

First steps in Struts using eclipse + MyEclipse

This tutorial will explain first steps using the web framework Apache Struts and the development environment eclipse. We will create a simple example library application.

Generals

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<http://www.laliluna.de/tutorial.html> – Tutorials for Struts, EJB, xdoclet and eclipse.

Date:

November, 2st 2004

Software:

MyEclipse plugin 3.8

(A cheap and quite powerful Extension to Eclipse to develop Web Applications and EJB (J2EE) Applications. I think that there is a test version available at MyEclipse.)

Source code:

http://www.laliluna.de/assets/tutorials/first_steps_with_struts.zip

Using the source code.

The source code does not include any libraries but the sources. Create a web project, add the libraries manually or with the help of MyEclipse and the extract the sources we provided to your project.

The PDF Version of the tutorial.

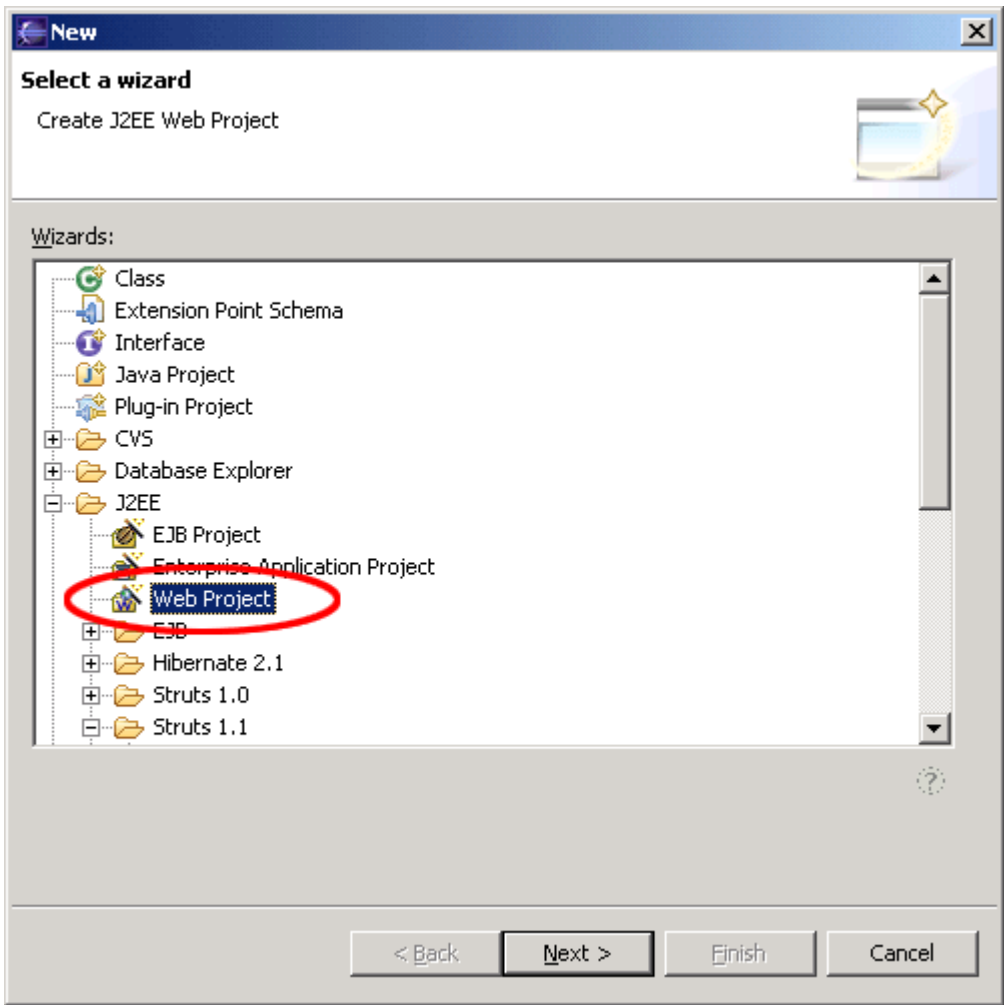
http://www.laliluna.de/assets/tutorials/first_steps_with_struts_en.pdf

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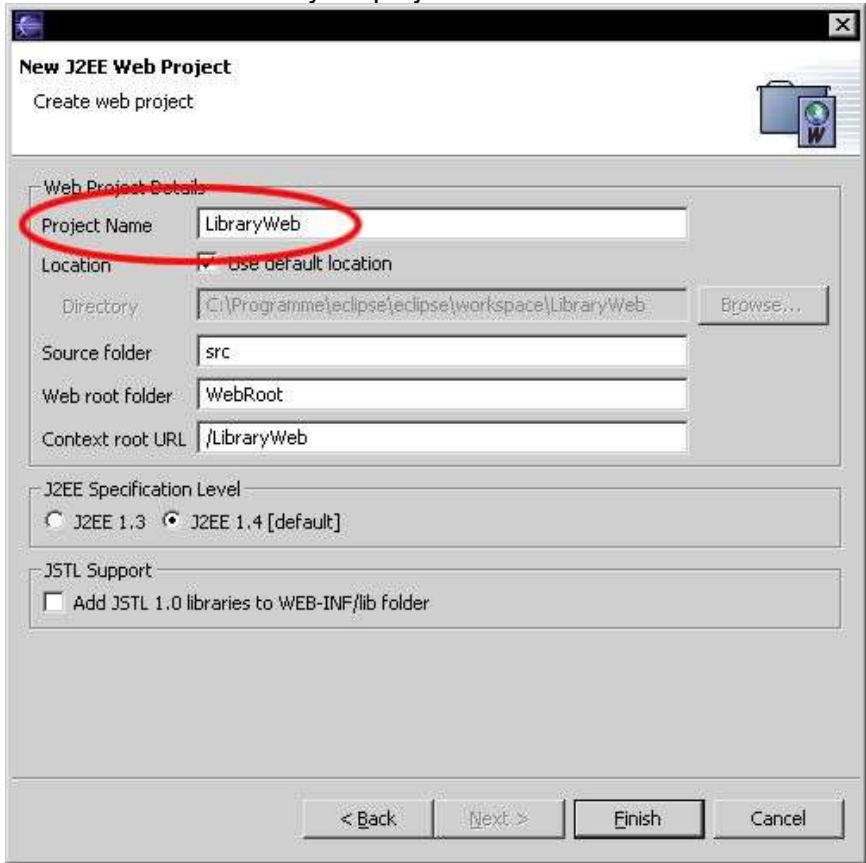
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Create a struts project

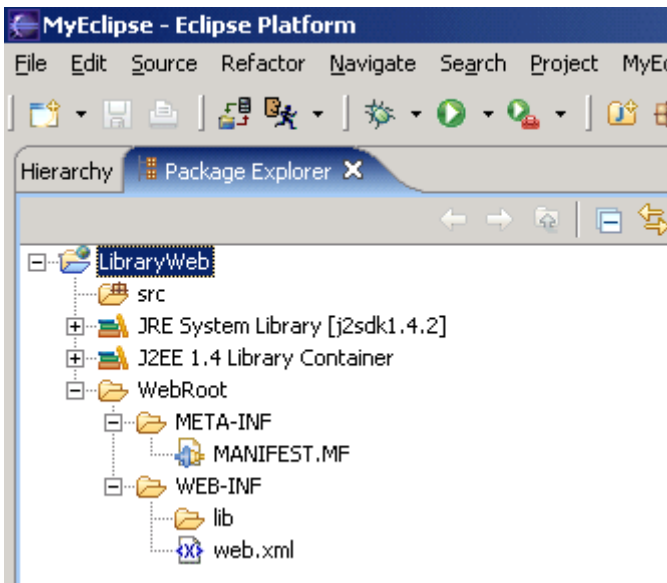
Create a new struts project with `File > New > Project` or use the shortcut `Strg + n`.
Select the Wizard in `J2EE Web Project`



