



P1201 · Honda

Cylinder 1 Misfire

P1201 is a Honda-specific code indicating that the powertrain control module has detected a misfire on cylinder 1, typically by monitoring crankshaft speed fluctuations. The computer sets this code when the misfire rate exceeds a threshold that could damage the catalytic converter or affect emissions.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Honda specific	High	Intermediate	Fuel and air metering (injector circuits)

Symptoms you may notice

- Check engine light illuminated, often flashing if the misfire is severe
- Rough idle or shaking felt through the steering wheel and seats
- Noticeable loss of power or hesitation during acceleration
- Engine vibration that worsens under load, such as climbing a hill
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, especially with a mild misfire
- Poor fuel economy or a rotten egg smell from the exhaust in severe cases

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Worn or fouled spark plug in cylinder 1
- 2 Faulty ignition coil or spark plug wire for cylinder 1
- 3 Clogged or leaking fuel injector on cylinder 1
- 4 Vacuum leak at the intake manifold near cylinder 1
- 5 Low compression due to worn piston rings, valves, or head gasket
- 6 Faulty rocker arm or valve adjustment issue specific to cylinder 1
- 7 Engine mechanical problem such as a collapsed lifter or damaged camshaft lobe

How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all stored codes and freeze-frame data to confirm the misfire is isolated to cylinder 1
- 2 Inspect the spark plug in cylinder 1 for wear, fouling, or incorrect gap; replace if needed
- 3 Swap the ignition coil from cylinder 1 with a known-good cylinder and see if the misfire moves
- 4 Check for vacuum leaks around the intake manifold and cylinder 1 intake runner using carb cleaner or smoke
- 5 Test the fuel injector for cylinder 1 with a noid light or by listening for a consistent click
- 6 Perform a compression test and cylinder leak-down test to rule out mechanical issues
- 7 If compression is low, perform a valve adjustment or inspect the valvetrain for damage



Honda misfire traps you should not fall for

- A flashing check engine light means the misfire is severe enough to damage the catalytic converter, so stop driving immediately and diagnose the cause.
- Honda engines are known for valve clearance issues that can cause a single-cylinder misfire, so always check valve adjustment before replacing expensive parts.
- A misfire code for cylinder 1 can be set by a failing ignition coil that tests fine when cold but breaks down under heat; swap-testing is more reliable than a simple resistance check.
- Fuel injector problems on Honda engines often stem from clogged screens or internal leaks that do not always trigger a lean code, so flow testing is essential.
- The P1201 code can be triggered by a loose or damaged crankshaft position sensor reluctor wheel, which mimics a misfire by sending erratic signals to the computer.

Can I keep driving with P1201?

If the check engine light is flashing, pull over and stop driving to prevent catalytic converter damage; if it is steady, drive gently to a repair shop and avoid heavy acceleration or towing.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and misfire counter capability
- Spark plug socket and ratchet set
- Ignition coil puller or socket set
- Compression tester
- Vacuum gauge or smoke machine
- Noid light or fuel injector tester

Reading P1201

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
1	Manufacturer-specific code (Honda): its meaning depends on the make.
2	Fuel and air metering (injector circuits).
01	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P1399 Engine RPM Signal Short To B+ · **P1399** Wheel Speed Sensor 2 G-Sensor Circuit Intermittent · **P1399** Glow Plug Circuit High Side High Input · **P1399** Wait To Start Lamp Circuit Open Or Shorted · **P0171** System Too Lean (Bank 1) · **P0300** Random/Multiple Cylinder Misfire Detected · **P0301** Cylinder 1 Misfire Detected · **P0302** Cylinder 2 Misfire Detected



See it working

Watch the animated explainer **Four-Stroke Engine Cutaway: Intake to Exhaust** on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/honda-p1201/>

