

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P0784

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P0784

4-5 Shift

P0784 is a generic transmission code indicating that the powertrain control module detected a fault in the 4-5 shift sequence, meaning the transmission did not achieve the expected gear ratio change when commanded to shift from fourth to fifth gear. The computer monitors engine speed and output shaft speed to calculate the actual ratio and flags the code when the ratio falls outside the expected range for a calibrated period.

SYSTEM

Powertrain

CODE TYPE

Generic (all makes)

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Professional

AREA

Transmission

Symptoms you may notice

- Check engine light or transmission warning light illuminated
- Harsh, delayed, or slipping 4-5 upshift
- Transmission may enter limp mode and stay in a single gear
- RPM flare or engine revving between shifts
- Poor fuel economy and increased engine noise at highway speeds
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, especially if the fault is intermittent

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Low or degraded transmission fluid
- 2 Sticking or faulty 4-5 shift solenoid
- 3 Worn valve body or shift valve bore
- 4 Internal transmission wear such as clutches or bands
- 5 Faulty transmission speed sensors (input or output)
- 6 Damaged wiring or corroded connector at the transmission
- 7 Engine performance issues affecting calculated torque and shift timing



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Check transmission fluid level and condition; top off or replace if burned or contaminated
- 2 Scan all modules for stored and pending codes, and check freeze-frame data for the 4-5 shift event
- 3 Inspect transmission wiring harness and connectors for chafing, corrosion, or loose pins
- 4 Test the 4-5 shift solenoid for resistance and function according to manufacturer specifications
- 5 Perform a transmission line pressure test and compare with specifications
- 6 Remove the valve body and inspect the 4-5 shift valve and bore for wear or sticking
- 7 If internal wear is confirmed, rebuild or replace the transmission as needed

Before you replace the transmission

- A low or contaminated fluid level is the most common cause of a P0784 and is often overlooked because the dipstick may show full when the engine is cold.
- The code can be set by a faulty output shaft speed sensor even when the transmission shifts perfectly, so always verify sensor signals before condemning internal parts.
- In some vehicles, an engine misfire or throttle position sensor fault can alter calculated torque and trigger a false 4-5 shift code.
- A sticking 4-5 shift solenoid may test fine electrically but still bind mechanically when hot, so a cold resistance check alone is not conclusive.
- After repairs, the transmission adaptive learning must be reset and a relearn drive cycle performed, or the code may return immediately.

Can I keep driving with P0784?

You can usually drive the vehicle short distances to a repair shop, but avoid heavy acceleration, towing, or highway speeds that force the 4-5 shift. If the transmission is slipping or in limp mode, limit driving to avoid further internal damage.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with transmission capability
- Digital multimeter
- Transmission fluid level dipstick or scan tool for fluid temperature
- Transmission pressure gauge
- Factory service information for solenoid resistance and pressure specs



Reading P0784

- P** Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 7** Transmission.
- 84** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0735 Gear 5 Incorrect Ratio · **P0780** Shift Error · **P0781** 1-2 Shift · **P0782** 2-3 Shift · **P0783** 3-4 Shift

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How an Automatic Transmission Works, Gear by Gear](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p0784/>

