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.  
Compiling takes the source code from a low-level programming language and converts it into machine code.  
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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.  
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.  
He gave the first description of cryptanalysis by frequency analysis, the earliest code-breaking algorithm.  
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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).  
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.  
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, Charles Babbage had already written his first program for the Analytical Engine in 1837.  
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In 1801, the Jacquard loom could produce entirely different weaves by changing the "program" – a series of pasteboard cards with holes punched in them.  
Some languages are more prone to some kinds of faults because their specification does not require compilers to perform as much checking as other languages.