Getting your Google API v2 key for BT Maps (Android)

Preface

The new version of Android is coming! And with it will come a new slew of different improvements, one which everyone seems to be waiting for; the Maps.

Once you have the newest version for Android, you'll need to obtain a Google 'API Key' to utilize maps in your application (this applies whether Android or iOS).

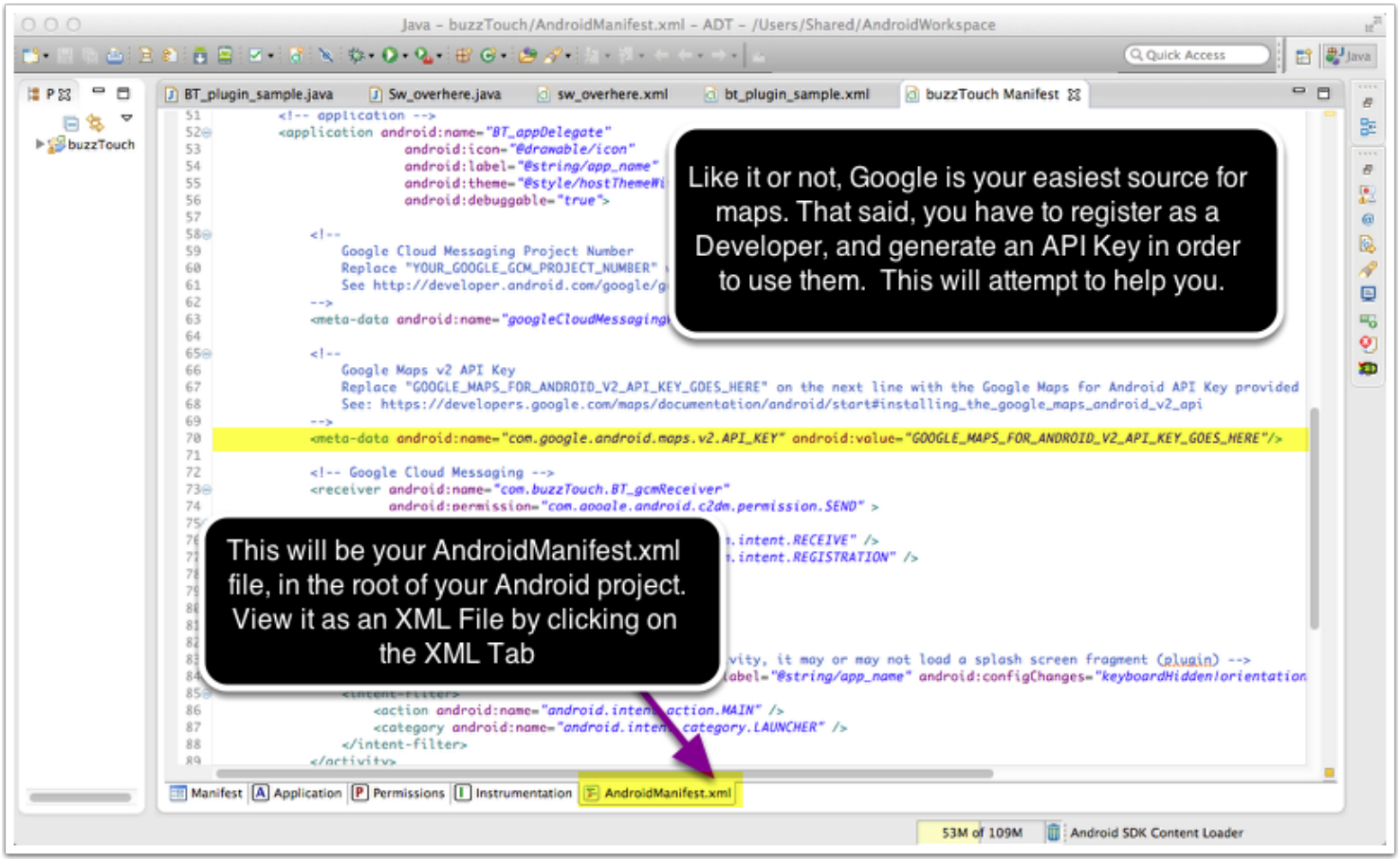
This tutorial shows you the basics of how to get an API key and insert it into your Android BT Project.

We assume a few of the following circumstances:

1) You're somewhat familiar with the Eclipse environment.
2) You already have a Google developer account. If you don't, get one. They're free and easy to obtain.
3) You already installed the Eclipse Keytool. If you haven't, do so. A good introductory link for that information is located here.
4) Read through this document, and picture yourself performing the steps. This does two things; familarize yourself with the tasks required, and allows you to realize what resources you'll need to complete the tasks. Make a list, prepare your resources. Then perform the tasks.

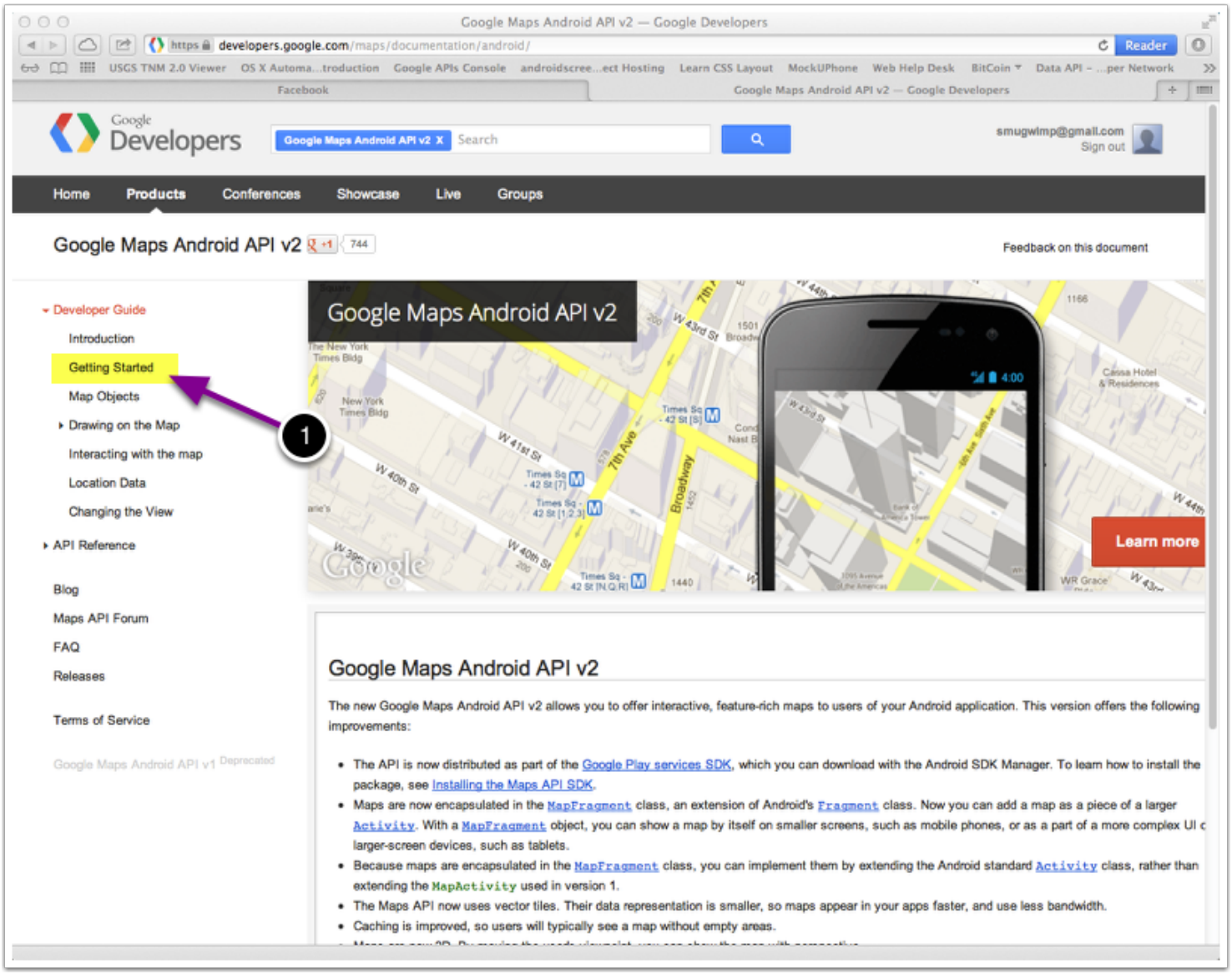
I can only hope that Eclipse for the PC is very similar to Eclipse for the Macintosh. I've done this on my Macintosh. Apologies in advance if somethings don't seem right on a PC. I don't develop BT stuff on my PC's.

