

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. 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. 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. 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. Scripting and breakpointing is also part of this process. By the late 1960s, data storage devices and computer terminals became inexpensive enough that programs could be created by typing directly into the computers. 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. Computer programmers are those who write computer software. 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. Proficient programming usually requires expertise in several different subjects, including knowledge of the application domain, details of programming languages and generic code libraries, specialized algorithms, and formal logic. 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). Normally the first step in debugging is to attempt to reproduce the problem. Programs were mostly entered using punched cards or paper tape. Readability is important because programmers spend the majority of their time reading, trying to understand, reusing and modifying existing source code, rather than writing new source code. 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. In the 9th century, the Arab mathematician Al-Kindi described a cryptographic algorithm for deciphering encrypted code, in A Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages. 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. High-level languages made the process of developing a program simpler and more understandable, and less bound to the underlying hardware. Debugging is a very important task in the software development process since having defects in a program can have significant consequences for its users. Proficient programming usually requires expertise in several different subjects, including knowledge of the application domain, details of programming languages and generic code libraries, specialized algorithms, and formal logic. Scripting and breakpointing is also part of this process. Code-breaking algorithms have also existed for centuries. Programming languages are essential for software development. Computer programmers are those who write computer software.