

# Running Apache FOP

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## 1. System Requirements

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The following software must be installed:

- Java 1.3.x or later Runtime Environment.
- Apache FOP. The [FOP distribution](#) includes all libraries that you will need to run a basic FOP installation. These can be found in the [fop-root]/lib directory. These libraries include the following:
  - A JAXP-compatible XML Parser (FOP comes with [Apache Xerces-J](#)).
  - A JAXP-compatible XSLT Processor (FOP comes with [Apache Xalan-J](#)).
  - [Apache Batik](#), an SVG library.
  - [Apache Jakarta Commons Logging](#), a logger abstraction kit.
  - [Apache Jakarta Commons IO](#), a library with I/O utilities.
  - [Apache Excalibur/Avalon Framework](#), for XML configuration handling.

The following software is optional, depending on your needs:

- Graphics libraries. Support for some graphics formats requires additional packages. See [FOP: Graphics Formats](#) for details.
- PDF encryption. See [FOP: PDF Encryption](#) for details.

In addition, the following system requirements apply:

- If you will be using FOP to process SVG, you must do so in a graphical environment. See [FOP: Graphics \(Batik\)](#) for details.

## 2. Installation

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### 2.1. Instructions

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Basic FOP installation consists of first unzipping the .gz file that is the distribution medium, then unarchiving the resulting .tar file in a directory/folder that is convenient on your system. Please consult your operating system documentation or Zip application software documentation for instructions specific to your site.

### 2.2. Problems

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Some Mac OSX users have experienced filename truncation problems using Stuffit to unzip and unarchive their distribution media. This is a legacy of older Mac operating systems, which had a

31-character pathname limit. Several Mac OSX users have recommended that Mac OSX users use the shell command `tar -xzf` instead.

### 3. Starting FOP as a Standalone Application

The usual and recommended practice for starting FOP from the command line is to run the batch file `fop.bat` (Windows) or the shell script `fop` (Unix/Linux). If you write your own scripts, be sure to review these standard scripts to make sure that you get your environment properly configured.

The standard scripts for starting FOP require that the environment variable `JAVA_HOME` be set to a path pointing to the appropriate Java installation on your system. Macintosh OSX includes a Java environment as part of its distribution. We are told by Mac OSX users that the path to use in this case is `/Library/Java/Home`. **Caveat:** We suspect that, as Apple releases new Java environments and as FOP upgrades the minimum Java requirements, the two will inevitably not match on some systems. Please see [Java on Mac OSX FAQ](#) for information as it becomes available.

As an alternative to the start scripts you can run `"java -jar build/fop.jar"` in which case FOP tries to build the classpath for running FOP dynamically. Please note, that this might not always work as expected.

```
USAGE
Fop [options] [-fo|-xml] infile [-xsl file]
[-awt|-pdf|-mif|-rtf|-tiff|-png|-pcl|-ps|-txt|-at|-print] <outfile>
[OPTIONS]
-d          debug mode
-x          dump configuration settings
-q          quiet mode
-c cfg.xml  use additional configuration file cfg.xml
-l lang     the language to use for user information
-r          relaxed/less strict validation (where available)
-dpi xxx    resolution in dots per inch (dpi) where xxx is a number
-s          for area tree XML, down to block areas only
-v          to show FOP version being used

[INPUT]
infile      xsl:fo input file (the same as the next)
-fo infile  xsl:fo input file
-xml infile xml input file, must be used together with -xsl
-xsl stylesheet xslt stylesheet

-param name value <value> to use for parameter <name> in xslt stylesheet
(repeat '-param name value' for each parameter)

[OUTPUT]
outfile     input will be rendered as pdf file into outfile
```

```

-pdf outfile      input will be rendered as pdf file (outfile req'd)
-awt              input will be displayed on screen
-mif outfile      input will be rendered as mif file (outfile req'd)
-rtf outfile      input will be rendered as rtf file (outfile req'd)
-tiff outfile     input will be rendered as tiff file (outfile req'd)
-png outfile      input will be rendered as png file (outfile req'd)
-pcl outfile      input will be rendered as pcl file (outfile req'd)
-ps outfile       input will be rendered as PostScript file (outfile req'd)
-txt outfile      input will be rendered as text file (outfile req'd)
-svg outfile      input will be rendered as an svg slides file (outfile
req'd)
-at outfile       representation of area tree as XML (outfile req'd)
-print            input file will be rendered and sent to the printer
                  see options with "-print help"
-out mime outfile input will be rendered using the given MIME type
                  (outfile req'd) Example: "-out application/pdf D:\out.pdf"
                  (Tip: "-out list" prints the list of supported MIME types)

-foout outfile   input will only be XSL transformed. The intermediate
                  XSL-FO file is saved and no rendering is performed.
                  (Only available if you use -xml and -xsl parameters)

[Examples]
Fop foo.fo foo.pdf
Fop -fo foo.fo -pdf foo.pdf (does the same as the previous line)
Fop -xml foo.xml -xsl foo.xsl -pdf foo.pdf
Fop -xml foo.xml -xsl foo.xsl -foout foo.fo
Fop foo.fo -mif foo.mif
Fop foo.fo -rtf foo.rtf
Fop foo.fo -print or Fop -print foo.fo
Fop foo.fo -awt