Buzztouch project AndroidManifest.xml



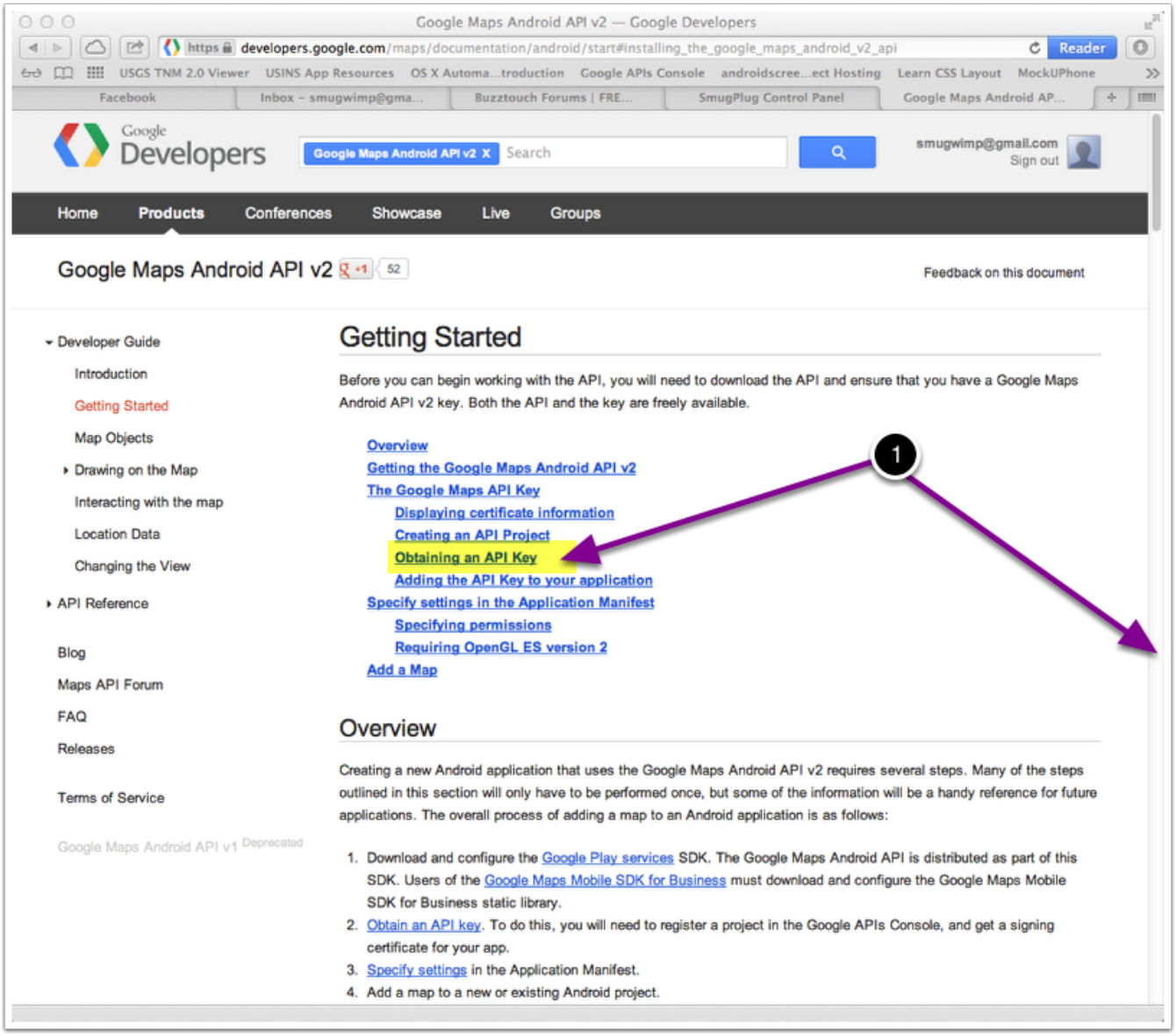
If you want to use Google Maps in your project, you'll have to get an API key. Since API v1 keys has been deprecated and are no longer issued, we must now move on to API v2. Not a problem, just a little different than the way it used to be. Stay close and pay attention, and you'll be fine.

