

GENERIC · CHASSIS

C0578

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

C0578

Park Brake Switch Stuck Open

The C0578 code indicates that the electronic brake control module (EBCM) has detected the park brake switch circuit as open when it should be closed, meaning the switch is not completing the circuit as expected. This can cause the module to be unsure of the park brake's status, potentially affecting brake-related functions and illuminating the brake warning light.

SYSTEM

Chassis

CODE TYPE

Generic (all makes)

SEVERITY

Low

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

Brakes, steering and suspension

Symptoms you may notice

- Brake warning light illuminated on the dashboard
- Parking brake indicator may not turn off after releasing the brake
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light
- Possible intermittent operation of the parking brake warning
- Reduced functionality of systems that rely on park brake status, such as hill start assist
- In some cases, the electronic parking brake may not engage or disengage properly

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Faulty park brake switch (stuck open or failed internally)
- 2 Damaged or disconnected electrical connector at the switch
- 3 Broken or chafed wire in the park brake switch circuit
- 4 Corroded or loose ground connection for the switch
- 5 Failed electronic brake control module (EBCM) or body control module (BCM) input circuit
- 6 Aftermarket accessories or wiring interfering with the circuit



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Verify the parking brake is fully released and inspect the switch for physical damage or debris
- 2 Check the electrical connector at the park brake switch for tightness and corrosion; clean or reseal as needed
- 3 Test the switch continuity with a multimeter according to the manufacturer's specifications; replace if faulty
- 4 Inspect the wiring harness from the switch to the EBCM/BCM for continuity and shorts; repair any damaged wires
- 5 Check ground connections for the switch circuit and clean or tighten as necessary
- 6 Clear the diagnostic trouble codes and test-drive the vehicle to see if the code returns
- 7 If the code persists, follow the manufacturer's diagnostic flow chart, which may involve testing the EBCM/BCM or replacing the module

Common Misdiagnosis Traps for C0578

- A stuck-open park brake switch can be caused by a simple mechanical issue, such as a misadjusted switch or a build-up of dirt preventing contact, so always check the switch actuation before replacing parts.
The park brake switch circuit often shares grounds or power with other sensors, so a fault in a related system can set this code; inspect the entire circuit rather than focusing solely on the switch.
- In vehicles with electronic parking brakes, the switch may be integrated into the parking brake motor assembly, making diagnosis more complex and requiring manufacturer-specific procedures.
- A weak or failing battery can cause erratic switch signals and set this code; always verify battery health and charging system operation before extensive diagnostics.
The code may be stored intermittently due to a loose connector that only loses contact under certain driving conditions, so a wiggle test of the harness while monitoring live data can be invaluable.

Can I keep driving with C0578?

The vehicle is generally safe to drive because the service brake system is unaffected, but the parking brake warning light will remain on and some convenience features may be disabled. Avoid relying on the parking brake until the fault is repaired, and have the vehicle inspected soon to prevent potential issues with electronic parking brake functions.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool
- Digital multimeter
- Wire probe set
- Manufacturer's service information
- Basic hand tools (screwdrivers, pliers, socket set)



Reading C0578

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

Often seen with

C0577 Park Brake Force Sensor Circuit Malfunction · **C0579** Brake Booster Temperature Sensor B Circuit Low · **C0580** Brake Booster Motor A Phase U-V-W Circuit Low · **C0581** Park Brake Apply Performance · **C0582** Brake Booster Motor A Phase U-V-W Circuit Range/Performance

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/c0578/>

