A Short History of Object-Oriented Programming

object-oriented programming, use of predefined programming modular units (objects, classes, subclasses, and so forth) in order to make programming faster and easier to maintain. Object-oriented languages help to manage complexity in large programs. Objects package data and the operations on them so that only the operations are publicly accessible and internal details of the data structures are hidden. This information hiding made large-scale programming easier by allowing a programmer to think about each part of the program in isolation. In addition, objects may be derived from more general ones, "inheriting" their capabilities. Such an object hierarchy made it possible to define specialized objects without repeating all that is in the more general ones.

Object-oriented programming began with the Simula language (1967), which added information hiding to ALGOL. Another influential object-oriented language was Smalltalk (1980), in which a program was a set of objects that interacted by sending messages to one another. Since the 1990s, Java has been one of the most successful object-oriented languages.