

## OBD II & EOBD TROUBLE CODE CONSTRUCTION

Diagnostic Trouble Codes (DTCs) are codes that identify a particular problem area and are intended as a guide to the proper service procedure described in the vehicle's service manual. **Do not** replace parts or components based only on DTCs without first consulting the vehicle's service manual for proper testing procedures for that particular system, circuit or component.

1. Diagnostic trouble codes are alphanumeric codes that are used to identify a problem that is present on any of the systems that are monitored by the on-board computer (PCM).
2. Each trouble code is assigned a message that explains the circuit, component or system area where the problem was detected.
3. OBD II diagnostic trouble codes are composed of five characters; one letter followed by four digits ([see example below](#)):

- The 1st character is a **letter** - it identifies the "main system" where the fault originated (Body, Chassis, Powertrain, or Network).  
The 2nd character is a **numeric digit** - it identifies the "type" of code (Generic or Manufacturer Specific).

### NOTES:

*Generic diagnostic trouble codes are codes that have been standardized to be used by all vehicle manufacturers. The Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) sets the standards for generic trouble codes, as well as their definitions. Manufacturer Specific diagnostic trouble codes are codes that are controlled by the vehicle manufacturer.*

*The Federal Government **does not** require manufacturer specific codes in order to comply with the new OBD II emission standards, but manufacturers are free to expand beyond the **required** computer on-board diagnostics to make their systems easier to diagnose.*

- The 3rd character is a **numeric digit** - it identifies the specific system or sub-system where the problem is located.
- The 4th and 5th characters are **numeric digits** - they identify what section of the system is malfunctioning.