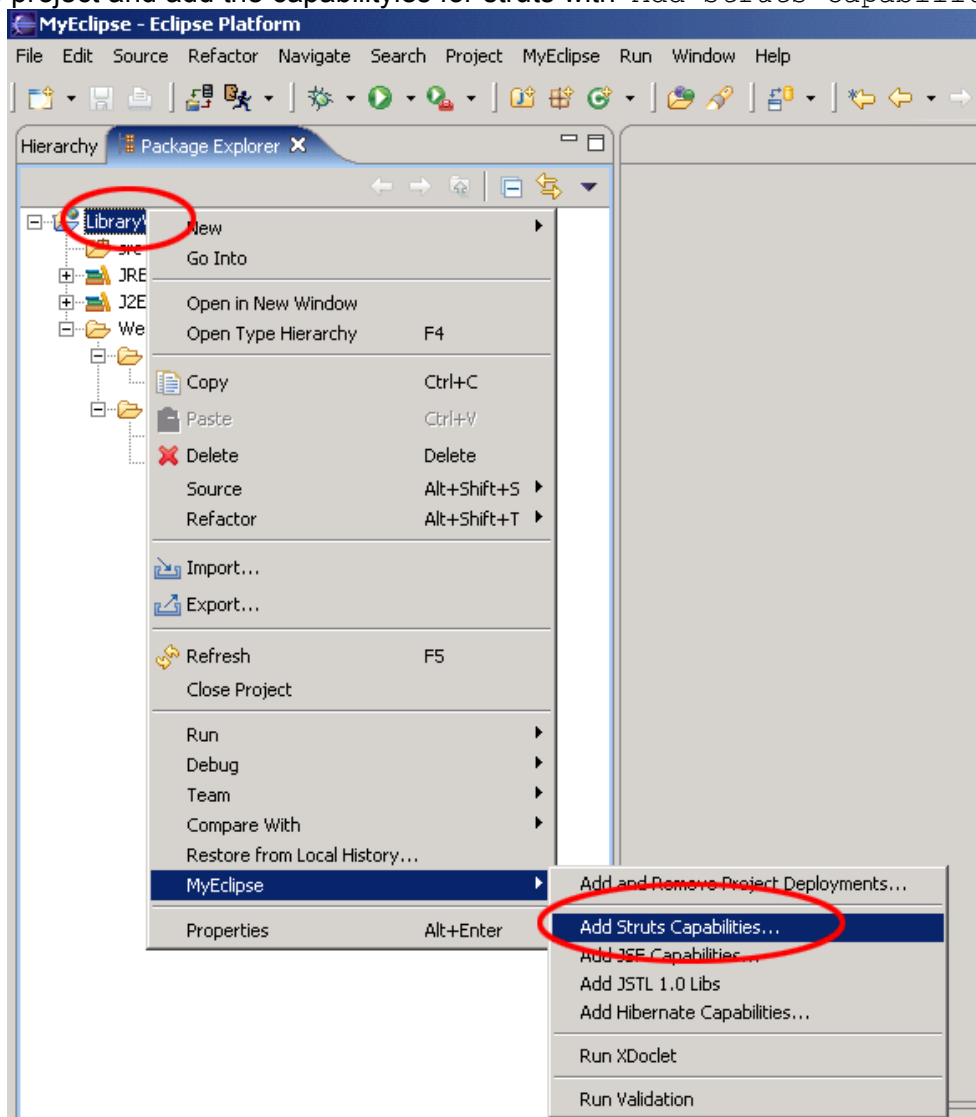
Create a nice name for your project



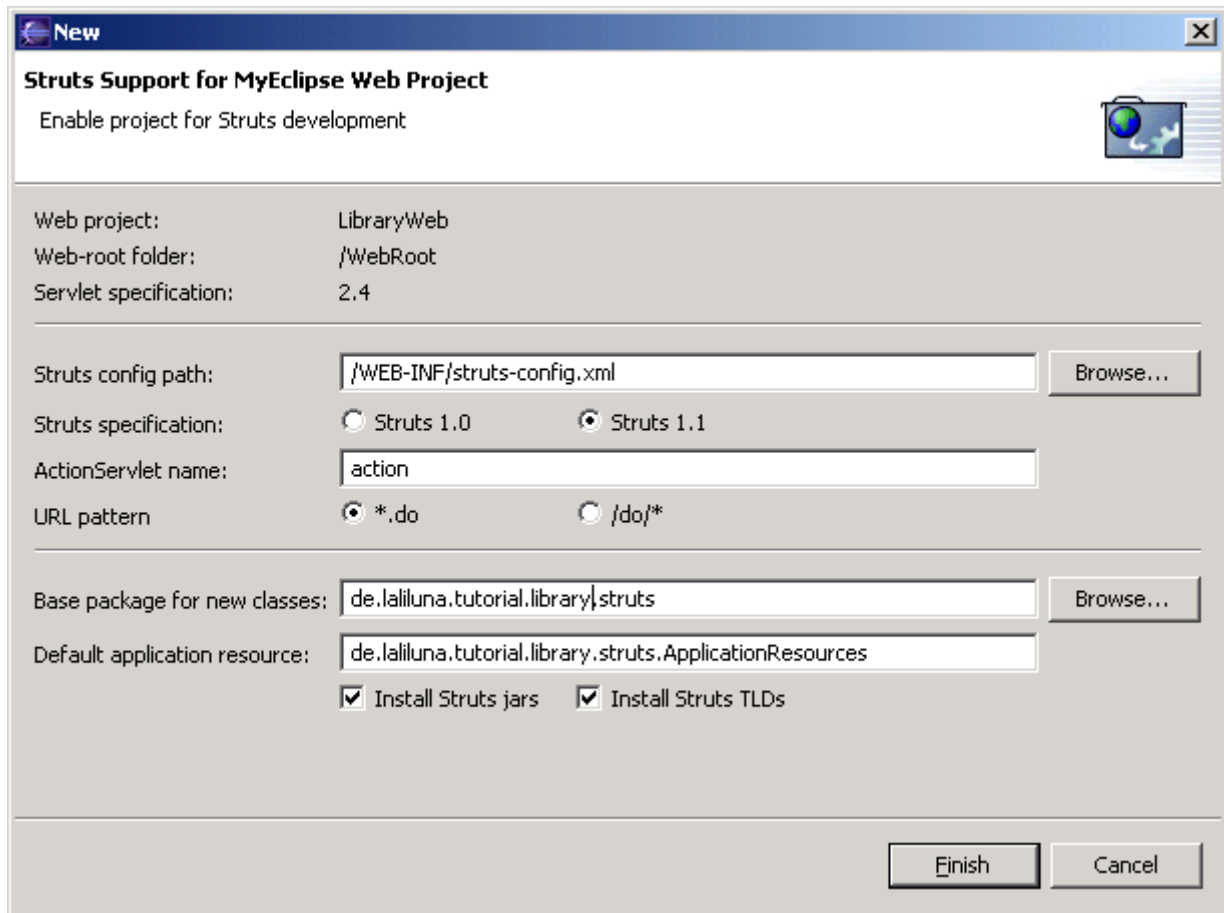
After creating the project, your Package Explorer looks like the picture below.



For now your project is a normal J2EE project, so we need to add the struts capabilities. Right click on the project and add the capabilities for struts with `Add Struts Capabilities`.

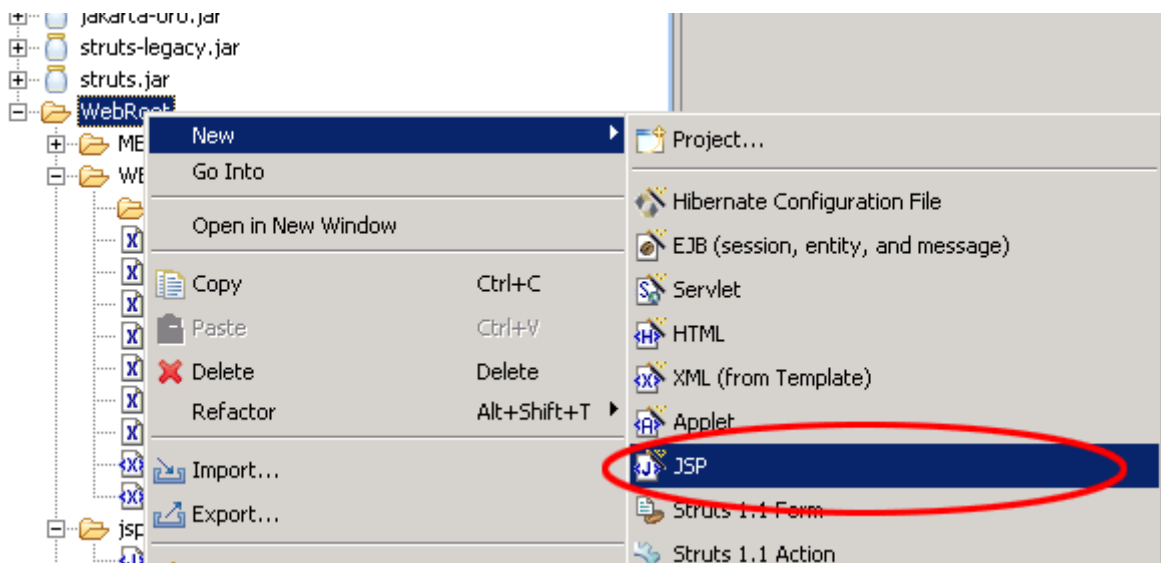


Change the properties Base package for new classes and Default application resource

