

GENERIC · CHASSIS

C0185

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

C0185

Lateral Acceleration Sensor Range/Performance

C0185 means the vehicle's stability control system has detected that the lateral acceleration sensor is reporting values outside its expected range or is not performing reliably. The computer compares the sensor signal against other dynamic inputs and flags the code when the reading is implausible, erratic, or stuck within a key-on self-test.

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

Symptoms you may notice

- Traction control or stability control warning light illuminated on the dashboard
- Anti-lock brake system (ABS) light may also come on if the fault affects shared components
- Electronic stability control (ESC) system may be disabled, reducing cornering assistance
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, with normal braking and driving behavior
- In rare cases, a slight pull or unusual steering feel if the sensor is skewed and the system applies corrective braking
- Cruise control or hill assist features may become unavailable on some vehicles

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Lateral acceleration sensor internally failed or contaminated
- 2 Damaged or corroded wiring harness or connector at the sensor
- 3 Poor electrical ground or reference voltage supply to the sensor
- 4 Sensor mounting bracket loose or sensor physically misaligned
- 5 Faulty yaw rate sensor or steering angle sensor feeding conflicting data to the stability control module
- 6 Stability control module software glitch or internal fault
- 7 Low battery voltage or charging system issue causing erratic sensor readings



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules for stored codes and record freeze-frame data to confirm C0185 is current and not history
- 2 Inspect the lateral acceleration sensor connector and wiring for corrosion, chafing, or loose pins
- 3 Check battery voltage and charging system output to rule out low-voltage glitches
- 4 Verify sensor mounting is secure and free of debris or damage
- 5 Perform a zero-point calibration or relearn procedure for the lateral acceleration sensor using a scan tool
- 6 Compare live lateral acceleration data with a known-good vehicle or physical tilt test to confirm sensor accuracy
- 7 Replace the lateral acceleration sensor if calibration fails or live data remains implausible, then clear codes and retest

Why a simple calibration often fixes C0185

- A lateral acceleration sensor that has drifted slightly out of calibration can set C0185 without any physical damage, and a scan-tool relearn procedure frequently resolves the code at no parts cost. Technicians sometimes replace the lateral acceleration sensor only to find the real culprit is a failing yaw rate sensor or steering angle sensor that is feeding contradictory data into the stability control module.
 - The sensor is often located under the center console or beneath a front seat, where spilled drinks or floor leaks can cause corrosion that a quick visual inspection of the connector will reveal.
 - C0185 can be set by a weak battery during engine cranking, so always check for a stable 12-volt supply and clear the code after charging before condemning the sensor.
- On some vehicles, the lateral acceleration sensor is integrated into a combined sensor cluster with the yaw rate sensor, meaning a fault in either function can trigger this code and require cluster replacement.

Can I keep driving with C0185?

You can usually drive the vehicle with C0185 set because normal braking remains functional, but stability control and traction control assistance may be disabled. Avoid aggressive cornering, towing, or driving in slippery conditions until the fault is repaired, and have the system diagnosed promptly to restore full safety features.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with stability control module access and live data capability
- Digital multimeter for voltage and resistance checks
- Socket set and trim removal tools for accessing the sensor
- Factory service information or equivalent for calibration procedures
- Battery charger or power supply to maintain stable voltage during testing



Reading C0185

- C** Chassis: brakes, steering and suspension.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 1** Brakes, steering and suspension.
- 85** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

C0040 Left Rear Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit · **C0050** Right Rear Wheel Speed Sensor Circuit Malfunction · **C0186** Lateral Acceleration Sensor Circuit · **C0196** Yaw Rate Sensor Circuit · **U0122** Lost Communication With Vehicle Dynamics Control Module

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Gyroscope Works: Gimbals and Precession](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/c0185/>

