

GENERIC · CHASSIS

# C0072

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

## C0072

### Brake Temperature Too High

C0072 is a generic chassis code indicating that a brake system control module has detected a brake temperature exceeding a calibrated safe limit, typically from a temperature sensor on a brake caliper, drum, or brake fluid circuit. The module sets the code when the measured temperature stays above the threshold long enough to confirm a genuine overheat condition rather than a transient spike.

|         |                     |          |                |                                 |
|---------|---------------------|----------|----------------|---------------------------------|
| SYSTEM  | CODE TYPE           | SEVERITY | FIX DIFFICULTY | AREA                            |
| Chassis | Generic (all makes) | Medium   | Intermediate   | Brakes, steering and suspension |

### Symptoms you may notice

- A red or amber brake warning light illuminated on the dashboard, sometimes accompanied by a chime.
- A message on the driver information display warning of high brake temperature or advising the driver to stop safely.
- Reduced or inconsistent brake performance, including a soft pedal or longer stopping distances, after repeated hard stops.
- A burning smell from the wheels or a visible haze of smoke coming from a brake corner after aggressive driving.
- The stability control or hill-descent system temporarily disabling itself as a protective measure.
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light when the overheat was brief and the brakes have already cooled.

### Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Riding the brakes or repeated hard stops that generate more heat than the brake system can shed, especially on long descents or while towing.
- 2 A dragging brake caliper, seized slide pin, or stuck parking brake mechanism that keeps a pad in contact with the rotor.
- 3 A faulty brake temperature sensor or a damaged sensor wiring harness giving a false high reading.
- 4 Low or contaminated brake fluid that reduces heat capacity and raises operating temperatures.
- 5 A restricted or damaged brake backing plate, duct, or air deflector that prevents normal airflow cooling.
- 6 An overheated wheel bearing or a dragging parking brake shoe adding heat to the same corner.
- 7 A brake control module calibration or software issue that misinterprets valid sensor data.



## How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Connect a scan tool and read the freeze-frame data and live brake temperature sensor values to confirm which corner or circuit triggered the code.
- 2 Inspect each brake corner for dragging by lifting the vehicle and checking that wheels spin freely, then look for blue or glazed rotors and worn pads.
- 3 Check brake fluid level, condition, and moisture content, and flush the fluid if it is dark or has absorbed moisture.
- 4 Test the brake temperature sensor and its wiring for resistance, continuity, and shorts against the manufacturer's specification.
- 5 Service any dragging caliper, slide pin, or parking brake mechanism and replace heat-damaged pads, rotors, or fluid as needed.
- 6 Clear the code and perform a road test with live data monitoring to verify the temperature readings return to normal and the code does not reset.
- 7 If the hardware and sensor check out, check for brake control module software updates or calibration procedures before condemning the module.

## Why brake temperature codes set without a real overheat

- A temperature sensor that has drifted or a chafed sensor wire can report a high temperature when the brakes are actually cool, so always compare live sensor readings across corners before replacing hardware.
- A dragging parking brake shoe inside a rear drum or a partially seized caliper slide pin often generates enough heat to set C0072 during normal driving without the driver noticing any drag.
- Some vehicles set this code after a single aggressive stop from high speed, and the code may be stored in history rather than a current fault once the brakes cool.
- Low brake fluid or old fluid with high moisture content boils at a lower temperature and can cause the system to reach the overheat threshold sooner than expected.
- A wheel bearing that is failing and generating heat can raise the temperature at that corner enough to trigger the brake temperature sensor, leading to a misdiagnosis of the brake system.

## Can I keep driving with C0072?

If the warning light is on and the brakes feel normal, drive gently to a safe location and let the brakes cool before continuing, avoiding heavy braking or long descents. If the pedal feels soft, the vehicle pulls, or you smell burning, stop as soon as it is safe and arrange a tow rather than risking brake fade.



## Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and freeze-frame capability
- Infrared thermometer
- Brake fluid moisture tester
- Jack and jack stands
- Digital multimeter
- Basic hand tools for brake inspection

## Reading C0072

|           |                                                                      |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>C</b>  | Chassis: brakes, steering and suspension.                            |
| <b>0</b>  | Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle. |
| <b>0</b>  | Brakes, steering and suspension.                                     |
| <b>72</b> | The exact fault within that area.                                    |

## Often seen with

**C0035** Left Front Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit Range/Performance · **C0040** Left Rear Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit · **C0050** Right Rear Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit Malfunction · **C0110** ABS Pump Motor Circuit Malfunction · **C0265** EBCM Relay Circuit

## See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How ABS Works: Anti-Lock Brakes in X-Ray](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/c0072/>

