

VOLKSWAGEN · POWERTRAIN

P1204

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P1204 · Volkswagen

Cylinder 4 Fuel Injector Circuit Electrical Malfunction

P1204 on a Volkswagen means the engine control module (ECM) has detected an electrical fault in the circuit that operates the fuel injector for cylinder 4. The ECM monitors the injector driver circuit for abnormal current draw or voltage, and this code sets when the expected electrical signature is missing or out of range.

SYSTEM

Powertrain

CODE TYPE

Volkswagen specific

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

Fuel and air metering (injector circuits)

Symptoms you may notice

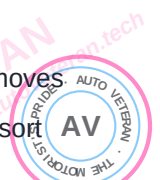
- Often no symptoms besides the warning light, especially if the fault is intermittent
- Rough idle or misfire that is most noticeable at idle and low engine speeds
- Noticeable loss of power and reduced fuel economy
- Engine may stumble or hesitate under acceleration
- In severe cases, the engine may run on three cylinders and shake violently
- A strong raw fuel smell may be present if the injector is stuck open

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Failed fuel injector for cylinder 4 (open or shorted internal coil)
- 2 Damaged or corroded electrical connector at the cylinder 4 injector
- 3 Broken, chafed, or shorted wire in the injector harness near the cylinder head
- 4 Faulty engine control module (ECM) injector driver for cylinder 4
- 5 Poor ground connection for the injector circuit
- 6 Aftermarket or damaged injector with incorrect resistance

How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules and record freeze-frame data to confirm the fault is current and not history
- 2 Inspect the cylinder 4 injector connector and harness for corrosion, chafing, or loose pins
- 3 Measure the resistance of the cylinder 4 injector and compare it to the other injectors
- 4 Check for battery voltage at the injector connector with the key on and engine off
- 5 Perform a continuity and short-to-ground test on the injector control wire from the ECM
- 6 Swap the cylinder 4 injector with a known-good injector from another cylinder and see if the code moves
- 7 If the circuit and injector test good, diagnose the ECM driver circuit or replace the ECM as a last resort



What the P1204 code does not always mean

- A P1204 does not automatically mean the injector itself has failed; a chafed wire in the harness near the cylinder head is a very common cause that is often missed.
- Volkswagen injector circuits are often batch-fired or sequential, and a fault in the shared power or ground circuit can set this code even when the cylinder 4 injector is fine.
- An intermittent connector fault can set P1204 only when the engine is hot or vibrating, so a cold static test may pass and mislead you.
- After replacing an injector, the ECM may need adaptation or the code may remain stored until several drive cycles complete.
- A stuck-open injector can hydrolock the cylinder and cause catastrophic engine damage, so raw fuel smell with this code demands immediate attention.

Can I keep driving with P1204?

It is not safe to continue driving with an active P1204 because a misfiring or stuck-open injector can damage the catalytic converter and, in worst cases, the engine. If the engine is running rough or you smell raw fuel, stop driving and have the vehicle towed to a repair shop.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and freeze-frame capability
- Digital multimeter with resistance and voltage scales
- Test light or noid light for injector pulse testing
- Factory wiring diagram for the Volkswagen model
- Basic hand tools for connector and injector access

Reading P1204

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|-----------|---|
| P | Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions. |
| 1 | Manufacturer-specific code (Volkswagen): its meaning depends on the make. |
| 2 | Fuel and air metering (injector circuits). |
| 04 | The exact fault within that area. |



Often seen with

P1203 Cylinder 3 Fuel Injector Circuit Electrical Malfunction · **P1201** Cylinder 1 Fuel Injector Circuit Electrical Malfunction · **P1202** Cylinder 2 Fuel Injector Circuit Electrical Malfunction · **P1203** Cylinder 3 Misfire · **P1201** Cylinder 1 Misfire · **P1202** Cylinder 2 Misfire · **P1203** Cylinder 3 Injector Circuit Open/Shorted · **P1201** Cylinder 1 Injector Circuit Open/Shorted · **P1202** Cylinder 2 Injector Circuit Open/Shorted · **P1202** Cylinder 2 Misfire · **P1203** Cylinder 3 Misfire · **P1201** Cylinder 1 Misfire · **P1202** Alternative Fuel Gas Mass Sensor Circuit Low Frequency · **P1203** Alternative Fuel Gas Mass Sensor Circuit High Frequency · **P1201** Alternative Fuel Gas Mass Sensor Circuit Range Performance · **P1202** (Alternative Fuel) Gas Mass Sensor Circuit Low Frequency · **P1203** (Alternative Fuel) Gas Mass Sensor Circuit High Frequency · **P1201** (Alternative Fuel) Gas Mass Sensor Circuit Range/Performance · **P0204** Injector Circuit Malfunction - Cylinder 4 · **P0304** Cylinder 4 Misfire Detected

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [Car Won't Start? Step-by-Step No-Start Diagnosis](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/volkswagen-p1204/>