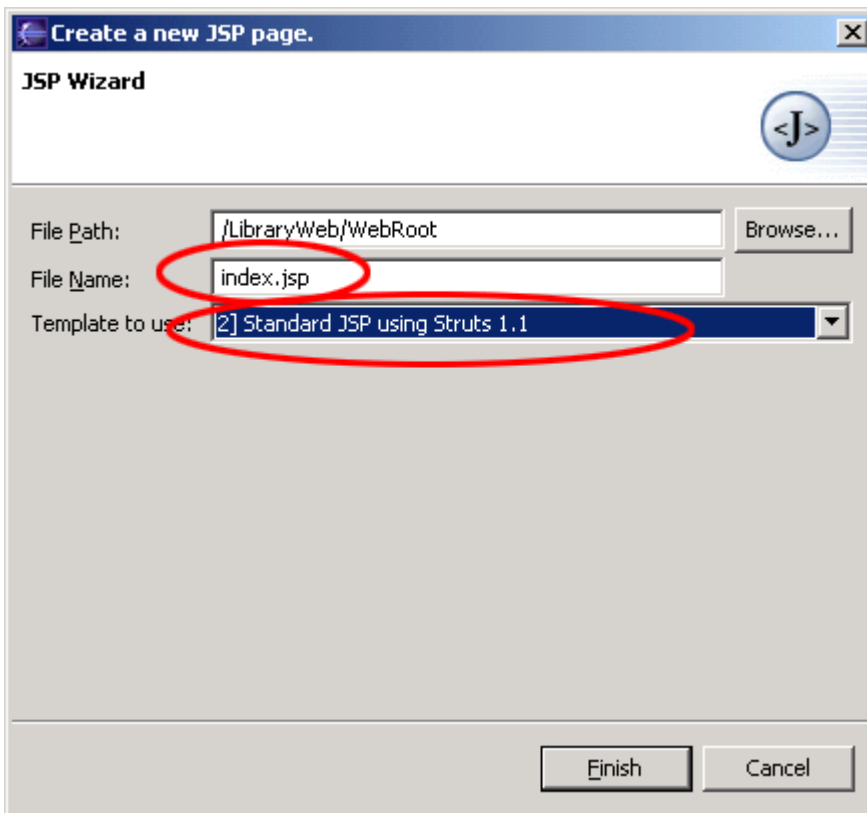


Create a default welcome page

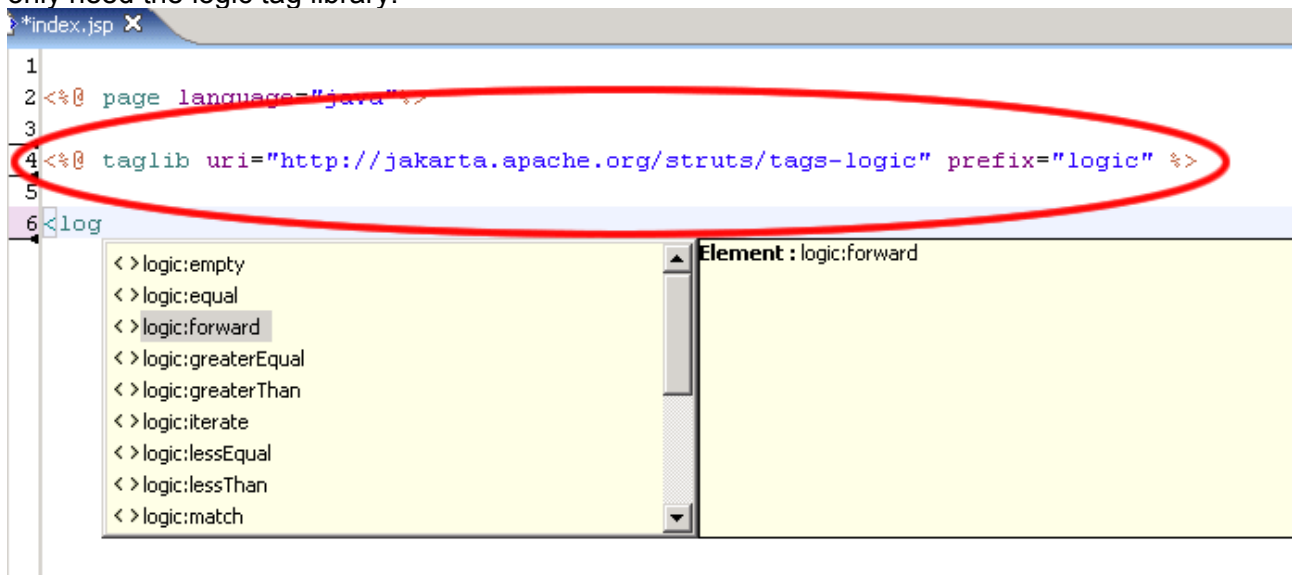
Ok, now we want to create a default page. Right click (yes again) on the Folder `WebRoot` in the Project and choose `New > JSP`.



Set the name to `index.jsp` and choose on template to use > Standard JSP using Struts 1.1 MyEclipse will use the template to create the JSP File.



You will find the file `index.jsp` in the folder `WebRoot` of the project. On the top of the file you will find the struts tag libraries. These includes will be use to access the tags of struts. In your case we only need the logic tag library.



Insert the following line below the included logic tag.

```
<logic:forward name="welcome" />
```

This line will arrange struts to find a forward with the name `welcome`. If the application doesn't find this forward it will lead to an error. In the next section I briefly explain the action forward.

Create a second `index.jsp` file in the folder `/WebRoot/jsp`
Change the body of the file to the following

```
<body>
  Welcome!
  <br>
  <html:link action="bookList">Show the booklist</html:link>
</body>
```

Global Action Forwards and Action Mappings

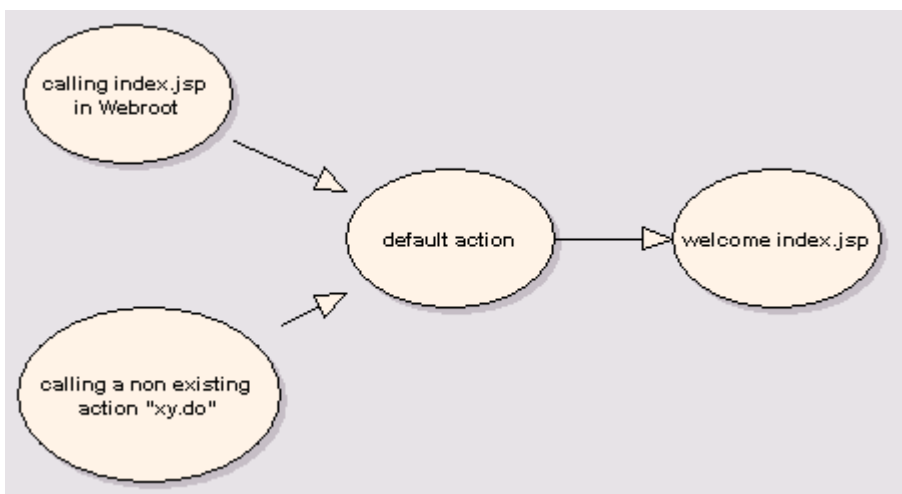
What is an action forward?

An action forward can be used to forward to a JSP or action mapping. There are two different action forwards: the global action forward and the local action forward. You can access a global action forward on each JSP or action class. A local action forward can only be accessed by the assigned action class.

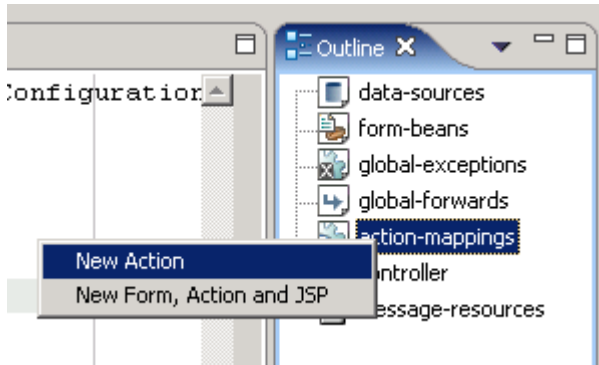
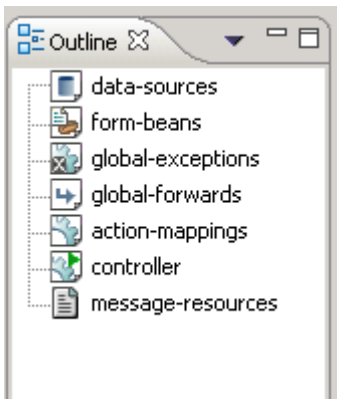
What is an action mapping?

The action mapping is the heart of Struts. It manages all actions between the application and the user. You can define which action will be executed by creating an action mapping.

