

In the 1880s, Herman Hollerith invented the concept of storing data in machine-readable form. It is usually easier to code in "high-level" languages than in "low-level" ones. There exist a lot of different approaches for each of those tasks. Some languages are very popular for particular kinds of applications, while some languages are regularly used to write many different kinds of applications. New languages are generally designed around the syntax of a prior language with new functionality added, (for example C++ adds object-orientation to C, and Java adds memory management and bytecode to C++, but as a result, loses efficiency and the ability for low-level manipulation).

Programming languages are essential for software development. Implementation techniques include imperative languages (object-oriented or procedural), functional languages, and logic languages. However, Charles Babbage had already written his first program for the Analytical Engine in 1837. A study found that a few simple readability transformations made code shorter and drastically reduced the time to understand it. High-level languages made the process of developing a program simpler and more understandable, and less bound to the underlying hardware. Allen Downey, in his book *How To Think Like A Computer Scientist*, writes: Many computer languages provide a mechanism to call functions provided by shared libraries. Some languages are more prone to some kinds of faults because their specification does not require compilers to perform as much checking as other languages. In 1801, the Jacquard loom could produce entirely different weaves by changing the "program" – a series of pasteboard cards with holes punched in them. Some of these factors include: The presentation aspects of this (such as indents, line breaks, color highlighting, and so on) are often handled by the source code editor, but the content aspects reflect the programmer's talent and skills. Integrated development environments (IDEs) aim to integrate all such help. The choice of language used is subject to many considerations, such as company policy, suitability to task, availability of third-party packages, or individual preference. Languages form an approximate spectrum from "low-level" to "high-level"; "low-level" languages are typically more machine-oriented and faster to execute, whereas "high-level" languages are more abstract and easier to use but execute less quickly. Use of a static code analysis tool can help detect some possible problems. Programming languages are essential for software development. Trade-offs from this ideal involve finding enough programmers who know the language to build a team, the availability of compilers for that language, and the efficiency with which programs written in a given language execute. Methods of measuring programming language popularity include: counting the number of job advertisements that mention the language, the number of books sold and courses teaching the language (this overestimates the importance of newer languages), and estimates of the number of existing lines of code written in the language (this underestimates the number of users of business languages such as COBOL). Many applications use a mix of several languages in their construction and use. FORTRAN, the first widely used high-level language to have a functional implementation, came out in 1957, and many other languages were soon developed—in particular, COBOL aimed at commercial data processing, and Lisp for computer research. The first step in most formal software development processes is requirements analysis, followed by testing to determine value modeling, implementation, and failure elimination (debugging). Assembly languages were soon developed that let the programmer specify instruction in a text format (e.g., ADD X, TOTAL), with abbreviations for each operation code and meaningful names for specifying addresses.