**Markdown** is a lightweight markup language for creating formatted text using a plain-text editor. John Gruber created Markdown in 2004 as a markup language that is easy to read in its source code form.[9] Markdown is widely used for blogging and instant messaging, and also used elsewhere in online forums, collaborative software, documentation pages, and readme files.

A **lightweight markup language** (**LML**), also termed a **simple** or **humane markup language**, is a markup language with simple, unobtrusive (unassuming) syntax. It is designed to be easy to write using any generic text editor and easy to read in its raw form. Lightweight markup languages are used in applications where it may be necessary to read the raw document as well as the final rendered output.

A **markup** **language** is a text-encoding system consisting of a set of symbols inserted in a text document to control its structure, formatting, or the relationship between its parts. Markup is often used to control the display of the document or to enrich its content to facilitate automated processing.

A markup language is a set of rules governing what markup information may be included in a document and how it is combined with the content of the document in a way to facilitate use by humans and computer programs. The idea and terminology evolved from the "marking up" of paper manuscripts (i.e., the revision instructions by editors), which is traditionally written with a red pen or blue pencil on authors' manuscripts.

Older markup languages, which typically focus on typography and presentation, include Troff, TeX, and LaTeX. Scribe and most modern markup languages, such as XML, identify document components (for example headings, paragraphs, and tables), with the expectation that technology, such as stylesheets, will be used to apply formatting or other processing.

In communications and information processing, **coding** is a system of rules to convert information—such as a letter, word, sound, image, or gesture—into another form, sometimes shortened or secret, for communication through a communication channel or storage in a storage medium. An early example is an invention of language, which enabled a person, through speech, to communicate what they thought, saw, heard, or felt to others. But speech limits the range of communication to the distance a voice can carry and limits the audience to those present when the speech is uttered. The invention of writing, which converted spoken language into visual symbols, extended the range of communication across space and time.

The process of **encoding** converts information from a source into symbols for communication or storage. **Decoding** is the reverse process, converting code symbols back into a form that the recipient understands, such as English or/and Spanish.

One reason for coding is to enable communication in places where ordinary plain language, spoken or written, is difficult or impossible. For example, semaphore, where the configuration of flags held by a signaler or the arms of a semaphore tower encodes parts of the message, typically individual letters, and numbers. Another person standing a great distance away can interpret the flags and reproduce the words sent.