

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P07A9

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P07A9

Transmission Friction Element D Stuck On

P07A9 means the transmission control module has detected that friction element D is applied when the controller commanded it to be released, indicating a hydraulic or mechanical stuck-on condition. The computer typically compares commanded gear state with input and output speed ratios to infer that the clutch or band is holding when it should not be.

SYSTEM

Powertrain

CODE TYPE

Generic (all makes)

SEVERITY

High

FIX DIFFICULTY

Professional

AREA

Transmission

Symptoms you may notice

- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, especially if the fault is intermittent or only occurs under specific conditions
- Harsh or delayed shifts, particularly when the affected element should be releasing during a gear change
- The transmission may feel like it is binding or holding two gears at once, causing a lurch or engine stall at low speed
- Transmission may default to a limp-home mode with a single forward gear and no reverse
- Elevated transmission fluid temperature or burnt fluid smell if the element drags continuously
- Poor fuel economy and increased engine load due to parasitic drag inside the transmission

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Sticking or contaminated shift solenoid valve that controls hydraulic pressure to friction element D
- 2 Worn or damaged valve body bore allowing hydraulic pressure to bypass the solenoid and apply the element
- 3 Internal transmission seal or piston failure causing the friction element to remain applied regardless of command
- 4 Mechanical binding of the clutch pack or band assembly due to warped plates or broken return spring
- 5 Debris or sludge in the hydraulic circuit blocking the release port for friction element D
- 6 Faulty transmission control module or wiring harness causing incorrect solenoid commands or feedback
- 7 Incorrect transmission fluid level or type leading to erratic hydraulic behavior and element drag



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Verify transmission fluid level and condition, checking for burnt smell or metallic debris that indicates internal damage
- 2 Scan all modules for related codes and freeze-frame data to confirm the fault is current and not a historical glitch
- 3 Inspect the wiring harness and connectors at the transmission solenoids for chafing, corrosion, or loose pins
- 4 Perform a solenoid function test and compare commanded versus actual hydraulic pressure if the scan tool supports it
- 5 Remove the transmission pan to inspect for debris and test the shift solenoid for friction element D with a multimeter and bench test
- 6 If the solenoid tests good, remove the valve body and inspect the bore and spool valve for friction element D for scoring or sticking
- 7 If internal mechanical binding is suspected, perform a transmission air pressure test or teardown to inspect the clutch pack and piston seals

Why element D sticks on without a solenoid code

- A stuck-on friction element often sets no solenoid electrical code because the solenoid coil and circuit test fine; the fault is hydraulic or mechanical, so technicians who only check resistance miss it.
- Contaminated transmission fluid from a failing cooler or neglected service is a leading cause of valve body spool valves sticking, and a fluid flush alone rarely fixes a stuck element once debris has lodged.
- Some transmissions use a normally applied element for engine braking or failsafe operation, so a stuck-on command can be a deliberate limp-home strategy rather than a true hydraulic failure.
- A worn valve body bore can allow pressure to bleed into the apply circuit even when the solenoid is commanded off, which is why replacing the solenoid without inspecting the bore often leads to a repeat repair.
- Intermittent P07A9 can be caused by a failing transmission control module ground or voltage supply, so checking powers and grounds before internal repairs saves unnecessary teardown.

Can I keep driving with P07A9?

Do not continue driving normally because a stuck friction element can overheat the transmission and cause sudden binding or loss of motive power. Limit driving to moving the vehicle to a safe location or a short distance to a repair shop, and avoid highway speeds or heavy loads.



Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with transmission module capability and live data
- Digital multimeter for circuit and solenoid resistance testing
- Transmission fluid pressure gauge set
- Socket and wrench set for pan and valve body removal
- Transmission jack or support stand for safe access
- Factory service information for solenoid and valve body specifications

Reading P07A9

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
0	Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
7	Transmission.
A9	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0700 Transmission Control System Malfunction · **P0730** Incorrect Gear Ratio · **P0741** Torque Converter Clutch Circuit Performance or Stuck Off · **P07A8** Transmission Friction Element D Performance/Stuck Off · **P07AA** Transmission Friction Element E Performance/Stuck Off

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/p07a9/>

