

JAGUAR · POWERTRAIN

P1238

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P1238 · Jaguar

VSV 3 Circuit

P1238 on a Jaguar indicates that the engine control module has detected an electrical fault in the circuit for Vacuum Switching Valve 3 (VSV 3), which is a solenoid that the module uses to control vacuum flow to a specific emissions or intake component. The module monitors the commanded state versus the expected electrical feedback and sets this code when the circuit does not respond as designed.

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

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- Rough idle or unstable engine speed when the affected vacuum circuit is active
- A slight hesitation or stumble during light acceleration
- Poor fuel economy or increased emissions in some cases
- In rare instances, a noticeable hissing sound from a disconnected or split vacuum hose

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Failed VSV 3 solenoid, typically an open or shorted internal coil
- 2 Damaged, corroded, or disconnected electrical connector at the VSV
- 3 Broken or chafed wiring in the VSV 3 circuit between the module and the valve
- 4 Split, cracked, or disconnected vacuum hose at the VSV or its controlled component
- 5 Carbon buildup or mechanical sticking inside the VSV, preventing proper operation
- 6 Faulty engine control module driver circuit, though this is less common

How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Verify the code with a scan tool and check for any related codes that might indicate a shared circuit fault
- 2 Inspect the VSV 3 electrical connector and wiring for corrosion, damage, or looseness
- 3 Test the VSV 3 solenoid resistance with a multimeter and compare to the manufacturer's specification
- 4 Check all vacuum hoses connected to the VSV for splits, cracks, or disconnections
- 5 Command the VSV on and off with a scan tool and listen for an audible click; if no click, test the circuit with a test light or multimeter
- 6 If the solenoid fails electrical tests, replace the VSV and clear the code
- 7 If the circuit tests good but the code persists, diagnose the control module driver circuit as per Jaguar Service information



What a VSV 3 code really tells you

- A P1238 is often set by a simple vacuum leak at a brittle hose that cracks with age, not by a failed solenoid, so always inspect the hoses before condemning the valve.
- The VSV 3 circuit can be affected by a shared power or ground splice that also feeds other solenoids, so a single bad connection can set multiple codes including P1238.
- Some Jaguar models use the VSV for evaporative emissions purge or intake tuning; a stuck-open valve can cause a lean condition that may not trigger a lean code immediately.
- A technician might overlook a sticking VSV that tests fine electrically but fails mechanically when hot, so a functional test with the engine at operating temperature is essential.
- Replacing the VSV without clearing the adaptive learning values can cause the code to reappear until the module relearns the circuit, so always perform a reset after repair.

Can I keep driving with P1238?

You can generally continue driving with P1238, but avoid heavy acceleration or towing until the fault is repaired, as the affected vacuum circuit may impair emissions and engine performance. If the check engine light begins flashing or you notice severe drivability issues, stop driving and seek professional diagnosis.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with bidirectional control capability
- Digital multimeter
- Vacuum gauge
- Hand tools for hose and connector access
- Jaguar-specific service information for circuit testing

Reading P1238

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

Often seen with

P1237 Cylinder 1 Injector Circuit Open Circuit · **P1239** Cylinder 3 Injector Circuit Open Circuit · **P1237** VSV 2 Circuit · **P1237** Injector Circuit Cylinder 6 Intermittent · **P1237** Fuel Pump Secondary Circuit Fault · **P1239** Speed Fuel Pump Positive Feed Fault · **P1237** Injector Circuit Cylinder 6 Intermittent · **P0171** System Too Lean (Bank 1) · **P0443** EVAP Purge Control Valve Circuit Malfunction · **P0444** EVAP Purge Control Valve Circuit Open



See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Fuel Injector Works: Pulse Width and Spray](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/jaguar-p1238/>

