

Table 2.1 The initial steps to building and running a program

Task	Covered in
Step zero: creating the project directory	Section 2.2
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Step two: writing your first Ant build file	Section 2.4
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2.2 **STEP ZERO: CREATING THE PROJECT DIRECTORY**

Before doing anything else, create an empty directory. Everything will go under here: source files, created output files, and the build file itself. All new Java/Ant projects should start this way.

Our new directory, `firstbuild`, will be the base directory of our first project. We then create some real Java source to compile. In the new directory, we create a file called `Main.java`, containing the following minimal Java program:

```
public class Main {  
  
    public static void main(String args[]) {  
        for(int i=0;i<args.length;i++) {  
            System.out.println(args[i]);  
        }  
    }  
}
```

The fact that this program does nothing but print the argument list is unimportant; it's still Java code that we need to build, package, and execute—work we will delegate to Ant.

2.3 **STEP ONE: VERIFYING THE TOOLS ARE IN PLACE**

Ant is a command-line tool that must be on the path to be used. Appendix A describes how to set up an Ant development system on both Unix and Windows. To compile Java programs, developers also need a properly installed Java Development Kit.

To test that Ant is installed, at a command prompt type

```
ant -version
```

A good response would be something listing a recent version of Ant, version 1.7 or later:

```
Apache Ant version 1.7 compiled on December 13 2006
```