

User Manual

VARI-64 Mk II

KONTAKT instrument



Version 1.0.0

VARI-64 Mk II - User Manual

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Forgotten Keys
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Contents

- 1 Introduction.....4**
- 2 Usage.....5**
 - 2.1 Rhythms.....6
 - Main section.....6
 - Footer section.....8
 - 2.2 Sounds.....11
 - Mixer section.....11
 - Footer section.....12
- 3 Version History.....14**
- 4 License.....15**

1 Introduction

Welcome to the VARI-64 Mk II KONTAKT Instrument.

Requirements

Requires the full version of Native Instruments KONTAKT 5.8.1 or higher.

Important: This instrument will not work as expected in the free KONTAKT Player.

Description

VARI-64 Mk II is a virtual re-creation of the later version of the Hammond Auto-Vari 64 analogue drum machine from the 1980s.

This KONTAKT instrument has been carefully created to be as accurate to the original as possible.

Setup

Unzip the archive to a folder of your choice. This will create a sub-folder called *Forgotten Keys*. All recent Forgotten Keys instruments (those that require KONTAKT 5 or higher) can safely be unzipped to the same folder.

Backup

It is recommended that a backup of the archive file is made in case it needs to be re-installed at a later date.

2 Usage

Drag VARI-64 Mk II.nki onto the KONTAKT rack or browse for it within KONTAKT in the usual way (see the KONTAKT documentation).

Note: This instrument will not show in the KONTAKT library tab.

The KONTAKT instrument interface has two tabs: *Rhythms* and *Sounds*.

2.1 Rhythms

The Rhythms tab comprises of a main section that resembles the real drum machine and a footer section with additional controls.

Main section

Silent Sound / Touch Tempo control

This is essentially the rhythm start/stop control. Tap to start (sound) tap again to stop (silent).

To the left of the control is a small yellow switch marked *touch tempo*. With this enabled, tap the switch five times (one for each beat) at the desired tempo. On the fifth beat, the rhythm will start.

Rhythm Break control

As the names suggests, tapping this control introduces a rhythm break (or fill-in). The break will last up to two bars depending on when it is tapped. Each rhythm is a two-bar sequence as indicated by the red lights next to the control.

Lamps Off control

Essentially just stops the rhythm and deselects any active rhythm buttons.

Volume slider

Adjusts the overall instrument volume mirroring the KONTAKT instrument volume slider.

Tempo slider

Adjusts the tempo between 30-300 beats per minute. Only active when the sync switch is off (see below).

Tip: Click on a slider while holding the control/command key on the computer keyboard to set it to its default value.

Tip: Hold the shift key on the computer keyboard while moving a slider to get a higher resolution for more accurate control.

Preset rhythm switches

There are 16 rhythm switches in 3 colour-coded sections: traditional, modern (well, they were once) and latin. They work in conjunction with the auto-vari switches discussed next.

By default, selecting a rhythm cancels any other selected rhythm. You can combine rhythms by holding the control/command key on the computer keyboard while selecting a rhythm.

Variation switches

Each of the 16 rhythms has four variations that can be selected using these switches. This is where the *64* comes from in the instrument name.

AutoVari switch

When this switch is enabled (by sliding upwards) it will automatically cycle through the four variations mentioned above.

Measure slider

This slider works in conjunction with the autovari switch and selects how frequently the variations will cycle. The range is from $\frac{1}{2}$ bar to 8 bars (or measures).

Program switch

This switch allows you to program the order in which the auto-variations will change.

The procedure is as follows:

1. Slide the autovari switch downwards (off).
2. Slide the program switch upwards (on).
3. Press the variation buttons in the desired sequence for a maximum of 16 steps.
4. Slide the program switch downwards (off).
5. Slide the autovari switch upwards (on).
6. Slide the measure slider to the desired interval.
7. Set the desired rhythm pattern and press start.

Footer section

Values switch

Displays the value of knobs briefly in a pop-up window while adjusting them.

Tip: To show the tempo value only: Turn the switch off then click on it while holding the control/command key on the computer keyboard.

UI FX switch

Adds a touch of realism to the interface by playing real sounds of controls while interacting with them.

Sync switch

Allows the tempo to be controlled by the host. This will likely be a DAW or KONTAKT itself if in stand-alone mode. The start/stop controls of the host will also start/stop rhythm playback. When the switch is off, the tempo control on the interface will become active.

Swing controls

Shifts the timing of notes to produce a triplet/swing/shuffle feel. You can adjust the amount of shift by using the swing knob.

Note: Experimentation is recommended for the swing controls. Not all rhythms are suited to it.

MIDI file recorder

A MIDI file can be recorded and exported using this section. It is the recommended way to play this instrument from a DAW because you can start and stop playback anywhere, even mid bar, and it will always be in the right place.

The procedure is as follows:

1. Select a rhythm and any other desired settings such as swing.
2. Press the record button to start recording.
You can change rhythms during recording if desired.
3. Press the button again when enough has been recorded.
4. Save the MIDI file by doing either of the following:
 - Drag the file to a folder or to a track on a DAW using the control with the drag and drop symbol.

- Click where it says <enter name here>, enter a name for the file then press the save button or press enter on the computer keyboard.

The file will be saved in the same location as the instrument file running in KONTAKT.

Important: If no name is entered, the file will be saved as *untitled.mid* and will overwrite any existing file with the same name.

5. Press the erase button to clear the recording.

Note: Only note information is recorded. Volume and other controls will have no effect on the final MIDI file.

Note: The sync switch should be set to *off* when playing back a MIDI file from a DAW.

2.2 Sounds

The Sounds tab comprises of a mixer section and a footer section with additional controls.

Mixer section

Output menus

Allows you to send each sound to any of the currently available outputs. What outputs are available depends on how this has been set up in KONTAKT. If in doubt, leave on *Def* (default).

Tune sliders

Raises or lowers the pitch of the sound by up to one octave either way.

Pan sliders

Sends the sound to the left or right channel or somewhere in-between.

Solo switches

Mutes all other sounds except the soloed sound. Multiple solo switches can be active at the same time.

Mute switches

Mutes the selected sound. Multiple mute switches can be active at the same time.

Tip: Hold the control/command key on the computer keyboard while selecting a solo/mute switch to cancel all other solo/mute switches.

Volume sliders

Adjusts the sound's volume from off to 0dB.

Footer section

Values switch

Displays the value of knobs and sliders briefly in a pop-up window while adjusting them.

Order switch

Displays a row of small switches marked < (left) and > (right) under each mixer channel. Clicking on one will move that channel left or right.

Holding the control/command key on the computer keyboard while clicking on a < or > switch will reset the mixer to the default order.

Info switch

Displays general information about this KONTAKT instrument such as the version number.

3 Version History

1.0.0

- Initial release for KONTAKT 5.

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