Google Developer Website



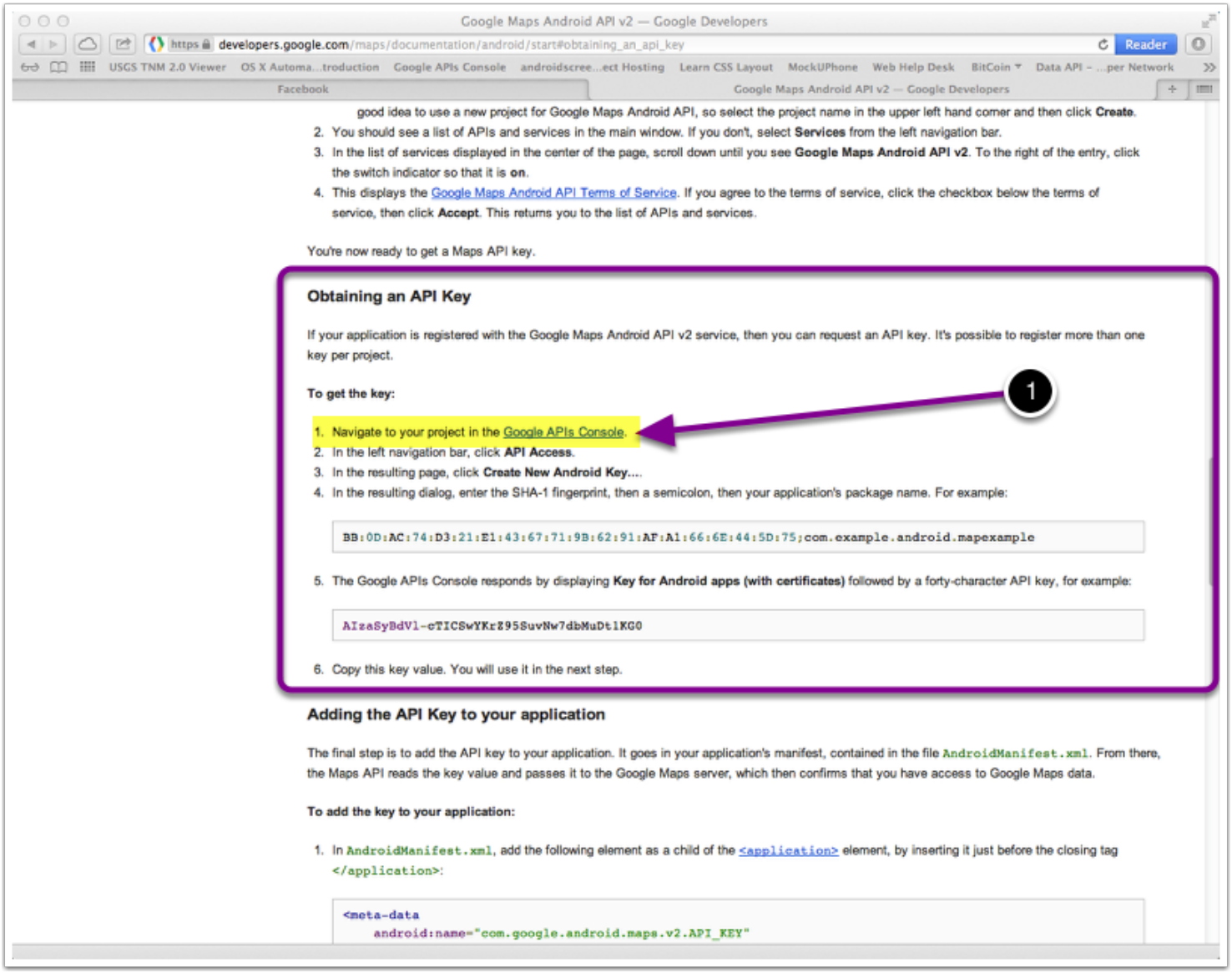
Login to your account at the Google Developers Website (developers.google.com). When you do, click on the link 'Getting Started'.

Getting Started with the Google API v2



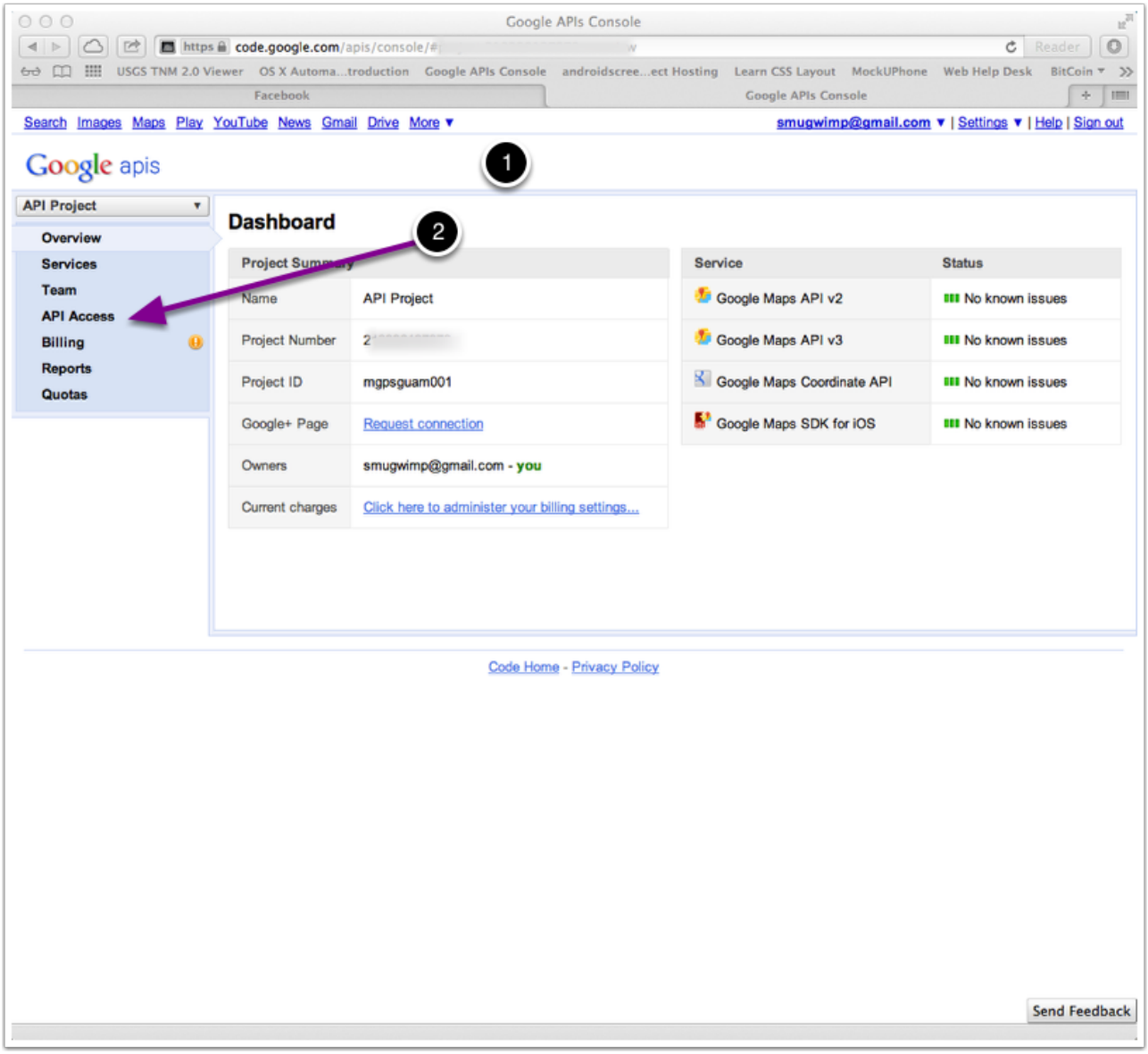
1) Click on 'Obtaining an API Key' (or scroll down to the subsection manually)

