

Many factors, having little or nothing to do with the ability of the computer to efficiently compile and execute the code, contribute to readability. A similar technique used for database design is Entity-Relationship Modeling (ER Modeling). 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. Scripting and breakpointing is also part of this process. Various visual programming languages have also been developed with the intent to resolve readability concerns by adopting non-traditional approaches to code structure and display. 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. Integrated development environments (IDEs) aim to integrate all such help.

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. 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. 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). There are many approaches to the Software development process. 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. 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. 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.

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. 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. Implementation techniques include imperative languages (object-oriented or procedural), functional languages, and logic languages. 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. In 1801, the Jacquard loom could produce entirely different weaves by changing the "program" – a series of pasteboard cards with holes punched in them. Machine code was the language of early programs, written in the instruction set of the particular machine, often in binary notation. 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. Assembly languages were soon developed that let the programmer specify instruction in a text format (e.g., ADD X, TOTAL), with abbreviations for each operation code and meaningful names for specifying addresses. Some languages are very popular for particular kinds of applications, while some languages are regularly used to write many different kinds of applications. Many applications use a mix of several languages in their construction and use.