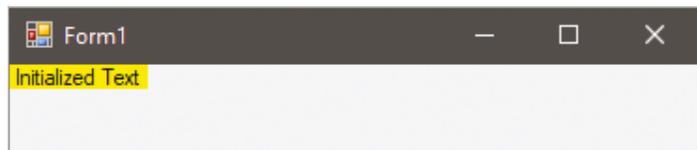# Coding property values

In addition to setting property design values for your application in the **Properties** window, you may also set some text and color values in programming code, so the properties get assigned their initial values (are "initialized") when the Form first loads.

Statements to initialize property values should be placed within the Form's **Load** event-handler. This executes the statements it contains when it is called by the action of the Form loading – just as the **Click** event-handler executes its statements when it is called by the action of a user clicking the **Button**.

Initializing Control properties

1 Click on **File**, **New**, **Project** then create a new **Windows Forms App** and name it "Initialize"

2 Click and drag a **Label** item from the Toolbox's **Common Controls** category, or double-click on it, to add a Label control to a blank default Form

3 In the Form Designer window, double-click anywhere on the default Form to launch the **Code** editor – the cursor is automatically placed in the Form's **Load** event-handler section of code, ready to add statements

4 Type an instruction to set the Label's background color
Label1.BackColor = Color.Yellow

5 On the next line, add an instruction to set the Label's text
Label1.Text = "Initialized Text"

6 Click on the **Start** button to run the application and see that the Label properties initialize with the values you have specified

Hot tip

Use the **Properties** window to set design features such as fonts and layout – only use code to initialize text or color values.

VB

Initialize

Hot tip

The Visual Basic **Color** object lets you specify a wide range of colors. Try adding an instruction to set this label's **ForeColor** property to **Color.Red**.

Initializing Form properties

1 Click the **Stop Debugging** button to halt the Initialize application and return once more to the **Code** editor at the Form's **Load** event-handler section of code

2 Type an instruction to attempt to set the Form's background to blue, then hit **Enter**
Form1.BackColor = Color.Blue

3 Notice that a wavy underline now appears beneath this line of code – place the mouse pointer over the red wavy line and read the **ToolTip** message that pops up

```
Form1.BackColor = Color.Blue
    Property My.MyProject.MyForms.Form1 As Form1
    'Form1' cannot refer to itself through its default instance; use 'Me' instead.
```

4 The ToolTip message means you cannot refer to the Form by its name within its own event-handler, so change the instruction to see the wavy underline disappear
Me.BackColor = Color.Blue

5 Add an instruction to set the Form's text caption
Me.Text = "Initialized Caption"

6 Click on the **Start** button to run the application and see that the Form properties initialize with the values you have specified

> **Don't forget**
>
> You need to hit the **Enter** key after typing each statement so that only one statement appears on each line.

> **Beware**
>
> Use the special **Me** keyword in place of the Form's name if you want to address to the Form.