Obtaining an API Key Subsection



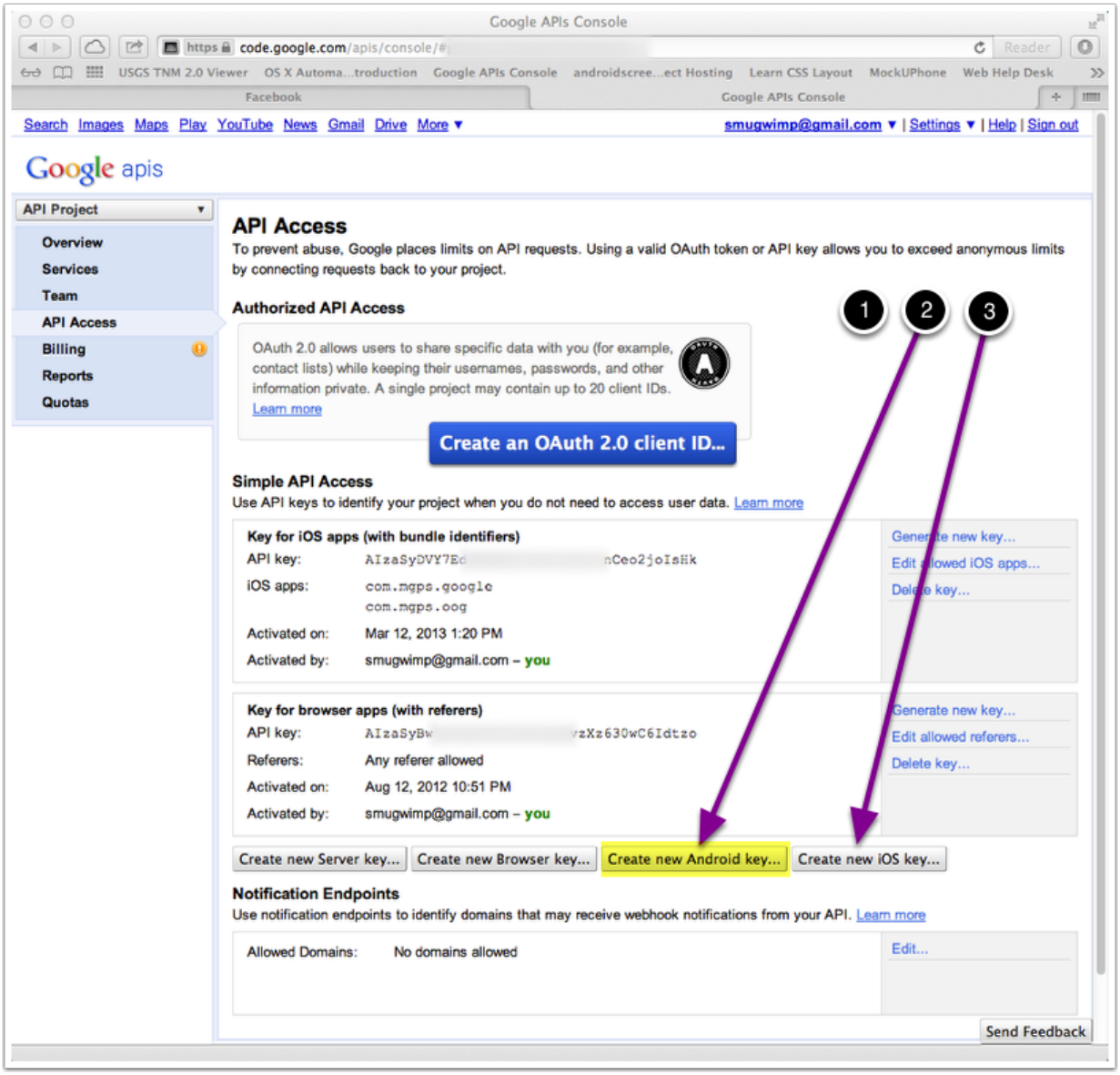
Click on 'Navigate to your project in the Google API Console'

Google Developer Dashboard



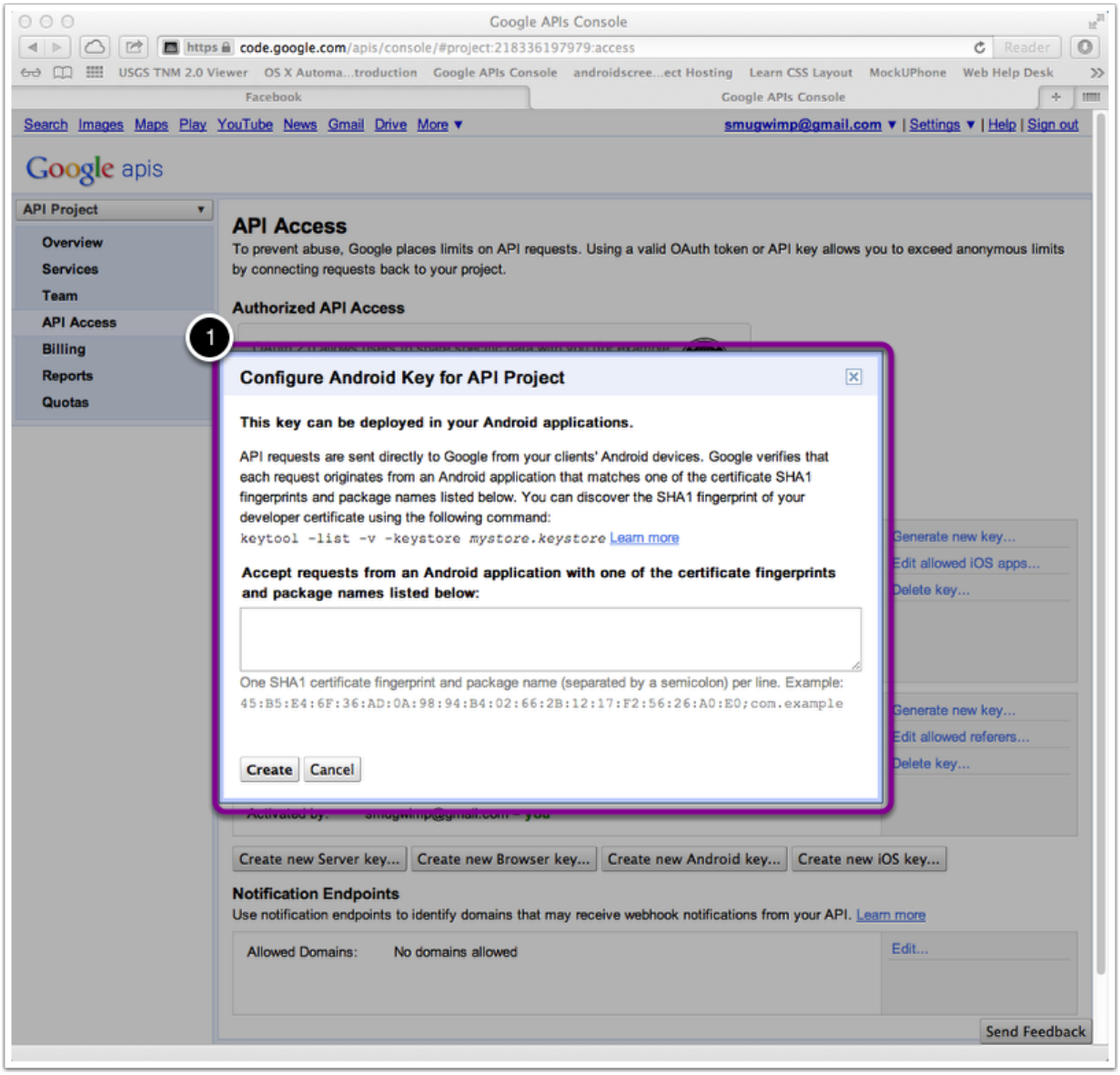
1) You should arrive at your API 'dashboard'. You'll see a summary of your current Google Service subscriptions, and the status of them.
2) Click on the link marked 'API Access'

