

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P0153

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P0153

O2 Sensor Circuit Slow Response (Bank 2 Sensor 1)

P0153 means the upstream oxygen sensor on bank 2 is responding too slowly to changes in exhaust oxygen content, so the engine computer cannot trust its feedback for fuel control. The computer watches the sensor voltage switch between lean and rich and flags the code when the average switching time exceeds a calibrated limit.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	Medium	Intermediate	Fuel and air metering

Symptoms you may notice

- Illuminated check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- Slightly rough idle or intermittent hesitation during acceleration
- Reduced fuel economy over time as the computer defaults to a richer mixture
- Occasional surge or stumble at steady cruising speeds
- Failed emissions test due to elevated hydrocarbons or carbon monoxide

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Aged or contaminated oxygen sensor that has slowed its switching response
- 2 Exhaust leaks upstream of the sensor letting outside air into the exhaust stream
- 3 Wiring damage, corrosion, or loose connector pins in the sensor circuit
- 4 Oil, coolant, or silicone contamination from an internal engine or gasket leak
- 5 A lazy sensor caused by excessive rich or lean running from another fault
- 6 Restricted exhaust or a failing catalytic converter affecting sensor behavior

How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all stored and pending codes to confirm P0153 is the only oxygen-sensor-related fault
- 2 Inspect the bank 2 sensor 1 wiring harness and connector for chafing, corrosion, or loose pins
- 3 Check for exhaust leaks between the cylinder head and the upstream sensor using a smoke test
- 4 Graph the sensor voltage on a scan tool to confirm slow switching rather than a dead or biased sensor
- 5 Verify fuel trims and look for vacuum leaks or fuel pressure problems that can mimic a lazy sensor
- 6 Replace the bank 2 upstream oxygen sensor only after electrical and exhaust checks pass
- 7 Clear codes and complete a drive cycle to confirm the monitor runs and the code does not return



Why a slow sensor is not always the sensor

- A small exhaust leak just ahead of the sensor pulls in outside air and makes the sensor look slow, so always smoke-test the exhaust before condemning the part.
- Oil or coolant contamination from a failing head gasket or valve cover gasket can coat the sensor tip and slow its response without setting a misfire code.
- Bank 2 sensor 1 is the upstream sensor on the side of the engine that does not contain cylinder one, which is easy to confuse with the downstream sensor on some layouts.
- A lazy sensor often causes the computer to add fuel, so long-term fuel trims may be noticeably positive even though the driver feels nothing.
- Replacing the sensor without fixing an underlying rich or lean condition will usually cause the new sensor to slow down and set the code again.

Can I keep driving with P0153?

You can usually keep driving short distances because the engine computer falls back to a default fuel strategy, but avoid heavy towing or long highway trips until it is repaired. Prolonged driving with a slow sensor can damage the catalytic converter and increase emissions.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data graphing
- Digital multimeter
- Smoke machine for exhaust leak testing
- Oxygen sensor socket
- Hand tools and penetrating spray

Reading P0153

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
0	Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
1	Fuel and air metering.
53	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0133 O2 Sensor Circuit Slow Response (Bank 1 Sensor 1) · **P0150** O2 Sensor Circuit Malfunction (Bank 2 Sensor 1) · **P0151** O2 Sensor Circuit Low Voltage (Bank 2 Sensor 1) · **P0152** O2 Sensor Circuit High Voltage (Bank 2 Sensor 1) · **P0171** System Too Lean (Bank 1)



See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How an Elevator Works: Traction Lift in X-Ray](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0153/>