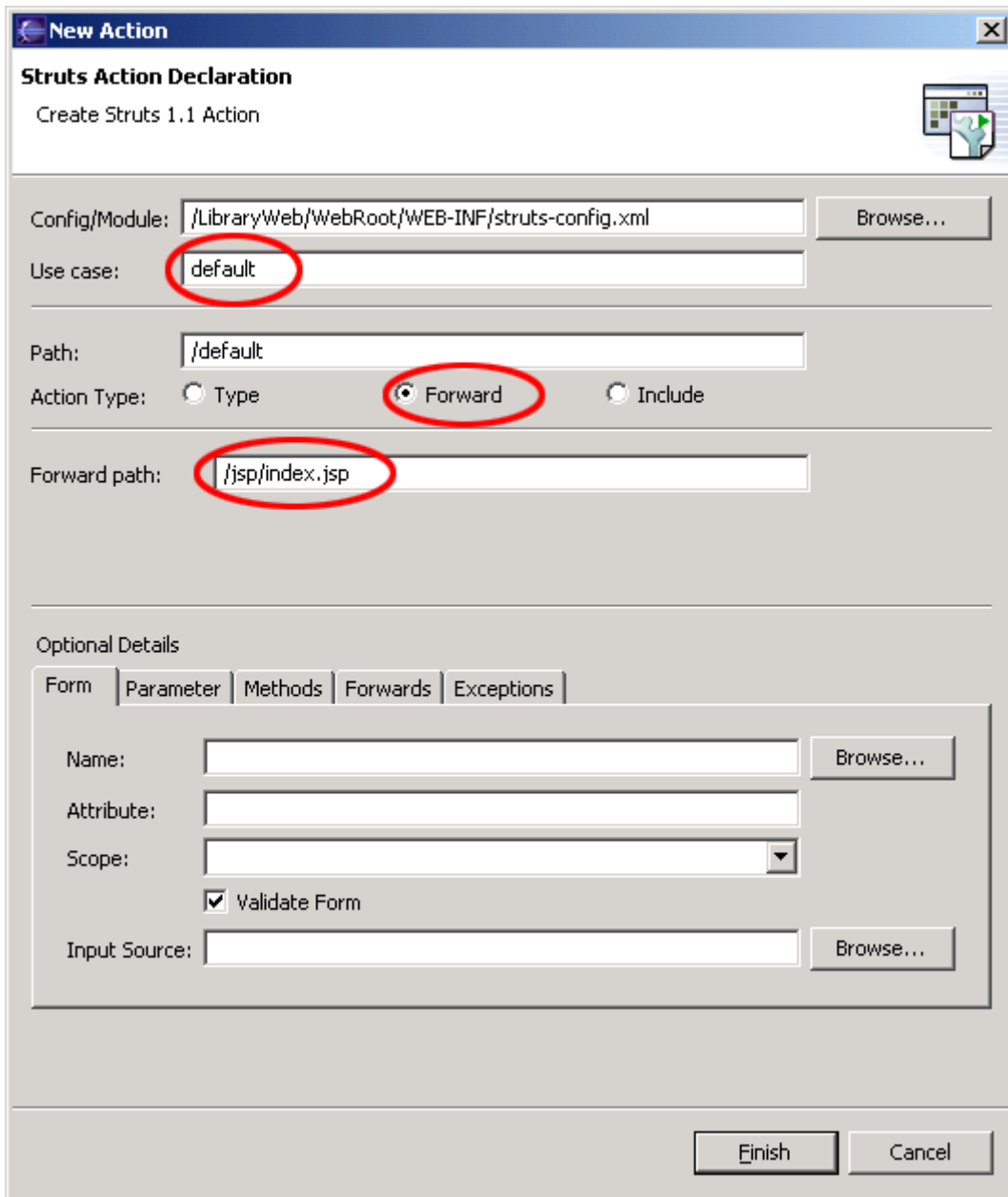
The diagram shows you how the application server manages the request of the `index.jsp` or a non-existing action mapping.



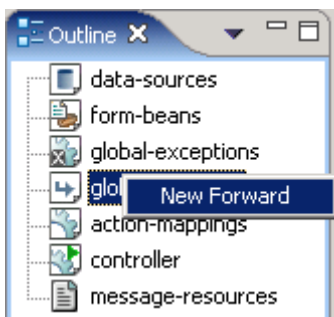
In the first step we create a new action mapping. Open the `struts-config.xml`, you will find it in the folder `WebRoot/WEB-INF`. Right-click in the outline window on `action-mapping`.



Choose Use Case **default** and Action Type **Forward**. The Forward Path is the welcome page `/jsp/index.jsp`



In the second step you create a global action forward. Go back to the outline window of MyEclipse and choose Global Forward



Choose the Forward Scope Global Forward. For name use the same you have set in your default page. The Global Forward refers to your action mapping.

You will see the following in your editor window.

```
<global-forwards >
  <forward name="welcome" path="/default.do" redirect="true" />
</global-forwards>
<action-mappings >
  <action forward="/jsp/index.jsp" path="/default" />
</action-mappings>
```

To catch all requests of non existing action mappings, we have to add a parameter `unknown="true"` to the action forward.

```
<action-mappings >
  <action forward="/jsp/index.jsp" path="/default" unknown="true"/>
</action-mappings>
```

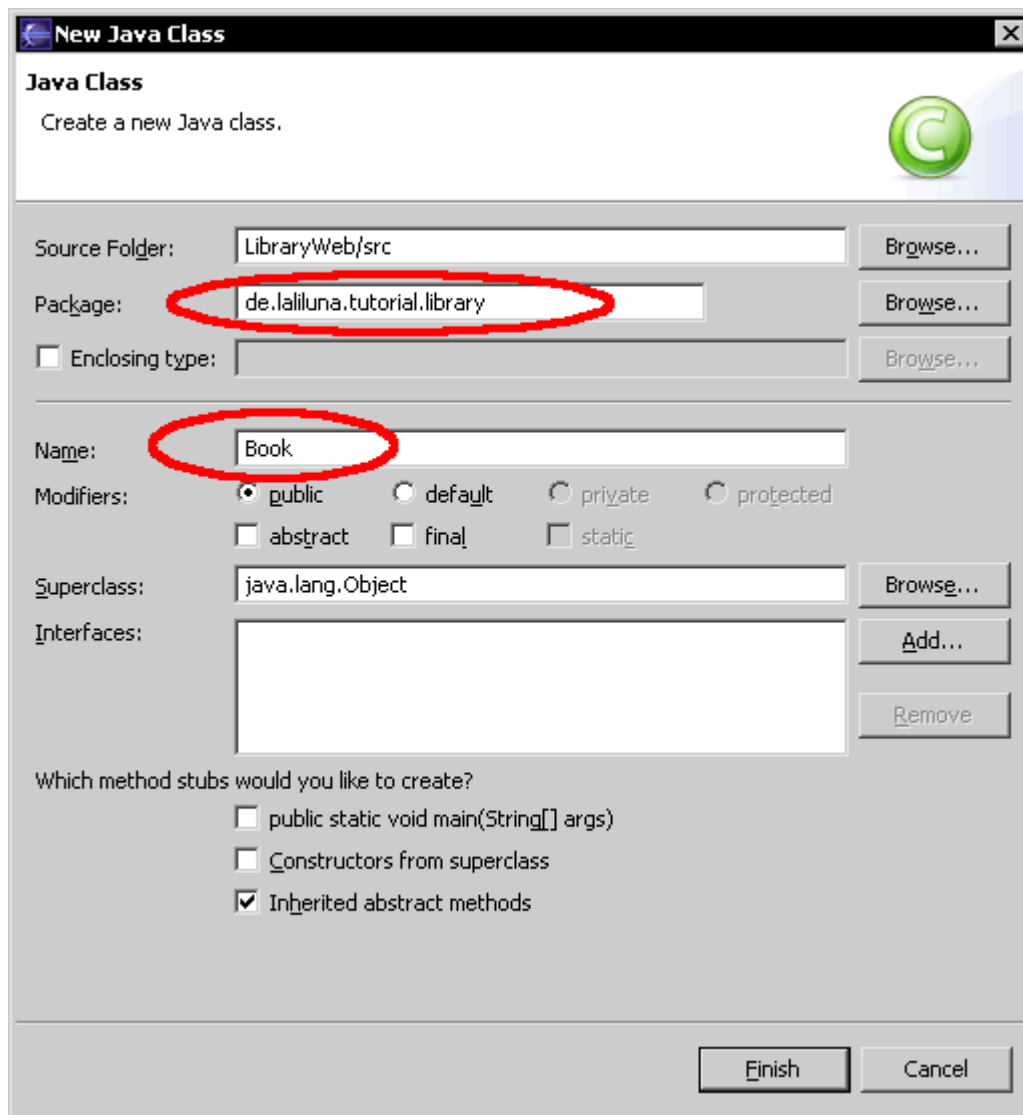
Usecase Book List

A Struts Action does always some kind of business logic and saves the result in a class of type `ActionForm`. The data from the `ActionForm` can be displayed in a JSP.

Our Action will read data from the database, save it in the action form. The JSP will display our data.

Create a object class „book“

Create a new class `Book` in the package `de.laliluna.tutorial.library`.