Google Developer API Access Summary



1) You should arrive at your API page. It will have a listing of your current API's (if available)
2) Click on the button marked 'Create new Android key...'
3) If you need an iOS key, it's this button. But for the moment, we're doing Android.

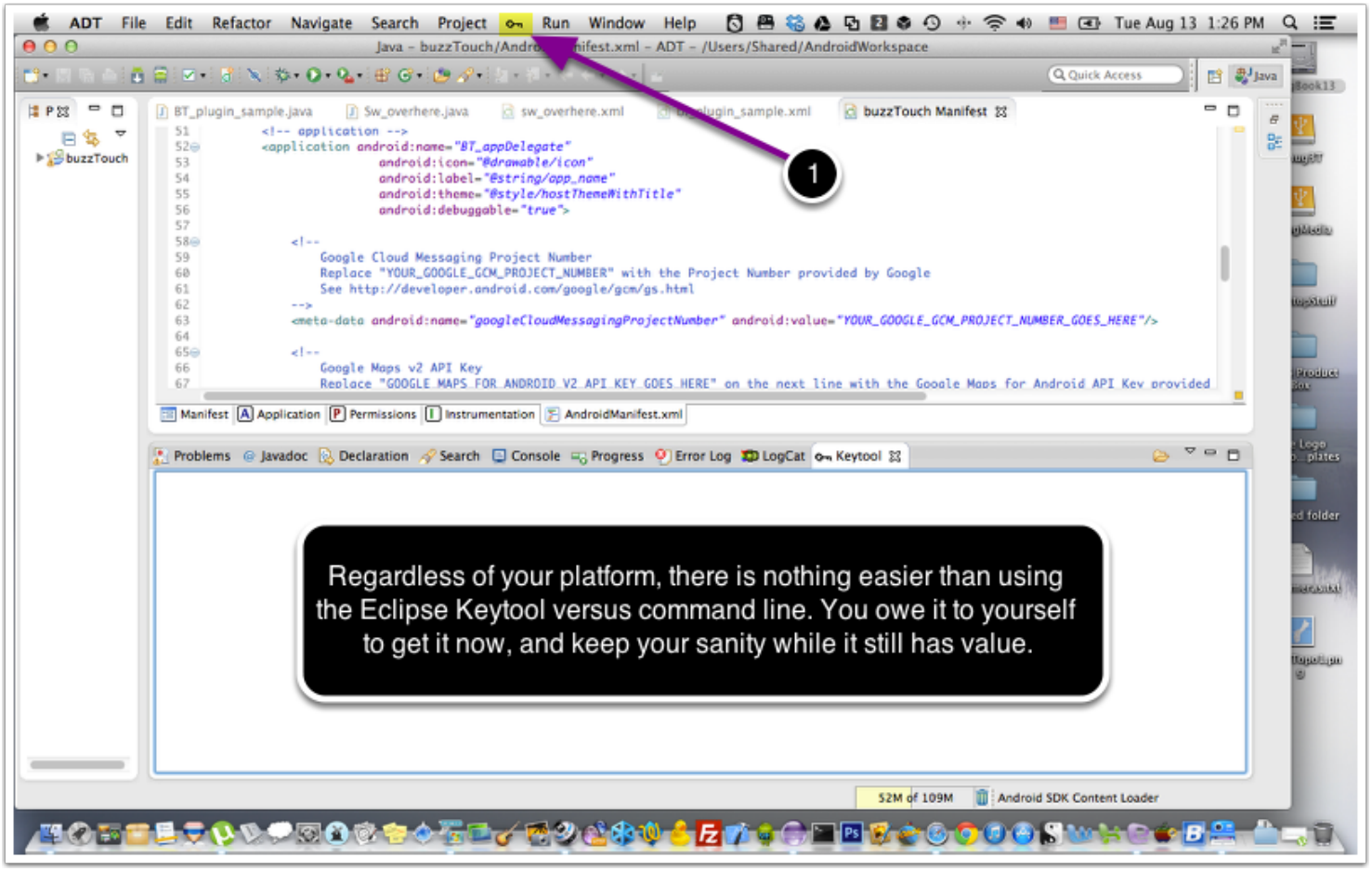
SHA1 Key and Project Name entry



1) Ok this box is asking you for the SHA1 fingerprint for your (intended) Android application.

So for a minute, let's move over to Eclipse, where I hope you've already installed the Eclipse Keytool. If you haven't done it already, step back and complete that before proceeding. If you need instruction, Mark (GoNorthWest) did an excellent job and details can be found in this BT Forum Post.

