

GENERIC · POWERTRAIN

P088C

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P088C

Reverse Inhibit Control Circuit Low

P088C means the transmission control module (TCM) has detected a low-voltage condition on the reverse inhibit control circuit, which is the electrical path that prevents the transmission from engaging reverse when the vehicle is moving forward. The TCM monitors this circuit and sets the code when the voltage on the control wire falls below the expected threshold, indicating a short to ground, an open circuit, or a faulty component.

SYSTEM	CODE TYPE	SEVERITY	FIX DIFFICULTY	AREA
Powertrain	Generic (all makes)	Medium	Intermediate	Transmission

Symptoms you may notice

- The reverse lights may not illuminate when the gear selector is placed in reverse.
- The transmission may refuse to engage reverse gear, or engagement may be delayed or harsh.
- A warning light on the instrument cluster, often the check engine light or a transmission fault message.
- The vehicle may default to a limp-home mode with limited gear selection.
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, especially if the fault is intermittent.

Common causes, most likely first

- A short to ground in the reverse inhibit control wire, often from chafed insulation or pinched harness.
- A faulty reverse inhibit solenoid or relay coil with low resistance.
- Corroded or loose electrical connectors at the transmission or TCM.
- A failed transmission control module (TCM) driver circuit.
- An open circuit in the power supply or ground path for the reverse inhibit circuit.
- Water intrusion into the transmission connector or TCM housing.



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules for stored codes and freeze-frame data to confirm P088C is current and not history.
- 2 Inspect the reverse inhibit circuit wiring and connectors for damage, corrosion, or loose pins.
- 3 Measure resistance and voltage on the control circuit at the solenoid and compare to manufacturer specifications.
- 4 Test the reverse inhibit solenoid or relay for correct resistance and function.
- 5 Check the TCM ground and power feeds, and perform a wiggle test on the harness while monitoring live data.
- 6 If the circuit and solenoid test good, follow the manufacturer's diagnostic flow for TCM internal fault confirmation.
- 7 Repair or replace the faulty wiring, solenoid, or TCM as indicated, then clear codes and verify reverse operation.

Reverse Inhibit Circuit Misdiagnosis Traps

- A low voltage code on the reverse inhibit circuit is frequently caused by a short to ground in the harness where it rubs against the transmission case or a bracket, not by a failed solenoid.
- Technicians often replace the TCM when the real fault is a corroded connector pin that creates resistance only when the harness is warm or wet.
- The reverse inhibit control circuit may share a ground with other transmission solenoids, so a single bad ground can set multiple codes including P088C.
- An aftermarket remote start or alarm system improperly tied into the reverse circuit can back-feed voltage and trigger this code intermittently.
- The code can set without any drivability complaint because the reverse inhibit function is only active during certain speed and gear conditions.

Can I keep driving with P088C?

You can usually drive the vehicle forward, but reverse may not engage or may be unreliable, so avoid situations that require reversing until the fault is repaired. If the transmission enters limp mode, limit driving to a safe route to a repair shop.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and bidirectional control
- Digital multimeter
- Wiring diagram and connector pinout for the specific vehicle
- Test light or fused jumper wire
- Socket set and trim removal tools



Reading P088C

- P** Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
- 0** Generic (SAE) code: it means the same thing on every OBD-II vehicle.
- 8** Transmission.
- 8C** The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P0705 Transmission Range Sensor Circuit Malfunction · **P0706** Transmission Range Sensor Circuit Range/Performance · **P0750** Shift Solenoid 'A' · **P088D** Reverse Inhibit Control Circuit High · **P088E** Planetary Gear Set Failure

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How a Wideband Air-Fuel Sensor Works](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/p088c/>

