

COBOL Programs Name Concepts

Absolutely! COBOL program naming conventions can vary by company or system, but there are many **common patterns** used across IT departments, especially in mainframe environments. Here's a practical guide to what you'll typically see:

1. General Structure

Most IT shops use a fixed-length or predictable format for COBOL program names, often **7 or 8 characters** (to fit legacy system constraints, like mainframe PDS member names).

Typical format:

tttsssss or XXXNNNNN

- ttt or XXX — **Type or application code**
 - sssss or NNNNN — **Sequence or function code**
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2. Prefixes by Type

- PRO – Production programs
 - DEV – Development programs
 - TST – Test programs
 - UTL – Utility programs
 - BAT – Batch programs
 - ONL – Online/interactive programs
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3. Application or System Codes

Many organizations start the program name with a short **application identifier**, e.g.:

- PAY – Payroll
- INV – Inventory
- HRP – Human Resources Payroll

- GL – General Ledger
 - ORD – Order Processing
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4. Function Suffixes

The rest of the name describes the **function** or a unique ID. This could be:

- Numbers: PAYR001 (Payroll Report 1)
 - Mnemonics: ORDENTR (Order Entry)
 - Module type: GLUPDT (General Ledger Update)
 - Process type: ARLOAD (Accounts Receivable Load)
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5. Examples

Program Name Meaning

PAYR001	Payroll Report 1
INVUPDT	Inventory Update
ORDENTR	Order Entry
GLLOAD	General Ledger Load
TSTPAY1	Test version of PAY1
UTLCLNUP	Utility Cleanup
DEVORD2	Dev Order Program 2

6. Mainframe & JCL Considerations

- **8 characters max** for PDS member names (hence most COBOL program names are ≤ 8 characters).
- Sometimes, names will match the corresponding **JCL job or PROC** for easier tracking.

7. Other Practices

- **Numeric suffixes** for related programs (ORD001, ORD002...).
- **Underscores** are rarely used due to mainframe constraints.
- Some teams use a **single letter** at the end to denote environments:
 - P = Production
 - T = Test
 - D = Development
(e.g., PAYR001P)

8. Documentation & Standards

Most organizations have an **internal document** listing required program naming standards. If you're joining a team, always check for their specific guidelines.

Summary Table

Segment	Example	Purpose
Type/App code	PAY, ORD, TST	Application/Type
Function/Seq	R001, UPDT, ENTR	Functionality/Seq
Suffix (opt.)	P, T, D	Environment (Prod/Test/Dev)

Quick Reference

- 8 characters or less
- Start with system/app/type code
- Use meaningful mnemonics or numbers for function
- No special characters (spaces, underscores, etc.)
- Keep it consistent!