



Automotive Terms Glossary

(Glossary of Acronyms)

AFR: Air/Fuel Ratio. Also Air/Fuel Ratio sensor.

AFS: Air/Fuel Ratio Sensor. Also spelled "A/FS".

CEL: Check Engine Light. The engine trouble light, that lights up on your dash when the ECU detects an error condition. See DTC.

COP: Coil On Plug. A type of ignition system that doesn't require spark plug wires, and has a coil mounted directly to each spark plug.

CTS: Coolant Temperature Sensor.

DIS: Distributorless Ignition Systems. Systems that utilize electronics instead of a distributor to calculate spark timing.

DTC: Diagnostic Trouble Code. The code number that the ECU gives you to help diagnose an error condition. For 1996 and newer vehicles, these can be read by standard OBD-II readers. Older vehicles may have a system for initiating a blink code, whereby the error numbers are read by the number of blinks of the Check Engine Light.

ECM: Engine Control Module. Also Electronic Control Module. See ECU.

ECT: Engine Coolant Temperature sensor. Also called CTS (Coolant Temperature Sensor).

ECU: Engine Control Unit. The vehicle's computer. Is often called by other names, but ECU seems to be the most common. See ECM, PCM and others.

EFI: Electronic Fuel Injection.

EFIE: Electronic Fuel Injection Enhancer. A device used to modify the signal from an oxygen sensor so that the ECU will lean the fuel mixture.

EOP: Engine Oil Pressure sensor.

HEGO: Heated Exhaust Gas Oxygen sensor. Another name for an oxygen sensor.

IAT: Intake Air Temperature sensor.

MAF: Mass Air Flow sensor. Measures the amount of air flowing into the engine.

MAP: Manifold Absolute Pressure sensor. Measures the pressure inside the intake manifold. The ECU compares this to the barometric pressure sensor (outside air pressure) to determine the difference between the pressure in the manifold and the outside air.

MAT: Manifold Air Temperature.

MIL: Malfunction Indicator Light. Same as CEL (Check Engine Light). See above.

O2S: Oxygen Sensor.

OBD-II: On Board Diagnostic system. Prior to 1996 the systems varied by manufacturer. Jan 1, 1996 marked the beginning of a mandated standard for all new vehicles to conform to. This was ODB-II. Now the same reader can plug into any car and read it's information, including engine sensor readings, trouble codes, etc. For more information see this page.

PCM: Powertrain Control Module. The computer. See ECU.

PCV: Positive Crankcase Ventilation. Also PCV valve. See wiki for more information.
Stoichiometric (Stoy'-kee-o-metric) Ratio - Not an acronym, I know. But it comes up a lot and I don't have another good place for it. This is the theoretical perfect combustion ratio of 1 part fuel to 14.7 parts air.

TPS: Throttle Position Sensor.

VCM: Vehicle Control Module. Yet another name for the ECU. Aren't acronyms fun?

VSS: Vehicle Speed Sensor.

WOT: Wide Open Throttle sensor.