```

PDF encryption is only available if FOP was compiled with encryption support **and** if compatible encryption support is available at run time. Currently, only the JCE is supported. Check the [Details](#).

## 4. Using Xalan to Check XSL-FO Input

FOP sessions that use `-xml` and `-xsl` input instead of `-fo` input are actually controlling two distinct conversions: Transforming XML to XSL-FO, then formatting the XSL-FO to PDF (or another FOP output format). Although FOP controls both of these processes, the first is included merely as a convenience and for performance reasons. Only the second is part of FOP's core processing. If a user has a problem running FOP, it is important to determine which of these two processes is causing the problem. If the problem is in the first process, the user's stylesheet is likely the cause. The FOP development team does not have resources to help with stylesheet issues, although we have included links to some useful [Specifications](#) and [Books/Articles](#). If the problem is in the second process, FOP may have a bug or an unimplemented feature that does require attention from the FOP development team.

**Note:**

The user is always responsible to provide correct XSL-FO code to FOP.

In the case of using `-xml` and `-xsl` input, although the user is responsible for the XSL-FO code that is FOP's input, it is not visible to the user. To make the intermediate FO file visible, the FOP distribution includes the `-foout` option which causes FOP to run only the first (transformation) step, and write the results to a file. (See also the Xalan command-line below)

**Note:**

When asking for help on the FOP mailing lists, *never* attach XML and XSL to illustrate the issue. Always run the XSLT step (`-foout`) and send the resulting XSL-FO file instead. Of course, be sure that the XSL-FO file is correct before sending it.

The `-foout` option works the same way as if you would call the [Xalan command-line](#):

```
java org.apache.xalan.xslt.Process -IN xmlfile -XSL file -OUT outfile
```

Note that there are some subtle differences between the FOP and Xalan command-lines.

## 5. Memory Usage

FOP can consume quite a bit of memory, even though this has been continually improved. This is partly inherent to the formatting process and partly caused by implementation choices. All FO processors currently on the market have memory problems with certain layouts.

If you are running out of memory when using FOP, here are some ideas that may help:

- Increase memory available to the JVM. See [the `-Xmx` option](#) for more information.

**Warning:**

It is usually unwise to increase the memory allocated to the JVM beyond the amount of physical RAM, as this will generally cause significantly slower performance.

- Avoid forward references. Forward references are references to some later part of a document. Examples include page number citations which refer to pages which follow the citation, tables of contents at the beginning of a document, and page numbering schemes that include the total number of pages in the document ("[page N of TOTAL](#)"). Forward references cause all subsequent pages to be held in memory until the reference can be resolved, i.e. until the page with the referenced element is encountered. Forward references may be required by the task, but if you are getting a memory overflow, at least consider the possibility of eliminating them. A table of contents could be replaced by PDF bookmarks

instead or moved to the end of the document (reshuffle the paper could after printing).

- Avoid large images, especially if they are scaled down. If they need to be scaled, scale them in another application upstream from FOP. For many image formats, memory consumption is driven mainly by the size of the image file itself, not its dimensions (width\*height), so increasing the compression rate may help.
- Use multiple page sequences. FOP starts rendering after the end of a page sequence is encountered. While the actual rendering is done page-by-page, some additional memory is freed after the page sequence has been rendered. This can be substantial if the page sequence contains lots of FO elements.

One of FOP's stated design goals is to be able to process input of arbitrary size. Addressing this goal is one of the prime motivations behind the [FOP Redesign](#).

## 6. Problems

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If you have problems running FOP, please see the "[How to get Help](#)" page.