

It is very difficult to determine what are the most popular modern programming languages. High-level languages made the process of developing a program simpler and more understandable, and less bound to the underlying hardware. 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). Programmable devices have existed for centuries. 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. Compilers harnessed the power of computers to make programming easier by allowing programmers to specify calculations by entering a formula using infix notation. 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. 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. It is very difficult to determine what are the most popular modern programming languages. In the 9th century, the Arab mathematician Al-Kindi described a cryptographic algorithm for deciphering encrypted code, in A Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages. 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. A study found that a few simple readability transformations made code shorter and drastically reduced the time to understand it. 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. The first step in most formal software development processes is requirements analysis, followed by testing to determine value modeling, implementation, and failure elimination (debugging). Many factors, having little or nothing to do with the ability of the computer to efficiently compile and execute the code, contribute to readability. Machine code was the language of early programs, written in the instruction set of the particular machine, often in binary notation. Machine code was the language of early programs, written in the instruction set of the particular machine, often in binary notation. High-level languages made the process of developing a program simpler and more understandable, and less bound to the underlying hardware. 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. Compilers harnessed the power of computers to make programming easier by allowing programmers to specify calculations by entering a formula using infix notation. Debugging is a very important task in the software development process since having defects in a program can have significant consequences for its users. By the late 1960s, data storage devices and computer terminals became inexpensive enough that programs could be created by typing directly into the computers. 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. 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. 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.