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..  
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.  
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.  
Ideally, the programming language best suited for the task at hand will be selected.  
It involves designing and implementing algorithms, step-by-step specifications of procedures, by writing code in one or more programming languages.  
Trade-offs from this ideal involve finding enough programmers who know the language to build a team, the availability of compilers for that language, and the efficiency with which programs written in a given language execute.  
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.  
 Popular modeling techniques include Object-Oriented Analysis and Design (OOAD) and Model-Driven Architecture (MDA).  
It is usually easier to code in "high-level" languages than in "low-level" ones.  
Sometimes software development is known as software engineering, especially when it employs formal methods or follows an engineering design process.  
 After the bug is reproduced, the input of the program may need to be simplified to make it easier to debug.  
A study found that a few simple readability transformations made code shorter and drastically reduced the time to understand it.  
Compilers harnessed the power of computers to make programming easier by allowing programmers to specify calculations by entering a formula using infix notation.  
There exist a lot of different approaches for each of those tasks.  
They are the building blocks for all software, from the simplest applications to the most sophisticated ones.