Many factors, having little or nothing to do with the ability of the computer to efficiently compile and execute the code, contribute to readability. However, Charles Babbage had already written his first program for the Analytical Engine in 1837. 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. In the 1880s, Herman Hollerith invented the concept of storing data in machine-readable form. Machine code was the language of early programs, written in the instruction set of the particular machine, often in binary notation. Whatever the approach to development may be, the final program must satisfy some fundamental properties. The first compiler related tool, the A-0 System, was developed in 1952 by Grace Hopper, who also coined the term 'compiler'. Normally the first step in debugging is to attempt to reproduce the problem. 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. Implementation techniques include imperative languages (object-oriented or procedural), functional languages, and logic languages.

Trial-and-error/divide-and-conquer is needed: the programmer will try to remove some parts of the original test case and check if the problem still exists. Many programmers use forms of Agile software development where the various stages of formal software development are more integrated together into short cycles that take a few weeks rather than years. The academic field and the engineering practice of computer programming are both largely concerned with discovering and implementing the most efficient algorithms for a given class of problems. After the bug is reproduced, the input of the program may need to be simplified to make it easier to debug. Text editors were also developed that allowed changes and corrections to be made much more easily than with punched cards. Many programmers use forms of Agile software development where the various stages of formal software development are more integrated together into short cycles that take a few weeks rather than years. Some text editors such as Emacs allow GDB to be invoked through them, to provide a visual environment. He gave the first description of cryptanalysis by frequency analysis, the earliest code-breaking algorithm. He gave the first description of cryptanalysis by frequency analysis, the earliest code-breaking algorithm. 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. Trial-and-error/divide-and-conquer is needed: the programmer will try to remove some parts of the original test case and check if the problem still exists. Sometimes software development is known as software engineering, especially when it employs formal methods or follows an engineering design process. Text editors were also developed that allowed changes and corrections to be made much more easily than with punched cards. In the 9th century, the Arab mathematician Al-Kindi described a cryptographic algorithm for deciphering encrypted code, in A Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages. The first step in most formal software development processes is requirements analysis, followed by testing to determine value modeling, implementation, and failure elimination (debugging).