Eclipse Keytool

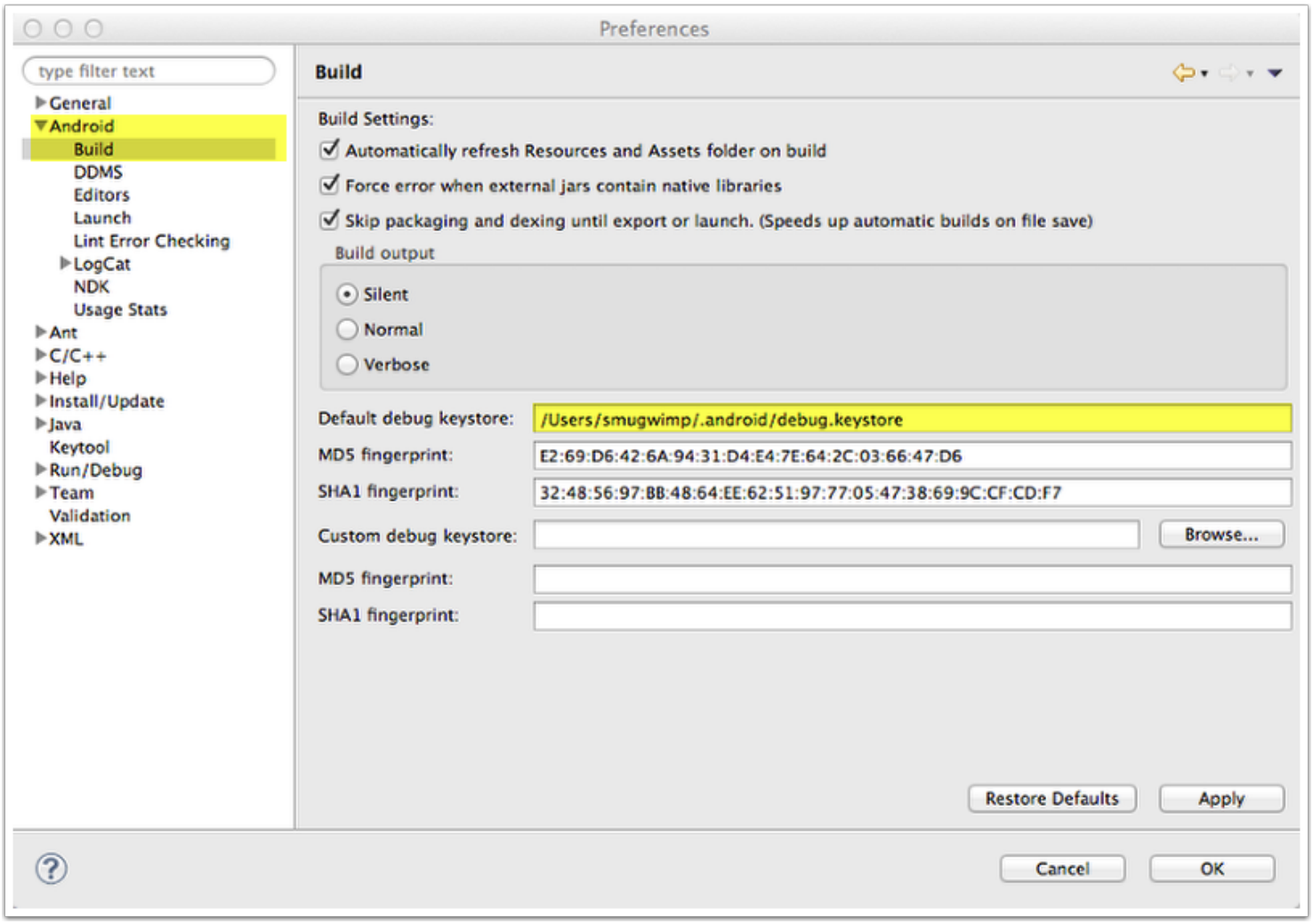


Click on the key tool menu item.

1) If you need to create and open a keystore, do so.
2) If you just need to open a keystore, do so.

Either way, you'll need to open your keystore. You'll have two; Debug and Release. It really depends on you, but I typically go ahead and install my 'Release' keys into my apps, because it's one less thing to worry about later. And sometimes dealing with so many API keys, the boundary of 'Debug' and 'Release' can get confusing. It's up to you.

Forget Waldo. Where is my debug and release keystore kept at?



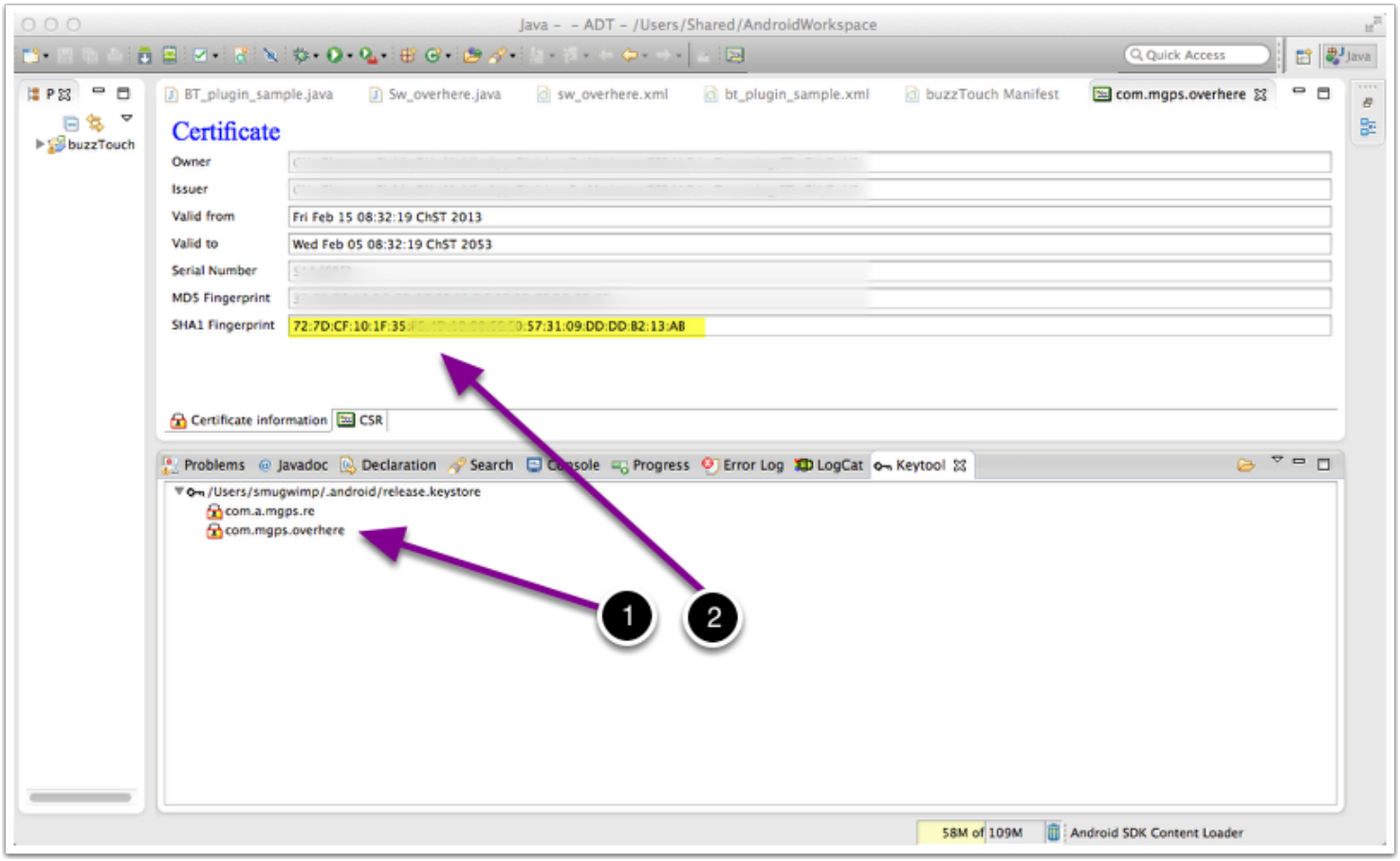
On the macintosh, the android keystores are in a hidden folder named '.android' which is located within your user directory (the same spot as documents, videos, music, etcetera, but you usually cannot see it. However, you can navigate to it using the keytool - go to your user directory and look inside the '.android' directory. Your debug keystore will be named 'debug.keystore' and your release keystore will be named whatever 'you' named it, if you have created one already. Otherwise when you do create one, just call it 'release.keystore'. It makes it easier on you later when you're looking again.