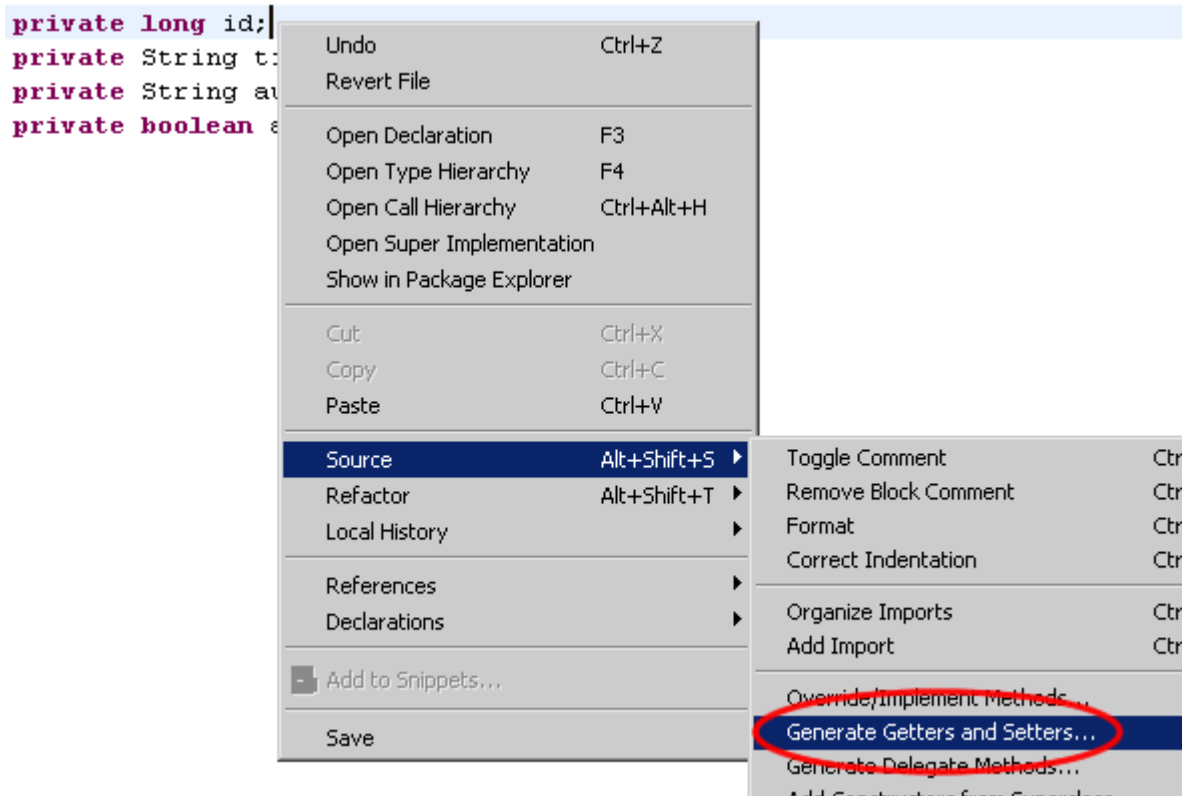


The Class `Book` represents a book with the properties `id`, `author`, `title` and `available`. Create four variables.

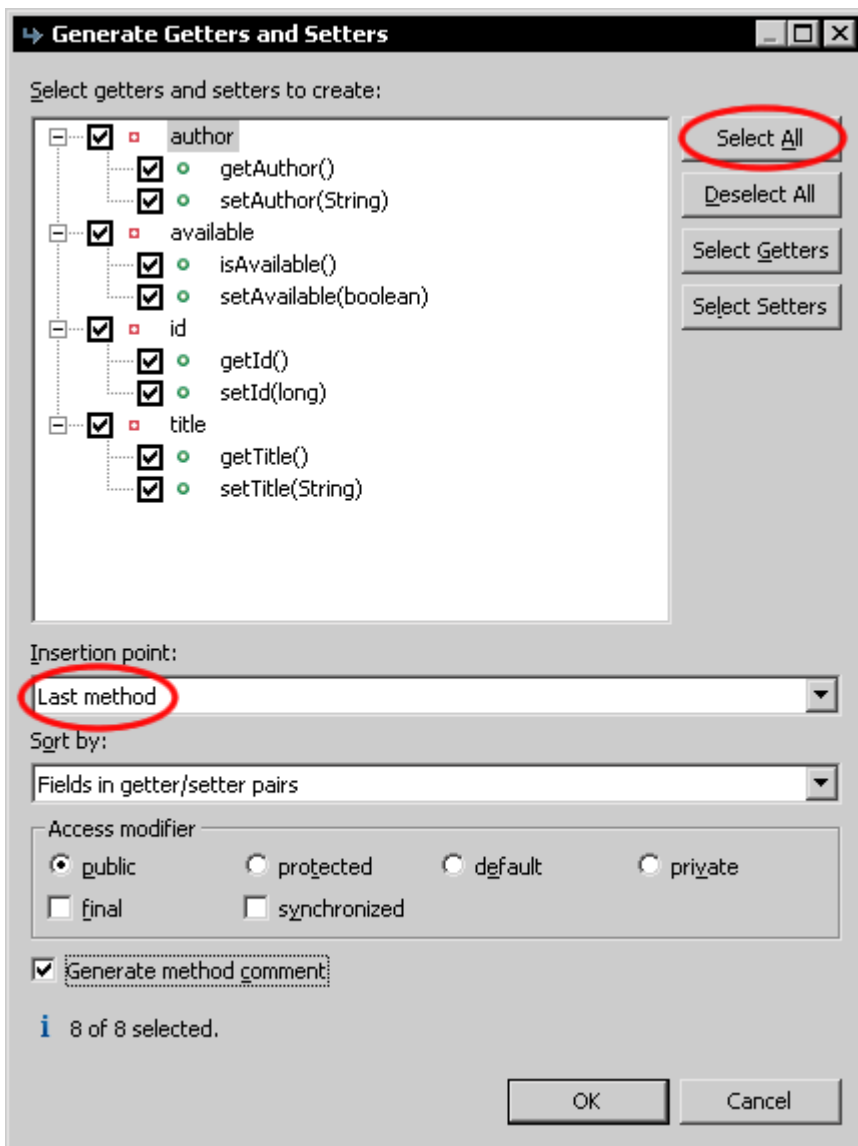
```
/**
 * @author laliluna
 */
public class Book {

    private long id;
    private String title;
    private String author;
    private boolean available;
}
```

Create a getter and setter for each variable. Right click in your class, `Source > Generate Getters and Setters`



Choose Select All and insertion point Last method.



Add two constructors to the class to set the properties on initialisation of the class.

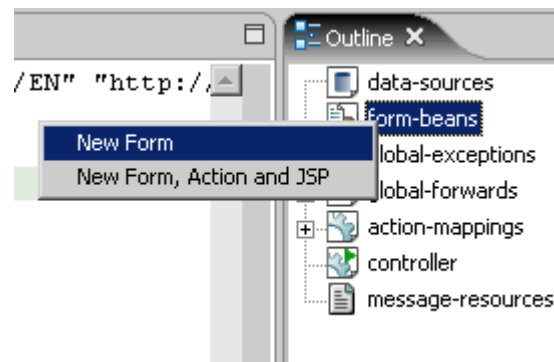
```
// Constructor
public Book() {}

// Constructor to initial the properties
public Book(long id, String author, String title, boolean available) {
    this.id = id;
    this.author = author;
    this.title = title;
    this.available = available;
}
```

