

# Larry Wall Quotes

*Computer, Thinking, People, Language, Want, Should, Perl, Writing, Trying,  
Way, Use, World, Technology, Ideas, Running, Easy, Jobs, Design, Problem,  
Giving*

Younger hackers are hard to classify. They're probably just as diverse as the old hackers are. We're all over the map.

~Larry Wall

At many levels, Perl is a 'diagonal' language.

~Larry Wall

Most of you are familiar with the virtues of a programmer. There are three, of course: laziness, impatience, and hubris.

~Larry Wall

Portability should be the default.

~Larry Wall

For me, writing is a love-hate relationship.

~Larry Wall

I think software patents are a bad idea. Many patents are given for trivial inventions.

~Larry Wall

Symmetry is overrated. Overrated is symmetry.

~Larry Wall

The Harvard Law states: Under controlled conditions of light, temperature, humidity, and nutrition, the organism will do as it damn well pleases.

~Larry Wall

Over the long term, symbiosis is more useful than parasitism. More fun, too. Ask any mitochondria.

~Larry Wall

Hubris itself will not let you be an artist.

~Larry Wall

True greatness is measured by how much freedom you give to others, not by how much you can coerce others to do what you want.

~Larry Wall

The problem with using C++ ... is that there's already a strong tendency in the language to require you to know everything before you can do anything.

~Larry Wall

Lisp has all the visual appeal of oatmeal with fingernail clippings mixed in.

~Larry Wall

When I announced the development of Perl 6, I said it was going to be a community design. I designed Perl, myself. It's limited by my own brain power. So I wanted Perl 6 to be a community design.

~Larry Wall

Easy things should be easy, and hard things should be possible.

~Larry Wall

What is the sound of Perl? Is it not the sound of a wall that people have stopped banging their heads against?

~Larry Wall

I think the way IBM has embraced the open source philosophy has been quite astonishing, but gratifying. I hope they'll do very well with it.

~Larry Wall

Real programmers can write assembly code in any language.

~Larry Wall

I think it's a new feature. Don't tell anyone it was an accident.

~Larry Wall

Laziness is a programmers main virtue.

~Larry Wall

I'm reminded of the day my daughter came in, looked over my shoulder at some Perl 4 code, and said, 'What is that, swearing?'

~Larry Wall

Computer language design is just like a stroll in the park. Jurassic Park, that is.

~Larry Wall

I take time to watch anime. I don't know whether I'm allowed to, but I do it anyway.

~Larry Wall

A journey of a thousand miles continues with the second step.

~Larry Wall

Perl is worse than Python because people wanted it worse.

~Larry Wall

Programmers can be lazy.

~Larry Wall

I note that the Python folks still think they like JPython. I wonder how long that will last?

~Larry Wall

And don't tell me there isn't one bit of difference between null and space, because that's exactly how much difference there is.

~Larry Wall

It's easier to make up sayings people like to hear than sayings they like to heed.

~Larry Wall

Take Lisp, you know its the most beautiful language in the world -- at least up until Haskell came along.

~Larry Wall

Some of modern engineering is necessary to good art. But I think of myself is a cultural artist.

~Larry Wall

The world has become a larger place. The universe has been expanding, and Perl's been expanding along with the universe.

~Larry Wall

When in doubt, parenthesize. At the very least it will let some poor schmuck bounce on the % key in vi.

~Larry Wall

Perl was designed to work more like a natural language. It's a little more complicated but there are more shortcuts, and once you learned the language, it's more expressive.

~Larry Wall

We all agree on the necessity of compromise. We just can't agree on when it's necessary to compromise.

~Larry Wall

I still drive my 1977 Honda Accord. The paint is almost all worn off. It's still running.

~Larry Wall

One of the very basic ideas of Post-Modernism is rejection of arbitrary

power structures. Different people are sensitive to different kinds of power structures.

~Larry Wall

Doing linear scans over an associative array is like trying to club someone to death with a loaded Uzi.

~Larry Wall

Think of prototypes as a funny markup language--the interpretation is left up to the rendering engine.

~Larry Wall

This does not mean that some of us should not want, in a rather dispassionate sort of way, to put a bullet through csh's head.

~Larry Wall

Psychotics are consistently inconsistent. The essence of sanity is to be inconsistently inconsistent.

~Larry Wall

Post-Modernism was a reaction against Modernism. It came quite early to music and literature, and a little later to architecture. And I think it's still coming to computer science.

~Larry Wall

People get annoyed when you try to debug them.

~Larry Wall

I want people to use Perl. I want to be a positive ingredient of the world and make my American history. So, whatever it takes to give away my software and get it used, that's great.

~Larry Wall

I wouldn't ever write the full sentence myself, but then, I never use goto

either.

~Larry Wall

Orthogonality for orthogonality's sake is not something I'm keen on.

~Larry Wall

For the sake of argument I'll ignore all your fighting words.