On the PC it depends on your Windows Version.

In XP it 'should' be located at C:\Documents and Settings\[User Name]\.android
In Vista/7+ it 'should' be located at C:\Users\.android

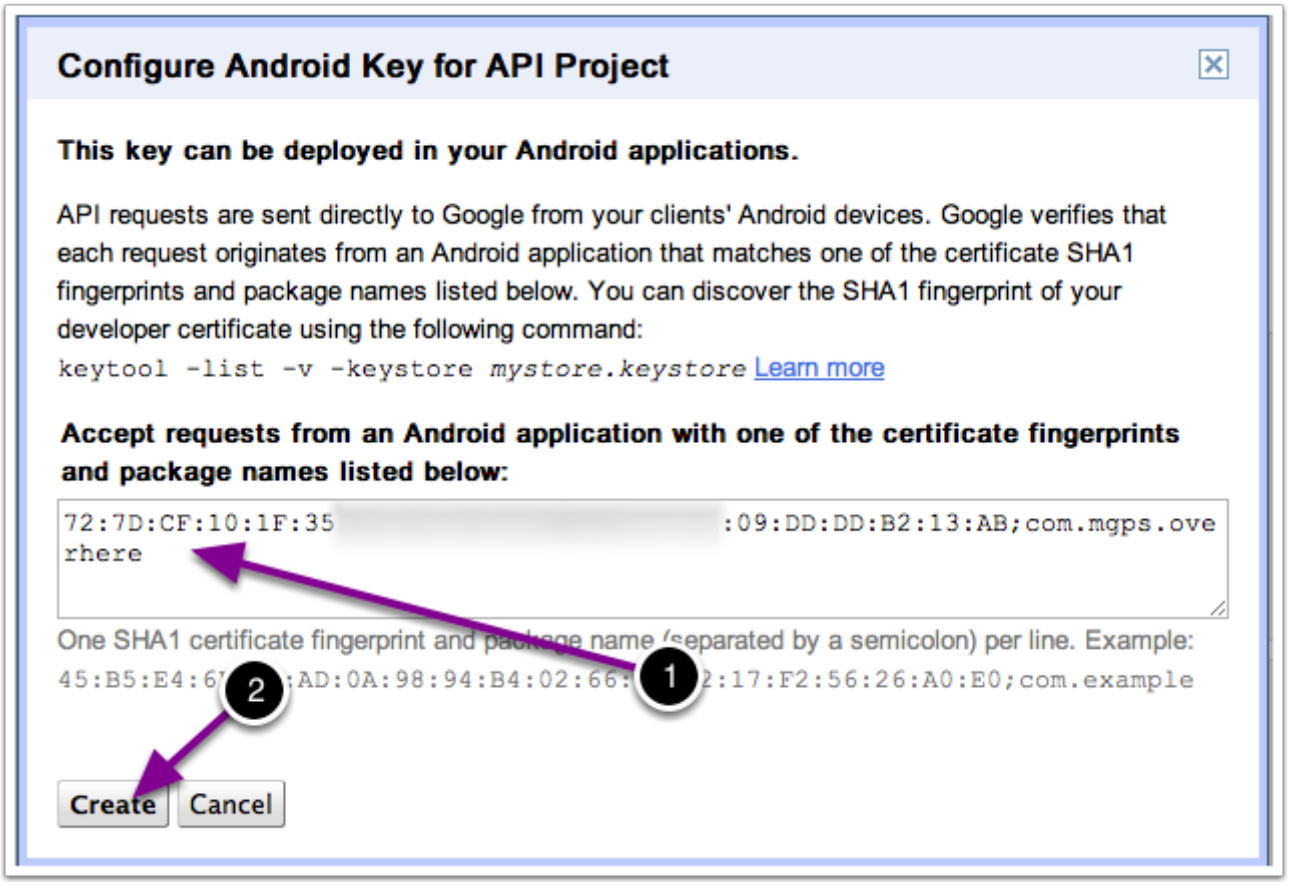
Regardless of platform, if you go to your Eclipse preferences, under the 'Android > Build' section, you should have a field with the location of your default keystore location.

