distinction allows you to tailor your products to the needs of your customers. Please note that there are significant differences between the hammer bar for upright and that for grand pianos, and that the VARIO connect can be operated without a hammer bar.

### ***Who can upgrade the system?***

Switching from VARIO classic to VARIO duet requires only replacement of the system's electronic components. The upgrade can be carried out by a piano dealer without special certification on the customer's premises. It is not necessary (nor feasible) to send the piano to the C. Bechstein production site for upgrading the VARIO system.

### ***Can the VARIO system on a grand piano also be upgraded?***

Yes. The electronic components can be replaced on a grand piano without any problems. However, unlike the requirements for an upright piano, replacing the pedal sensors is not optional. Please refer to the instructions that relate specifically to upgrading the system on a grand piano.

Moreover, as a double-triggered hammer bar has only been available since the second half of 2017, it is unlikely that a customer would already have such a bar mounted on their piano. Therefore, it may be advisable to **replace the hammer bar** on a grand piano when upgrading to the new VARIO system. Please do not hesitate to contact us by e-mail ([service@bechstein-digital.com](mailto:service@bechstein-digital.com)) or telephone (+49 2832 9750 995) if you have any questions on this matter.

### ***Why do we need the serial number of the old VARIO classic?***

When you order a new VARIO system, we need to know both the serial number of the piano and that of the VARIO classic to be replaced (located on the **underside** of the control module).

We will need these data if the customer presents a warranty claim in the future. In addition, the data allows us to trace the piano.

### ***What should I do with the electronic components of the old VARIO classic?***

These components can either remain with the customer or be reused, together with a **new** C. Bechstein Premium hammer bar, to equip any other piano from the C. Bechstein Group.

**Please note that only electronic components of the VARIO duet – and not those of the VARIO classic – can be installed on a piano not manufactured by the C. Bechstein Group.**

If the customer does not wish to keep the VARIO classic and you do not wish to reuse the old system, you can return all the electronic components to us free of charge. Simply let us know when you order the VARIO duet and we will send you a return slip.

***What should I do with the used headphones?***

For hygienic reasons, it is not possible to take back used headphones.

Moreover, **we do not recommend** using the headphones that come with the VARIO duet on a VARIO classic.

If required, the customer can use **Sennheiser HD 100 headphones** with the old system.

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Please do not hesitate to contact the C. Bechstein Digital service department:

***Telephone: 0049 2832 9750 995***

***E-mail: [service@bechstein-digital.com](mailto:service@bechstein-digital.com)***

We will be happy to assist you.

You can find answers to frequently asked questions on the following web page:

***<https://www.bechstein-digital.com/de/faq/>***