Programs were mostly entered using punched cards or paper tape..  
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.  
Compilers harnessed the power of computers to make programming easier by allowing programmers to specify calculations by entering a formula using infix notation.  
In the 9th century, the Arab mathematician Al-Kindi described a cryptographic algorithm for deciphering encrypted code, in A Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages.  
There exist a lot of different approaches for each of those tasks.  
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.  
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.  
 The academic field and the engineering practice of computer programming are both largely concerned with discovering and implementing the most efficient algorithms for a given class of problems.  
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.  
This can be a non-trivial task, for example as with parallel processes or some unusual software bugs.  
  
 Computer programming or coding is the composition of sequences of instructions, called programs, that computers can follow to perform tasks.  
 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.  
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.  
 Code-breaking algorithms have also existed for centuries.  
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.