

VOLKSWAGEN · POWERTRAIN

P1216

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P1216 · Volkswagen

Cylinder 4 Fuel Injector Circuit Short To B+

P1216 on a Volkswagen means the engine control module (ECM) has detected a short to battery voltage on the electrical circuit that powers cylinder 4's fuel injector. The ECM monitors the injector driver circuit and sees voltage present when the injector should be off, indicating a wiring fault or a failed injector rather than a normal open circuit.

SYSTEM

Powertrain

CODE TYPE

Volkswagen
specific

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

Fuel and air
metering (injector
circuits)

Symptoms you may notice

- Illuminated check engine light, often with no other noticeable symptoms
- Rough idle or misfire felt as shaking, especially when the engine is cold
- Reduced engine power or limp mode under acceleration
- Increased fuel consumption due to incorrect fuel delivery
- Possible strong fuel odor from the exhaust if the injector is stuck open
- In rare cases, the engine may crank but not start if the injector driver is disabled

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Faulty cylinder 4 fuel injector with an internal short to its power feed
- 2 Chafed or damaged injector harness wiring shorting to a battery-positive wire
- 3 Corroded or loose electrical connector at the cylinder 4 injector
- 4 Short inside the engine wiring harness where it rubs against the engine block or chassis
- 5 Failed engine control module (ECM) injector driver circuit (less common)
- 6 Aftermarket alarm or remote starter wiring tapped into the injector circuit incorrectly



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules for fault codes and record freeze-frame data to confirm P1216 is current and not history
- 2 Visually inspect the cylinder 4 injector connector and harness for chafing, corrosion, or loose pins
- 3 Measure resistance across the cylinder 4 injector terminals and compare with the other three injectors
- 4 With the key on and engine off, check for battery voltage on the injector control wire with the connector unplugged; voltage indicates a short to B+
- 5 Disconnect the ECM connector and check for continuity between the injector control wire and battery positive; repair any shorted section of harness
- 6 Swap the cylinder 4 injector with a known-good injector from another cylinder and see if the code moves
- 7 If wiring and injector test good, test the ECM driver circuit or substitute a known-good ECM to confirm internal failure

Why a short to B+ is not always the injector

- A short to battery voltage on an injector circuit often originates in the harness where it passes near the exhaust manifold or sharp metal edges, not inside the injector itself.
- Many technicians replace the injector first and find the code returns because the real fault is a rubbed-through wire hidden inside the loom.
- P1216 can be set intermittently by water intrusion into the injector connector after engine washing or heavy rain, leaving no permanent damage.
- A failed ECM driver is rare but possible; always rule out wiring and injector resistance before condemning the module.
- This code does not always mean the injector is stuck open; a short to B+ can hold the injector off entirely, causing a dead cylinder rather than a rich condition.

Can I keep driving with P1216?

You can drive short distances to a repair shop, but avoid heavy acceleration and long trips because a misfiring cylinder can overheat the catalytic converter and waste fuel. If the engine runs very rough or smells strongly of fuel, stop driving and have the vehicle towed.

Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with manufacturer-specific code reading capability
- Digital multimeter with back-probing pins
- Wiring diagram for the Volkswagen engine management system
- Injector connector release tool or small pick
- Test light or fused jumper wire for circuit testing



Reading P1216

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

Often seen with

P1215 Cylinder 3 Fuel Injector Circuit Short To B+ · **P1217** Cylinder 5 Fuel Injector Circuit Short To B+ · **P1217** Engine Over Temperature Overheat · **P1215** Fuel Injector 3 Circuit High Voltage · **P1215** Ground Fault Detection Indicated · **P1217** Fuel Solenoid Response Time Too Long · **P1215** Pedal Position Sensor C Circuit Low Input · **P1217** Pedal Position Sensor C Circuit Intermittent · **P1215** Ground Fault Detection Indicated · **P1217** Fuel Solenoid Response Time Too Long · **P0204** Injector Circuit Malfunction - Cylinder 4 · **P0261** Cylinder 1 Injector Circuit Low · **P0304** Cylinder 4 Misfire Detected

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [V6 Engine Explained: 60° Bank and Firing Order](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/volkswagen-p1216/>