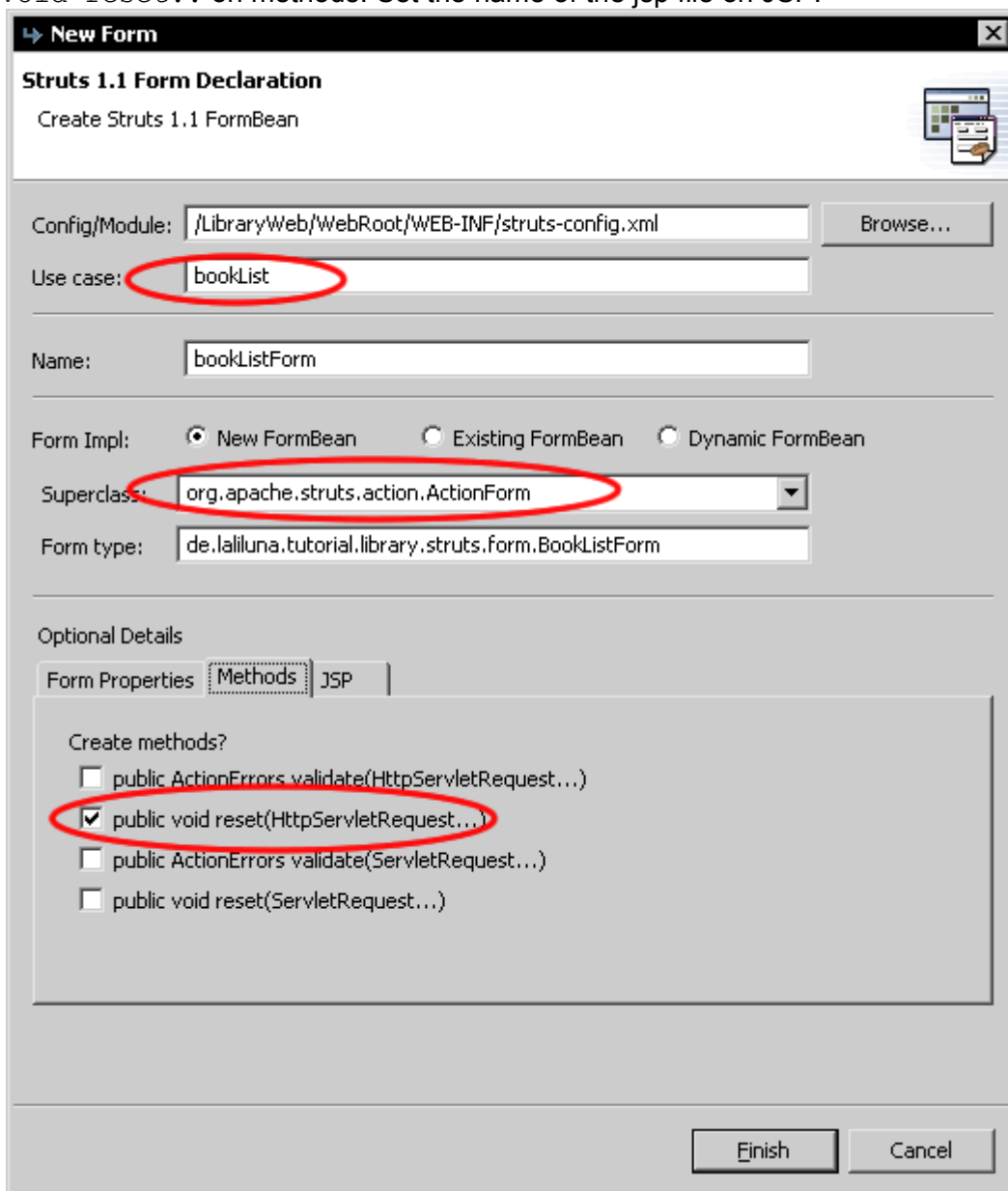
Thats all for our book class!

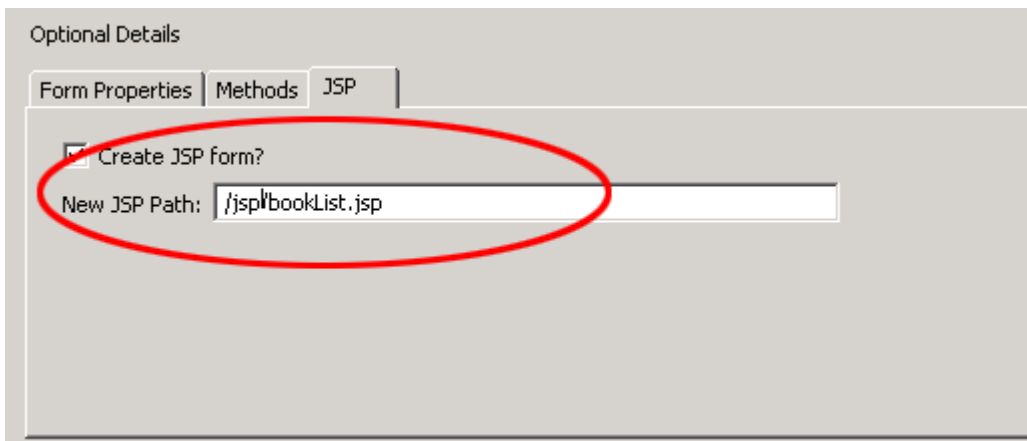
Create a form bean, action form and jsp

Open the `struts-config.xml`. Right click on Form Bean in the outline window.

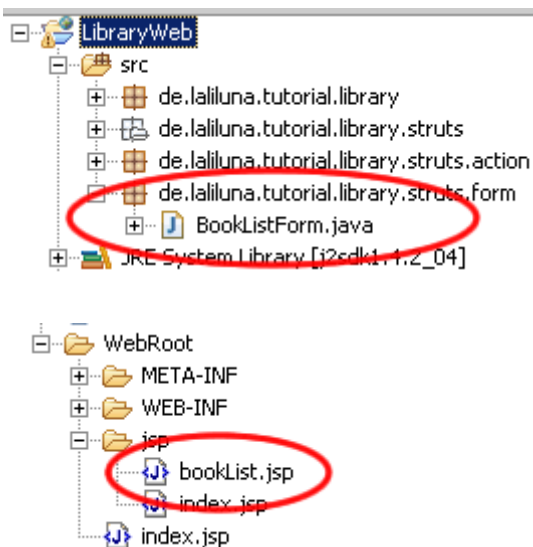


Use Case is `bookList`, Superclass `org.apache.struts.ActionForm`. Select only public `void reset..` on methods. Set the name of the jsp file on JSP.

A screenshot of the 'New Form' dialog box. The title bar says 'New Form'. The main heading is 'Struts 1.1 Form Declaration' with the subtitle 'Create Struts 1.1 FormBean'. The 'Config/Module' field contains '/Library/Web/WebRoot/WEB-INF/struts-config.xml'. The 'Use case' field contains 'bookList'. The 'Name' field contains 'bookListForm'. Under 'Form Impl', 'New FormBean' is selected. The 'Superclass' dropdown is set to 'org.apache.struts.action.ActionForm'. The 'Form type' field contains 'de.laliluna.tutorial.library.struts.form.BookListForm'. In the 'Optional Details' section, the 'Methods' tab is active. Under 'Create methods?', the checkbox for 'public void reset(HttpServletRequest...)' is checked. At the bottom, there are 'Finish' and 'Cancel' buttons.



The package explorer looks like the pictures below.



Edit the source code of the action form class

Open the file `BookListForm.java` and add the following source code.

```
public class BookListForm extends ActionForm {

    private Collection books;

    /* lalinuna.de 02.11.2004
    * get the collection books
    */
    public Collection getBooks() {
        return books;
    }

    /* lalinuna.de 02.11.2004
    * set the collection books
    */
    public void setBooks(Collection books) {
        this.books = books;
    }

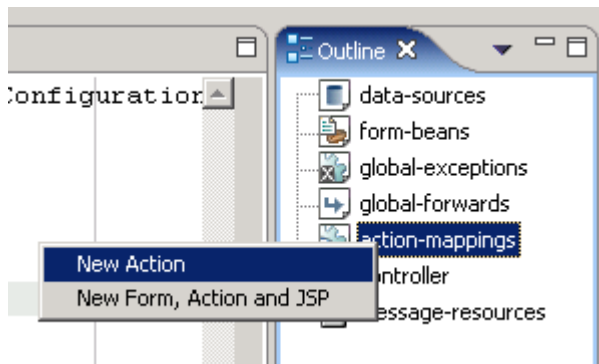
    /* lalinuna.de 02.11.2004
    * reset the collection books
    */
    public void reset(ActionMapping arg0, HttpServletRequest arg1) {
        books = new ArrayList();
    }
}
```

Define a collection `books` and generate a getter and setter. In your `reset` method initial the

collection with an array list.


Create an action mapping and action class

Open the struts-config.xml and create a new action mapping.



Use Case is bookList, choose Create new Action Class
Superclass org.apache.struts.Action
On Optional Details choose the Form Bean bookListForm.
The input source is /jsp/bookList.jsp

New Action ✕

Struts Action Declaration
Create Struts 1.1 Action 

Config/Module:

Use case:

Path:

Action Type: Type Forward Include

Action Impl: Create new Action class Use existing Action class

Superclass:

Type:

Optional Details

Name:

Attribute:

Scope:

Validate Form

Input Source:

Now add a forward `showList` to the action mapping.

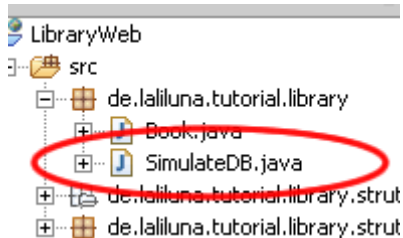
Optional Details

Forwards:

You will find the action class `bookListAction` in your package `de.laliluna.tutorial.library.action`.

Class to provide test data

We do not use a database in this tutorial and want some test data. Open the source code we provided as download and copy the class `simulateDB.java` in your package `de.laliluna.tutorial.library`.



Edit the source code of the action class

Open the class `bookListAction` and edit the method `execute`. The command `mapping.findForward(„showList“)` will search for a local forward with the name `showList`

```
/**
 * Method execute
 * @param mapping
 * @param form
 * @param request
 * @param response
 * @return ActionForward
 */
public ActionForward execute(
    ActionMapping mapping,
    ActionForm form,
    HttpServletRequest request,
    HttpServletResponse response) {
    BookListForm bookListForm = (BookListForm) form;

    /* lalinuna.de 03.11.2004
     * init SimulateDB class and set some dummy data
     */
    SimulateDB simulateDB = new SimulateDB();
    bookListForm.setBooks(simulateDB.getAllBooks(request.getSession()));

    return mapping.findForward("showList");
}
```

Yeah thats all, you have now created your form bean with an action form class, an action mapping with an action class and the jsp to display something.