~Larry Wall

Somebody out there is going to do something that's far more surprising than anything that I would do. I was surprised by the whole web thing in the first place.

~Larry Wall

Well, coffee is my drug of choice, generally, with a little bit of Pepsi here and there, if I need more sugar. But yeah, if I could do intravenous coffee, I would. But I guess that's pretty standard.

~Larry Wall

I want to see people using Perl to glue things together creatively, not just technically but also socially.

~Larry Wall

It is easier to port a shell than a shell script.

~Larry Wall

I think computer science, by and large, is still stuck in the Modern age.

~Larry Wall

A good messenger expects to get shot.

~Larry Wall

That which hits the fan tends to get flung in all directions.

~Larry Wall

Many days I don't write any code at all, and some days I spend all day writing code.

~Larry Wall

The young think they are immortal, and are determined to prove otherwise.

~Larry Wall

I think operating systems work best if they're free and open. Particular applications are more likely to be proprietary.

~Larry Wall

I just hope I'm never promoted to the level of my incontinence.

~Larry Wall

If you and I always agree, then one of us is redundant.

~Larry Wall

Odd that we think definitions are definitive.

~Larry Wall

Obviously I was either onto something, or on something.

~Larry Wall

Don't wear rollerskates to a tug-of-war.

~Larry Wall

The problem with being consistent is that there are lots of ways to be consistent, and they're all inconsistent with each other.

~Larry Wall

We can debug relationships, but it's always good policy to consider the people themselves to be features. People get annoyed when you try to debug them.

~Larry Wall

Perl doesn't have an infatuation with enforced privacy. It would prefer that you stayed out of its living room because you weren't invited, not because it has a shotgun

~Larry Wall

The purpose of most computer languages is to lengthen your resume by a word and a comma.

~Larry Wall

There's often more than one correct thing. There's often more than one right thing. There's often more than one obvious thing.

~Larry Wall

I don't like this official/unofficial distinction. It sound, er, officious.

~Larry Wall

It is my job in life to travel all roads, so that some may take the road less travelled, and others the road more travelled, and all have a pleasant day.

~Larry Wall

As someone pointed out, you could have an attribute that says 'optimize the heck out of this routine', and your definition of heck would be a parameter to the optimizer.

~Larry Wall

When's the last time you used duct tape on a duct?

~Larry Wall

We're really serious about reinventing everything that needs reinventing.

~Larry Wall

The potential of greater good goes right along with the potential for greater evil.

~Larry Wall

Historically speaking, the presence of wheels in Unix has never precluded their reinvention.

~Larry Wall

"Lurking" is one metaphor that the Omniscience has allowed us to borrow.

~Larry Wall

If you're a large corporation, you can afford to pay the money to register patents, but if you're an individual like me, you can't.

~Larry Wall

To ordinary folks, conversion is not always automatic. It's something that may or may not require explicit assistance. See Billy Graham.

~Larry Wall

Wow, I'm being shot at from both sides. That means I *\*must\** be right.

~Larry Wall

Even the White House has a press agent.

~Larry Wall

I suppose you could switch grammars once you've seen 'use strict subs'.

~Larry Wall

Well, hey, let's just make everything into a closure, and then we'll have our general garbage collector, installed by 'use less memory'.

~Larry Wall

Reserve your abuse for your true friends.

~Larry Wall

The computer should be doing the hard work. That's what it's paid to do, after all.

~Larry Wall

It's hard to tune heavily tuned code.

~Larry Wall

Well, you know, Hubbard had a bunch of people sworn to commit suicide when he died. So of course he never officially died.

~Larry Wall

Perhaps you should compile your Perl with long doubles one of these megaseconds.

~Larry Wall

Though I'll admit readability suffers slightly.

~Larry Wall

If any ideology is so serious that you can't have fun while you're doing it, it's probably too serious.

~Larry Wall

Computer languages differ not so much in what they make possible, but in what they make easy.

~Larry Wall

Well, I think Perl should run faster than C.

~Larry Wall

I'm never satisfied because I've been always interested in too many things and I always want to do everything at once.

~Larry Wall

I'm just paid to do whatever I want to do. Some of the time it's development, and some of the time it's just goofing off.

~Larry Wall

I am not a sort of person who wants to run a company.

~Larry Wall

You can never entirely stop being what you once were. That's why it's important to be the right person today, and not put it off till tomorrow.

~Larry Wall

Not that I have anything much against redundancy. But I said that already.

~Larry Wall

If you want your program to be readable, consider supplying the argument.

~Larry Wall

And I don't like doing silly things (except on purpose).

~Larry Wall

As pointed out in a followup, Real Perl Programmers prefer things to be visually distinct.

~Larry Wall

It's certainly easy to calculate the average attendance for Perl conferences.

~Larry Wall

Perl has a long tradition of working around compilers.

~Larry Wall

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