

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P079D

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P079D

Transmission Friction Element D Slip Detected

P079D indicates that the transmission control module has detected excessive slip in friction element D, which is a clutch or band inside the automatic transmission. The computer compares input and output shaft speeds and sees that the element is not holding as it should, meaning the transmission is slipping when it should be engaged.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	High	Professional	Transmission

Symptoms you may notice

- Illumination of the check engine light or transmission warning light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- Slipping sensation during acceleration or when shifting into a particular gear
- Harsh or delayed gear engagements, especially when the affected element is applied
- Transmission may enter limp mode, limiting vehicle speed and gear selection
- Abnormal engine RPM flare between shifts or during steady-speed driving
- Burning smell or transmission fluid overheating due to prolonged slip

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Worn or burnt clutch plates or band lining for friction element D
- 2 Low or degraded transmission fluid, or fluid contaminated with debris
- 3 Faulty solenoid or valve body issue preventing proper hydraulic pressure to the element
- 4 Internal seal leak or piston failure causing insufficient apply pressure
- 5 Transmission control module software calibration issue or faulty pressure sensor
- 6 Mechanical damage to the drum, piston, or return spring for the element



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Check transmission fluid level and condition; top off or replace fluid if contaminated or low
- 2 Scan all modules for stored and pending codes, and check for related transmission codes that may clarify the fault
- 3 Perform a road test with a scan tool to monitor input and output shaft speeds and solenoid commands during the slip event
- 4 Inspect solenoid operation and valve body for sticking valves or debris; clean or replace as needed
- 5 Perform a transmission pressure test to verify hydraulic pressure to friction element D
- 6 Remove transmission pan and inspect for clutch material or metal debris; if present, internal repair is likely
- 7 If internal damage is confirmed, disassemble transmission to inspect and replace worn clutch plates, seals, or pistons for element D

What a slip code really tells you

- A P079D can be set by a momentary glitch in the speed sensor signal rather than a true mechanical slip, so always verify live data before condemning the transmission.
- Many technicians replace the transmission when the actual fault is a sticking solenoid or a clogged filter that starves the friction element of fluid.
- Friction element D is not the same in every transmission; consult the factory service information to identify which clutch or band is labeled D for the vehicle at hand.
- A worn valve body or a leaking seal can cause slip only when the transmission is hot, so a cold test drive may not reproduce the code.
- After repairs, the transmission adaptive learning must be reset and relearned, or the code may return even with a correctly functioning transmission.

Can I keep driving with P079D?

Driving with a slipping friction element can quickly cause further internal damage and may leave you stranded, so limit driving to a short distance to a repair shop. Avoid heavy acceleration, towing, or highway speeds until the fault is diagnosed.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with transmission live data capability
- Transmission pressure gauge
- Fluid level dipstick or scan tool for fluid temperature
- Jack and jack stands or a lift
- Basic hand tools and torque wrench
- Factory service information for friction element identification



Reading P079D

- P** Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 7** Transmission.
- 9D** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0715 Input/Turbine Speed Sensor Circuit Malfunction · **P0730** Incorrect Gear Ratio · **P0740** Torque Converter Clutch Circuit Malfunction · **P079C** Transmission Friction Element C Slip Detected · **P079E** Transmission Friction Element E Slip Detected

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/p079d/>