Output the test data on the jsp file

Open the file `bookList.jsp` and add the following source code

```
<%@ page language="java"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-bean" prefix="bean"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-html" prefix="html"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-logic" prefix="logic"%>
<html>
```

```

<head>
<title>Show book list</title>
</head>
<body>
<table border="1">
  <tbody>
    <!-- set the header -->
    <tr>
      <td>Author</td>
      <td>Book name</td>
      <td>Available</td>
      <td>&nbsp;</td>
      <td>&nbsp;</td>
    </tr>
    <!-- check if book exists and display message or iterate over books
-->
    <logic:empty name="bookListForm" property="books">
      <tr>
        <td colspan="5">No books available</td>
      </tr>
    </logic:empty>
    <logic:notEmpty name="bookListForm" property="books">
      <logic:iterate name="bookListForm" property="books" id="book">
        <tr>
          <!-- print out the book informations -->
          <td><bean:write name="book" property="author" /
></td>
          <td><bean:write name="book" property="title" /
></td>
          <td><html:checkbox disabled="true" name="book"
property="available" />
          </td>
          <!-- print out the edit and delete link for each
book -->
          <td><html:link action="bookEdit.do?do=editBook"
paramName="book"
paramProperty="id"
paramId="id">Edit</html:link></td>
          <td><html:link action="bookEdit.do?do=deleteBook"
paramName="book"
paramProperty="id"
paramId="id">Delete</html:link></td>
        </tr>
      </logic:iterate>
    </logic:notEmpty>
    <!-- end interate -->
  </tbody>
</table>
</body>
</html>

```

The tag `<logic:iterate>` loops over the collection `books` of the form bean `bookListForm`. Within the tag `<logic:iterate>` you have access to the properties of the book. The tag `<bean:write>` prints out a property (author, title) on the current position. `<html:checkbox>` creates a checkbox.

Very good. If you like you do a first test of your application right here. Have a look at the end of the tutorial, to see how to test.

Usecase Add, edit and remove the data

In the next section we add the functionality to add, edit and remove the data.

New form bean

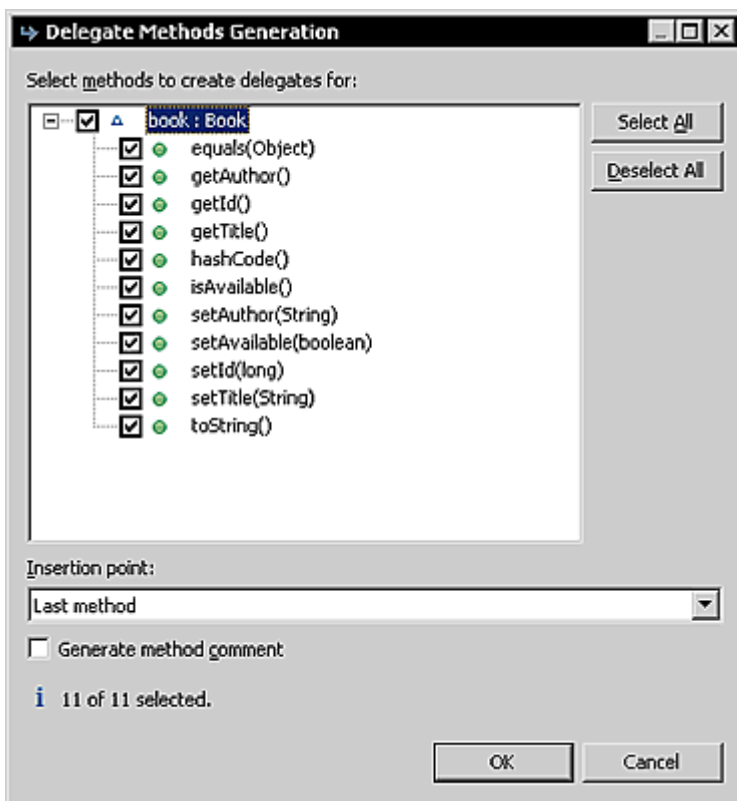
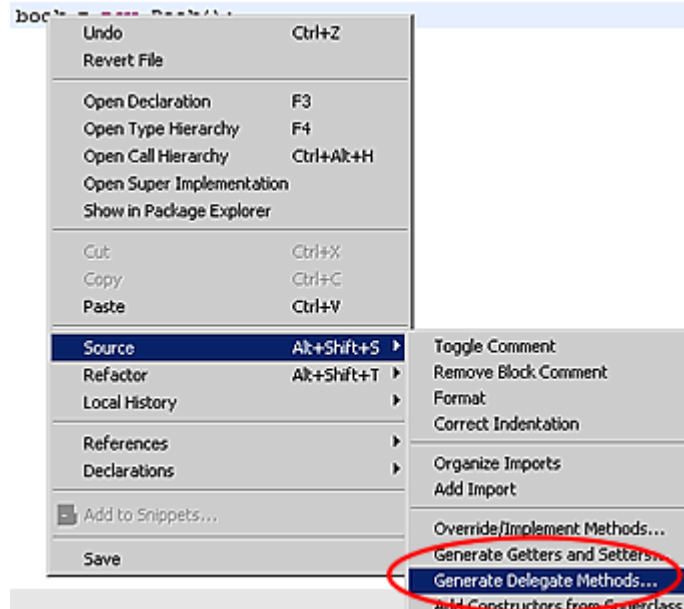
Create a new form bean and action form class. Set Use case to bookEdit and remove all methods on Optional details - Methods. Let MyEclipse create the jsp file for us.

Open the class BookEditForm.java in de.laliluna.tutorial.library.form.

Create a new instance book of the class Book

```
Book book = new Book();
```

Generate a getter and setter and delegate all methods of the class Book.



The source code looks like the following.

```
public class BookEditForm extends ActionForm {
```

```

Book book = new Book();

public Book getBook() {
    return book;
}
public void setBook(Book book) {
    this.book = book;
}
public boolean equals(Object arg0) {
    return book.equals(arg0);
}
public String getAuthor() {
    return book.getAuthor();
}
public long getId() {
    return book.getId();
}
public String getTitle() {
    return book.getTitle();
}
public int hashCode() {
    return book.hashCode();
}
public boolean isAvailable() {
    return book.isAvailable();
}
public void setAuthor(String author) {
    book.setAuthor(author);
}
public void setAvailable(boolean available) {
    book.setAvailable(available);
}
public void setId(long id) {
    book.setId(id);
}
public void setTitle(String title) {
    book.setTitle(title);
}
public String toString() {
    return book.toString();
}
}

```

The class Book is set in the action form class and we have access to the properties.

Action mapping

Create a new action mapping. There is a different between our first action class. The new action class will extends to the superclass `org.apache.struts.DispatchAction`.

Config/Module:

Use case:

Path:

Action Type: Type Forward Include

Action Impl: Create new Action class Use existing Action class

Superclass:

New Type:

Optional Details

Name:

Attribute:

Scope:

Validate Form

Input Source:

On Parameter we add a parameter `do`. These parameter is needed by the dispatch action class.

Optional Details

Parameter:

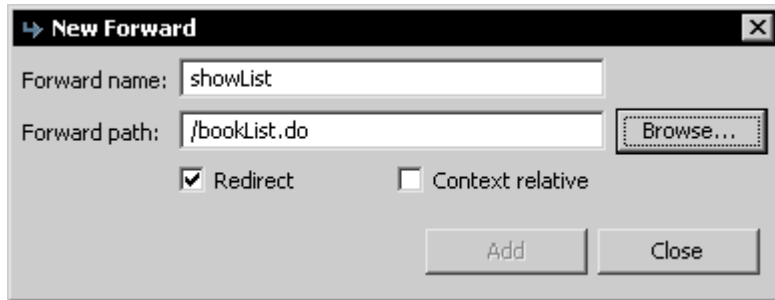
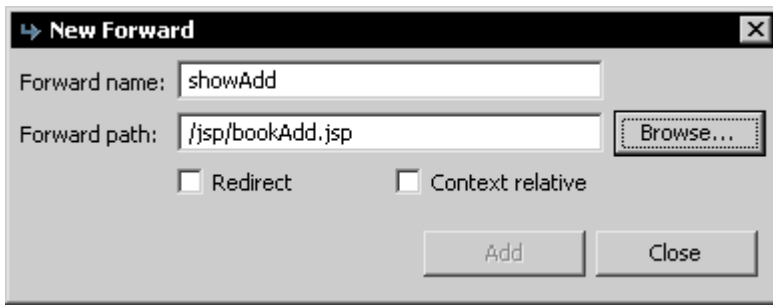
Add three new forwards. One is for the edit page, the second for the add page, where you can add the books and the last forward redirect the user to the book listing.

