

VOLKSWAGEN · POWERTRAIN

P1323

OBD-II DIAGNOSTIC TROUBLE CODE (DTC)

P1323 · Volkswagen

Knock Sensor 4 Circuit Low Input

P1323 on Volkswagen vehicles means the engine control module has detected a low voltage signal on the circuit for knock sensor 4, which is typically the sensor monitoring the cylinder bank or specific cylinders furthest from the front of the engine. The computer expects the sensor to return a small resting voltage and to generate its own voltage spikes when it detects knock, so a signal that stays below the expected threshold tells the module that the sensor circuit is shorted to ground, open, or the sensor itself has failed.

SYSTEM

Powertrain

CODE TYPE

**Volkswagen
specific**

SEVERITY

Medium

FIX DIFFICULTY

Intermediate

AREA

**Ignition system
and misfire**

Symptoms you may notice

- Illuminated check engine light, often with no other symptoms besides the warning light
- Reduced engine power or limp mode because the engine control module retards ignition timing to protect the engine
- Noticeable loss of fuel economy as the module runs a conservative timing strategy
- Rough running or hesitation under acceleration if timing is pulled aggressively
- In rare cases, audible engine knock or pinging if the module cannot reliably detect knock and defaults to a safe but suboptimal map
- Intermittent warning light that comes and goes with engine vibration or temperature changes

Common causes, most likely first

- 1 Failed knock sensor 4, often due to internal damage or a cracked sensor body from heat and vibration
- 2 Damaged or corroded wiring harness connector at knock sensor 4, including pushed-back pins or water intrusion
- 3 Open or shorted knock sensor signal wire between sensor 4 and the engine control module, often from chafing or rodent damage
- 4 Poor sensor mounting, such as a loose bolt or debris trapped between the sensor and the engine block, which prevents proper signal generation
- 5 Faulty engine control module, though this is rare and should only be suspected after all circuit and sensor checks pass
- 6 Engine mechanical noise or excessive vibration from a failing component that mimics or masks the knock signal, leading the module to set a low-input fault



How to diagnose and fix it

- 1 Scan all modules for stored and pending codes, then inspect live knock sensor data for sensor 4 to confirm the signal is flat or below the expected resting voltage
- 2 Visually inspect knock sensor 4 and its connector for corrosion, loose mounting, cracked housing, or damaged wiring, and repair any obvious faults
- 3 Measure resistance across knock sensor 4 and compare it to the manufacturer's specification, replacing the sensor if it is out of range or internally shorted
- 4 Check the signal wire from sensor 4 to the engine control module for continuity to ground and for shorts to ground or power, repairing the harness as needed
- 5 Verify the sensor mounting surface is clean and the bolt is tightened to the correct torque, since a loose sensor cannot generate a reliable signal
- 6 Clear the fault codes and perform a road test with live data to confirm the knock sensor 4 signal returns to normal and the code does not reset
- 7 If all circuit and sensor checks pass and the code persists, follow the manufacturer's diagnostic flow for engine control module internal fault before replacing the module

What a low knock signal really means

- A low input code does not always mean the sensor is dead; a poor ground connection at the sensor mounting bolt or a corroded connector pin can pull the signal voltage down and set the same fault.
- Technicians often replace the knock sensor without checking the harness, but chafed wiring near the intake manifold or cylinder head is a common cause on higher-mileage Volkswagen engines.
- Knock sensor 4 may be located on a specific cylinder bank or at the rear of the engine where heat and oil leaks degrade the connector, so always confirm the exact sensor location for the engine code before testing.
- Excessive mechanical noise from a failing timing chain tensioner or worn accessory drive can create vibration that confuses the knock detection strategy and sets a low-input code even when the sensor circuit is healthy.
- After any repair, the engine control module may need a drive cycle with several knock events before it will pass the monitor and turn off the light, so a code that returns immediately after clearing points to a circuit fault rather than a sensor that simply needs relearning.

Can I keep driving with P1323?

You can usually drive the vehicle to a workshop, but avoid hard acceleration and heavy loads because the engine control module is running reduced timing and may not protect the engine properly if knock occurs. If the check engine light is flashing or the engine is running very poorly, stop driving and have the vehicle towed.



Tools that help

- OBD-II scan tool with live data and manufacturer-specific code reading capability
- Digital multimeter for resistance and voltage checks
- Wiring diagram for the specific Volkswagen engine and model year
- Torque wrench for correct knock sensor installation
- Socket set and extensions to access the knock sensor
- Contact cleaner and dielectric grease for connector repair

Reading P1323

P	Powertrain: engine, transmission and emissions.
1	Manufacturer-specific code (Volkswagen): its meaning depends on the make.
3	Ignition system and misfire.
23	The exact fault within that area.

Often seen with

P1322 Knock Sensor 3 Circuit High Input · **P1324** Knock Sensor 4 Circuit High Input · **P1324** Knock Sensor Power Source Circuit Low Voltage · **P1324** Knock Sensor Power Source Circuit Low Voltage · **P1322** EI System Or Ignition Control Missing · **P1324** Crank RPM Too Low · **P1322** EI System Or Ignition Control Missing · **P1324** Crank RPM Too Low · **P0325** Knock Sensor 1 Circuit Malfunction (Bank 1) · **P0327** Knock Sensor 1 Circuit Low Input (Bank 1) · **P0332** Knock Sensor 2 Circuit Low

See it working

Watch the animated explainer [How the EVAP System Works: Fuel Vapour and Leak Test](#) on Auto Veteran to see the parts involved moving.

Full guide, related articles and animations: <https://www.autoveteran.tech/dtc-codes/volkswagen-p1323/>

