In 1206, the Arab engineer Al-Jazari invented a programmable drum machine where a musical mechanical automaton could be made to play different rhythms and drum patterns, via pegs and cams.  
The purpose of programming is to find a sequence of instructions that will automate the performance of a task (which can be as complex as an operating system) on a computer, often for solving a given problem.  
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.  
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).  
By the late 1960s, data storage devices and computer terminals became inexpensive enough that programs could be created by typing directly into the computers.  
Programming involves tasks such as analysis, generating algorithms, profiling algorithms' accuracy and resource consumption, and the implementation of algorithms (usually in a particular programming language, commonly referred to as coding).  
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.  
They are the building blocks for all software, from the simplest applications to the most sophisticated ones.  
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.  
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.  
Text editors were also developed that allowed changes and corrections to be made much more easily than with punched cards.  
 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.  
Relatedly, software engineering combines engineering techniques and principles with software development.  
 Debugging is often done with IDEs. Standalone debuggers like GDB are also used, and these often provide less of a visual environment, usually using a command line.  
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.