A study found that a few simple readability transformations made code shorter and drastically reduced the time to understand it.  
For example, COBOL is still strong in corporate data centers often on large mainframe computers, Fortran in engineering applications, scripting languages in Web development, and C in embedded software.  
Integrated development environments (IDEs) aim to integrate all such help.  
In the 9th century, the Arab mathematician Al-Kindi described a cryptographic algorithm for deciphering encrypted code, in A Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages.  
One approach popular for requirements analysis is Use Case analysis.  
A study found that a few simple readability transformations made code shorter and drastically reduced the time to understand it.  
Many programmers use forms of Agile software development where the various stages of formal software development are more integrated together into short cycles that take a few weeks rather than years.  
Integrated development environments (IDEs) aim to integrate all such help.  
Also, those involved with software development may at times engage in reverse engineering, which is the practice of seeking to understand an existing program so as to re-implement its function in some way.  
Compilers harnessed the power of computers to make programming easier by allowing programmers to specify calculations by entering a formula using infix notation.  
Text editors were also developed that allowed changes and corrections to be made much more easily than with punched cards.  
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Compiling takes the source code from a low-level programming language and converts it into machine code.  
  
The first compiler related tool, the A-0 System, was developed in 1952 by Grace Hopper, who also coined the term 'compiler'.  
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.