Many factors, having little or nothing to do with the ability of the computer to efficiently compile and execute the code, contribute to readability..  
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.  
 In the 1880s, Herman Hollerith invented the concept of storing data in machine-readable form.  
 The first computer program is generally dated to 1843, when mathematician Ada Lovelace published an algorithm to calculate a sequence of Bernoulli numbers, intended to be carried out by Charles Babbage's Analytical Engine.  
This can be a non-trivial task, for example as with parallel processes or some unusual software bugs.  
 Programs were mostly entered using punched cards or paper tape.  
A study found that a few simple readability transformations made code shorter and drastically reduced the time to understand it.  
It affects the aspects of quality above, including portability, usability and most importantly maintainability.  
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.  
Scripting and breakpointing is also part of this process.  
For this purpose, algorithms are classified into orders using so-called Big O notation, which expresses resource use, such as execution time or memory consumption, in terms of the size of an input.  
It is usually easier to code in "high-level" languages than in "low-level" ones.  
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.  
Techniques like Code refactoring can enhance readability.