

Program Evaluation and Performance Measurement: An Introduction to Practice

What is a Program?

A program is a set of instructions that a computer uses to perform a specific function. To use an analogy, a program is like a computer's recipe. It contains a list of ingredients (called variables, which can represent numeric data, text, or images) and a list of directions (called statements) that tell the computer how to execute a specific task.

Programs are created using specific programming languages such as C++, Python, and Ruby. These are high level programming languages that are human-readable and writable. These languages are then translated into low level machine languages by compilers, interpreters, and assemblers within the computer system. Assembly language is a type of low level language that is one step above a machine language and technically can be written by a human, although it is usually much more cryptic and difficult to understand.

Programs vs. software

Essentially, software consists of numerous programs that work together to create applications and computer systems. Compared to individual programs, software is usually more complex, has a dedicated user interface, and has gone through the compiling, testing, and debugging process before it is complete. When a user purchases software, they are usually buying the final version of a program. This means that the program is already in machine language it has been assembled and is ready to execute.

Reference

[Evaluating Research in Academic Journals: A Practical Guide to Realistic Evaluation, 4th Edition](#)

[Psychology GCSE for Edexcel: Revise and Supplement](#)