The source code of a program is written in one or more languages that are intelligible to programmers, rather than machine code, which is directly executed by the central processing unit.  
It is usually easier to code in "high-level" languages than in "low-level" ones.  
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).  
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.  
Integrated development environments (IDEs) aim to integrate all such help.  
Use of a static code analysis tool can help detect some possible problems.  
Ideally, the programming language best suited for the task at hand will be selected.  
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.  
However, with the concept of the stored-program computer introduced in 1949, both programs and data were stored and manipulated in the same way in computer memory.  
Proficient programming thus usually requires expertise in several different subjects, including knowledge of the application domain, specialized algorithms, and formal logic.  
Provided the functions in a library follow the appropriate run-time conventions (e.g., method of passing arguments), then these functions may be written in any other language.  
Later a control panel (plug board) added to his 1906 Type I Tabulator allowed it to be programmed for different jobs, and by the late 1940s, unit record equipment such as the IBM 602 and IBM 604, were programmed by control panels in a similar way, as were the first electronic computers.  
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.  
 Programs were mostly entered using punched cards or paper tape.