

In 1801, the Jacquard loom could produce entirely different weaves by changing the "program" – a series of pasteboard cards with holes punched in them. However, because an assembly language is little more than a different notation for a machine language, two machines with different instruction sets also have different assembly languages. Some text editors such as Emacs allow GDB to be invoked through them, to provide a visual environment. Programs were mostly entered using punched cards or paper tape. After the bug is reproduced, the input of the program may need to be simplified to make it easier to debug. Scripting and breakpointing is also part of this process. 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. By the late 1960s, data storage devices and computer terminals became inexpensive enough that programs could be created by typing directly into the computers. 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. 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. Programmable devices have existed for centuries. 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). 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. 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. 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. As early as the 9th century, a programmable music sequencer was invented by the Persian Banu Musa brothers, who described an automated mechanical flute player in the Book of Ingenious Devices. However, readability is more than just programming style. For example, when a bug in a compiler can make it crash when parsing some large source file, a simplification of the test case that results in only few lines from the original source file can be sufficient to reproduce the same crash. 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. Many factors, having little or nothing to do with the ability of the computer to efficiently compile and execute the code, contribute to readability. 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. Programs were mostly entered using punched cards or paper tape. 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. 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).