New Forward

Forward name:

Forward path:

Redirect Context relative



The last forward is different to the others. It refers to an existing action mapping and redirect the user.

Now create a new jsp file `bookAdd.jsp` in the folder `/WebRoot/jsp`. The forward `showAdd` forwards to this page.

Add the source code to the jsp files

Open the file `bookAdd.jsp` and add the following source code.

```
<%@ page language="java"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-bean" prefix="bean"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-html" prefix="html"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-logic" prefix="logic" %>

<html>
  <head>
    <title>Add a book</title>
  </head>
  <body>
    <!-- create a html form -->
    <html:form action="bookEdit">
      <!-- print out the form data -->
      <table border="1">
        <tr>
          <td>Author:</td>
          <td><html:text property="author" /></td>
        </tr>
        <tr>
          <td>Title:</td>
          <td><html:text property="title" /></td>
        </tr>
        <tr>
          <td>Available:</td>
          <td><html:checkbox property="available" /></td>
        </tr>
        <tr>
          <td colspan="2">
            <html:submit>Save</html:submit>
          </td>
        </tr>
      </table>
      <!-- set the parameter for the dispatch action -->
      <html:hidden property="do" value="saveBook" />
    </html:form>
  </body>
</html>
```

```
        </html:form>
    </body>
</html>
```

The tag `<html:form>` creates a new HTML form and refers with the parameter `action="bookEdit"` to the action mapping. The Tag `<html:text>` creates a text field with the property `author` of the book.

`<html:hidden>` is a hidden form field with the name `do`. We need this hidden field, because it tells the dispatch action class which method will called.

Open the file `bookEdit.jsp`. You can use the source code of the of the file `bookAdd.jsp` and change the following lines.

```
<title>Edit a book</title>
```

Add the following line above `<html:hidden property="do" value="saveBook" />`

```
<!-- hidden field that contains the id of the book -->
<html:hidden property="id" />
```

Source code of the dispatch action class

Ope the file `bookEditAction.java` and add the following methods.

```
/**
 * Method editBook
 * @param mapping
 * @param form
 * @param request
 * @param response
 * @return ActionForward
 */
public ActionForward editBook(
    ActionMapping mapping,
    ActionForm form,
    HttpServletRequest request,
    HttpServletResponse response) {
    BookEditForm bookEditForm = (BookEditForm) form;

    /* lalinuna.de 04.11.2004
    * get id of the book from request
    */
    long id = Long.parseLong(request.getParameter("id"));

    /* lalinuna.de 04.11.2004
    * init SimulatedDB class and get book by id
    */
    SimulatedDB simulatedDB = new SimulatedDB();
    bookEditForm.setBook(simulatedDB.loadBookById(id, request.getSession()));

    return mapping.findForward("showEdit");
}
```

The method `editBook` get the parameter `id` of the `request` and reads the book by `id` from the simulated database. The forward `showEdit` refres to the edit page `bookEdit.jsp`

```
/**
 * Method deleteBook
 * @param mapping
 * @param form
 * @param request
 * @param response
 * @return ActionForward
 */
public ActionForward deleteBook(
    ActionMapping mapping,
```

```

    ActionForm form,
    HttpServletRequest request,
    HttpServletResponse response) {
    BookEditForm bookEditForm = (BookEditForm) form;

    /* lalinuna.de 04.11.2004
    * get id of the book from request
    */
    long id = Long.parseLong(request.getParameter("id"));

    /* lalinuna.de 04.11.2004
    * init SimulateDB class and delete book by id
    */
    SimulateDB simulateDB = new SimulateDB();
    simulateDB.deleteBookById(id, request.getSession());

    return mapping.findForward("showList");
}

```

The method `deleteBook` get the parameter `id` of the request and remove the book by `id` from the simulated database. The forward `showList` refers to the book listing page `bookList.jsp`

```

/**
 * Method addBook
 * @param mapping
 * @param form
 * @param request
 * @param response
 * @return ActionForward
 */
public ActionForward addBook(
    ActionMapping mapping,
    ActionForm form,
    HttpServletRequest request,
    HttpServletResponse response) {
    BookEditForm bookEditForm = (BookEditForm) form;

    return mapping.findForward("showAdd");
}

```

The method `addBook` forwards on the add page `bookAdd.jsp`

```

/**
 * Method saveBook
 * @param mapping
 * @param form
 * @param request
 * @param response
 * @return ActionForward
 */
public ActionForward saveBook(
    ActionMapping mapping,
    ActionForm form,
    HttpServletRequest request,
    HttpServletResponse response) {
    BookEditForm bookEditForm = (BookEditForm) form;

    /* lalinuna.de 04.11.2004
    * init SimulateDB class and get data by id
    */
    SimulateDB simulateDB = new SimulateDB();
    simulateDB.saveToDB(bookEditForm.getBook(), request.getSession());

    return mapping.findForward("showList");
}

```

The last method get the book of the form bean `bookEditForm` and save it in the simulated

Database.

Edit the book listing page

Open the file `bookList.jsp` and change the source code.

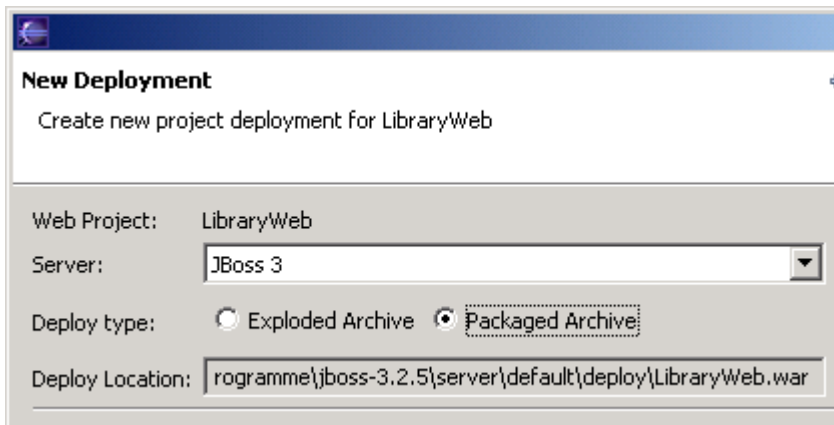
```
<%@ page language="java"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-bean" prefix="bean"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-html" prefix="html"%>
<%@ taglib uri="http://jakarta.apache.org/struts/tags-logic" prefix="logic"%>
<html>
<head>
<title>Show book list</title>
</head>
<body>
<table border="1">
  <tbody>
    <!-- set the header --%>
    <tr>
      <td>Author</td>
      <td>Book name</td>
      <td>Available</td>
      <td>&nbsp;</td>
      <td>&nbsp;</td>
    </tr>
    <!-- check if book exists and display message or iterate over books --%>
    <logic:empty name="bookListForm" property="books">
      <tr>
        <td colspan="5">No books available</td>
      </tr>
    </logic:empty>
    <logic:notEmpty name="bookListForm" property="books">
      <logic:iterate name="bookListForm" property="books" id="book">
        <tr>
          <!-- print out the book informations --%>
          <td><bean:write name="book" property="author" /></td>
          <td><bean:write name="book" property="title" /></td>
          <td><html:checkbox disabled="true" name="book" property="available" />
            </td>
          <!-- print out the edit and delete link for each book --%>
          <td><html:link action="bookEdit.do?do=editBook" paramName="book"
            paramProperty="id" paramId="id">Edit</html:link></td>
          <td><html:link action="bookEdit.do?do=deleteBook" paramName="book"
            paramProperty="id" paramId="id">Delete</html:link></td>
        </tr>
      </logic:iterate>
    </logic:notEmpty>

    <!-- print out the add link --%>
    <tr>
      <td colspan="5"><html:link action="bookEdit.do?do=addBook">Add a new
book</html:link>
      </td>
    </tr>
    <!-- end interate --%>
  </tbody>
</table>
</body>
</html>
```

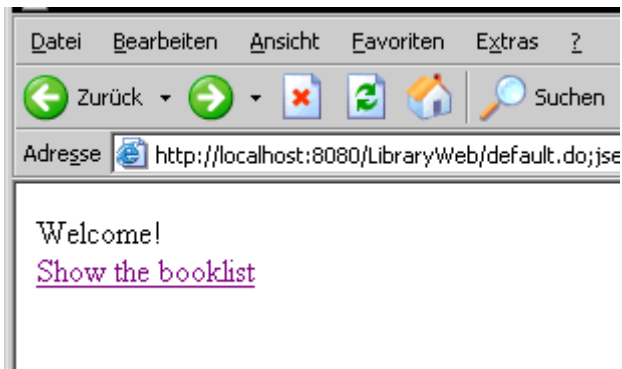
Congratulation, you have finished a simple library application. Now you can test the library.

Test the application

Start the jboss and deploy the project as package archiv.



Call the project in your favorite web browser. <http://localhost:8080/LibraryWeb/>



Thats all !!