Getting your SHA1 Fingerprint from Eclipse Keytool



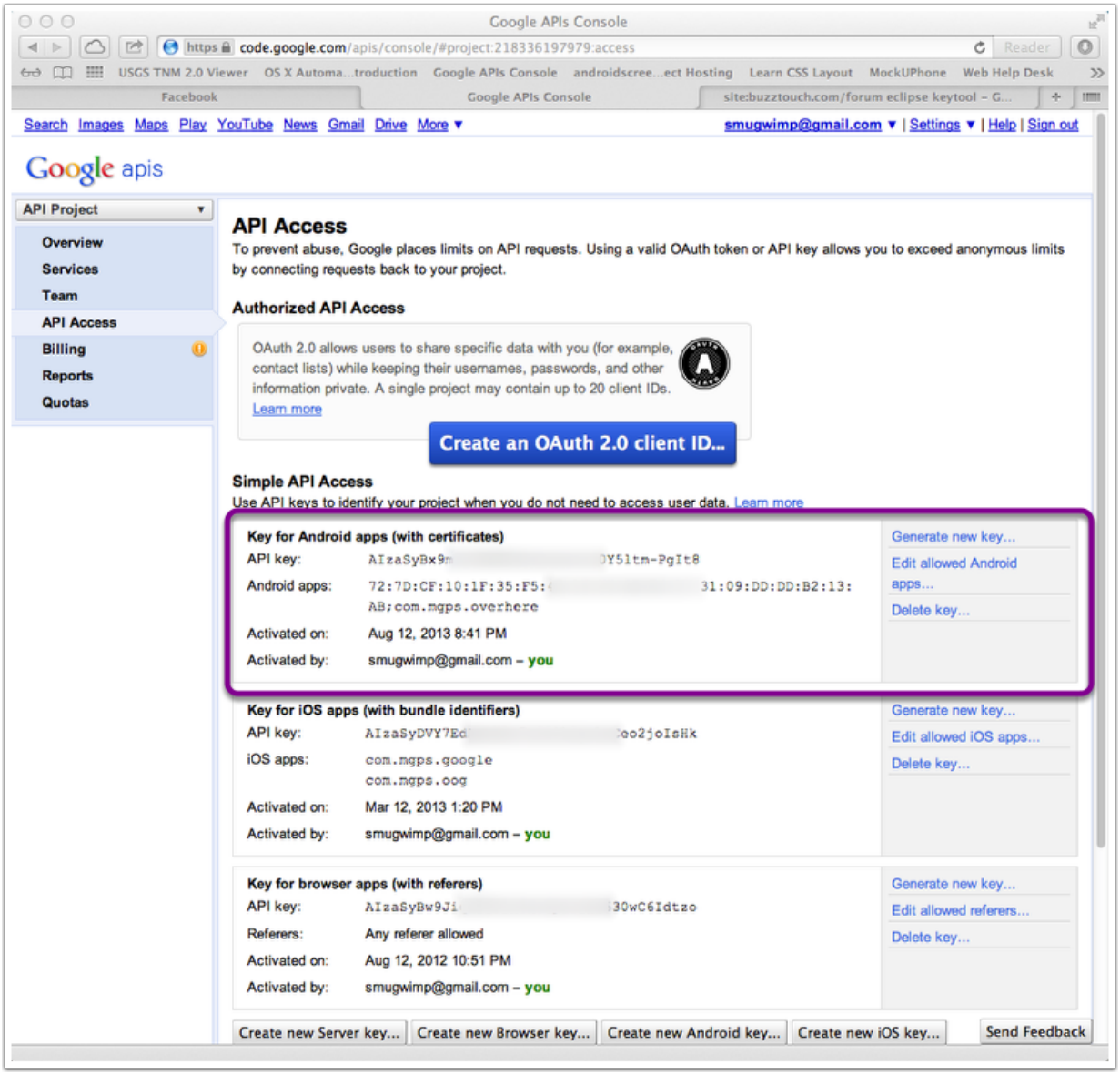
1) With your keytool open, select the app that you wish to generate an API Key for (one API per app)
2) Copy the SHA1 Fingerprint that will be assigned to your app when you compile it for release
3) Return to your Google API Console Web Page

Entering your SHA1 Fingerprint and App Name



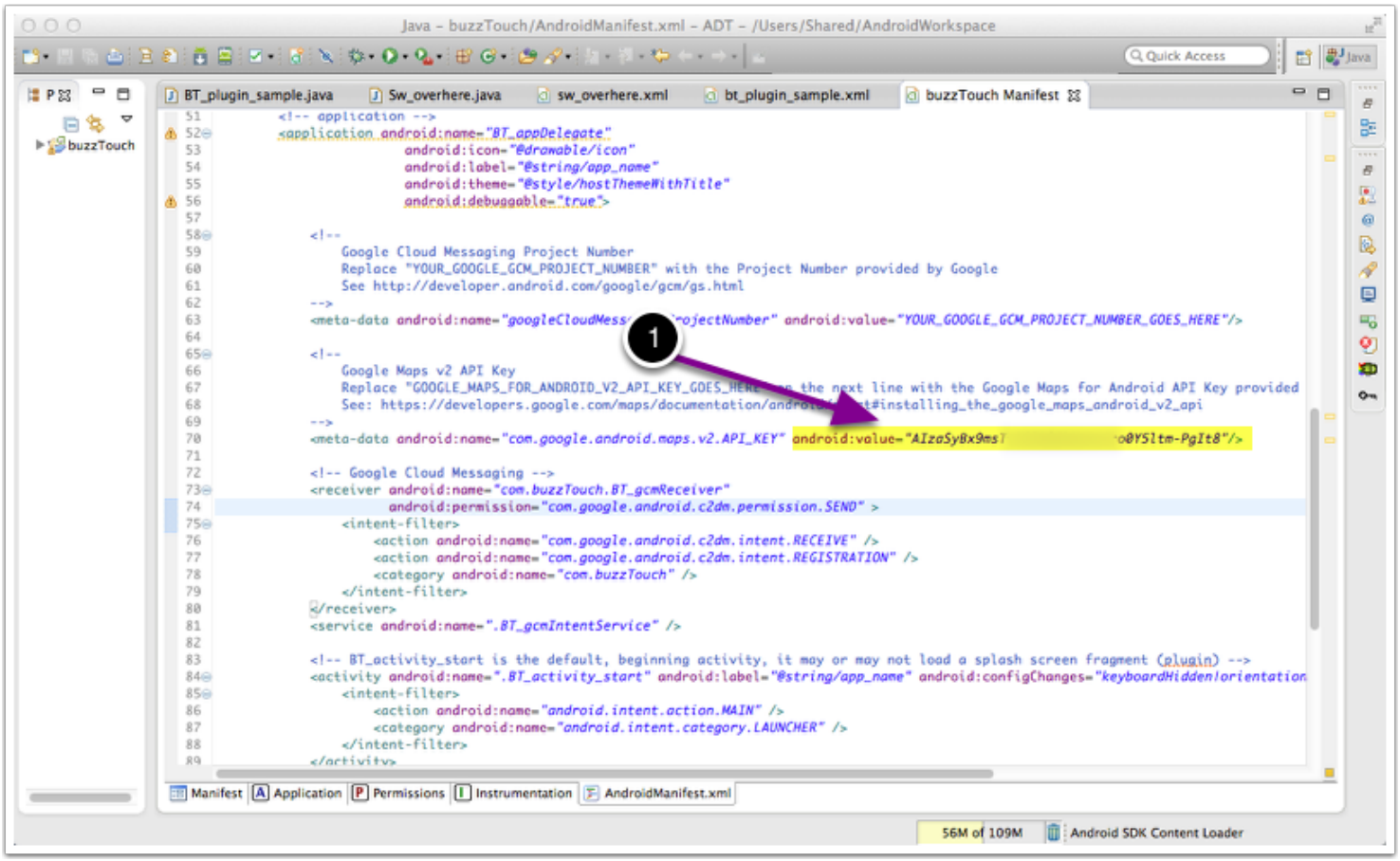
1) Paste your SHA1 Fingerprint in the dialog box. Add a semicolon (;) and the name of your app (com.something).
2) When you're finished, Press the 'Create' button

Viewing your newly generated Google Map API Key for Android



There you go! Just copy the API Key in the New record of your API Summary page...

Pasting your API key into the project AndroidManifest.xml file within Eclipse



1) Paste your newly aquired API Key between the quotation marks, replacing the 'holder' text.
2) **Remember** if you generated a 'Release' key, then you need to generate 'Release' builds for the API to correctly operate. Same principle applies if you generated a 'Debug' build of the API key.