

In 1206, the Arab engineer Al-Jazari invented a programmable drum machine where a musical mechanical automaton could be made to play different rhythms and drum patterns, via pegs and cams. Later a control panel (plug board) added to his 1906 Type I Tabulator allowed it to be programmed for different jobs, and by the late 1940s, unit record equipment such as the IBM 602 and IBM 604, were programmed by control panels in a similar way, as were the first electronic computers. However, with the concept of the stored-program computer introduced in 1949, both programs and data were stored and manipulated in the same way in computer memory. The following properties are among the most important: In computer programming, readability refers to the ease with which a human reader can comprehend the purpose, control flow, and operation of source code. Many factors, having little or nothing to do with the ability of the computer to efficiently compile and execute the code, contribute to readability. After the bug is reproduced, the input of the program may need to be simplified to make it easier to debug. When debugging the problem in a GUI, the programmer can try to skip some user interaction from the original problem description and check if remaining actions are sufficient for bugs to appear. Programmers typically use high-level programming languages that are more easily intelligible to humans than machine code, which is directly executed by the central processing unit. By the late 1960s, data storage devices and computer terminals became inexpensive enough that programs could be created by typing directly into the computers. Their jobs usually involve: Although programming has been presented in the media as a somewhat mathematical subject, some research shows that good programmers have strong skills in natural human languages, and that learning to code is similar to learning a foreign language. Unreadable code often leads to bugs, inefficiencies, and duplicated code. Also, specific user environment and usage history can make it difficult to reproduce the problem. These compiled languages allow the programmer to write programs in terms that are syntactically richer, and more capable of abstracting the code, making it easy to target varying machine instruction sets via compilation declarations and heuristics. 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. Provided the functions in a library follow the appropriate run-time conventions (e.g., method of passing arguments), then these functions may be written in any other language. Auxiliary tasks accompanying and related to programming include analyzing requirements, testing, debugging (investigating and fixing problems), implementation of build systems, and management of derived artifacts, such as programs' machine code. Implementation techniques include imperative languages (object-oriented or procedural), functional languages, and logic languages. One approach popular for requirements analysis is Use Case analysis. Programming languages are essential for software development. This can be a non-trivial task, for example as with parallel processes or some unusual software bugs. For example, COBOL is still strong in corporate data centers often on large mainframe computers, Fortran in engineering applications, scripting languages in Web development, and C in embedded software. It affects the aspects of quality above, including portability, usability and most importantly maintainability. While these are sometimes considered programming, often the term software development is used for this larger overall process – with the terms programming, implementation, and coding reserved for the writing and editing of code per se. When debugging the problem in a GUI, the programmer can try to skip some user interaction from the original problem description and check if remaining actions are sufficient for bugs to appear.