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# L.L.Bean

**L.L.Bean, Inc.**,<sup>[3]</sup> branded as **L.L.Bean**, is an American, privately held e-commerce, mail-order, and retail company founded in 1912 by Leon Leonwood Bean. The company is currently based in Freeport, Maine, United States. It specializes in clothing and outdoor recreation equipment. Its annual sales were USD \$1.6 billion in 2015.<sup>[2]</sup>

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## Company history

L.L.Bean was founded in 1912 by its namesake, hunter and fisherman Leon Leonwood Bean in Freeport, Maine. The company began as a one-room



L.L.Bean in Yonkers, NY

operation selling a single product, the Maine Hunting Shoe (also known as duck boots<sup>[4]</sup>). Bean had developed a waterproof boot, which is a combination of lightweight leather uppers and rubber bottoms, that he sold to hunters. He obtained a list of nonresident Maine hunting license holders, prepared a descriptive mail order circular, set up a shop in his brother's basement in Freeport, Maine, and started a nationwide mail-order business. By 1912, he was selling the "Bean Boot", or Maine Hunting Shoe, through a four-page mail-order catalog, and the boot remains a staple of the company's outdoor image. Defects in the initial design led to 90% of the original production run being returned: Bean made good on his money-back guarantee, corrected the design, and continued selling them.<sup>[1]</sup>

The 220,000-square-foot (20,000-square-meter) L.L.Bean retail store campus in Freeport, ME, is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with more than 3 million visitors per year.<sup>[5]</sup> As a privately held company, L.L.Bean does not disclose financials.

Leon L. Bean died on February 5, 1967, in Pompano Beach, Florida. He is buried in Freeport's Webster Cemetery.<sup>[6]</sup> The company passed into the directorship of Bean's grandson, Leon Gorman, from that time until 2001, when Gorman decided to take the position of Chairman, leaving the position of CEO to Christopher McCormick, the first non-family member to assume the title.<sup>[7]</sup> On May 19, 2013 Shawn Gorman, 47, a great-grandson of the company's founder, was elected L.L.Bean's chairman. The company announced a \$125,000 donation to a new scholarship fund upon Leon Gorman's death in 2015, representing about 2.5 years of tuition at his alma mater, Bowdoin College.<sup>[8]</sup>

Stephen Smith was named CEO in November 2015, the first time in its 103-year history that a CEO has been hired from outside the company.<sup>[9]</sup>

## Product line

Since its inception, the company has branched out not only to variations on its boots but to other outdoor equipment such as firearms, backpacks, tents, as well as producing a full line of clothing, which is now its mainstay.

### L.L.Bean, Inc.

L.L.Bean	
<b>Type</b>	Private
<b>Industry</b>	Retail
<b>Founded</b>	1912
<b>Founder</b>	Leon Leonwood Bean
<b>Headquarters</b>	15 Casco Street <div>Freeport, Maine,</div> <div>United States</div>
<b>Number of locations</b>	42 stores <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Area served</b>	Worldwide
<b>Key people</b>	Shawn Gorman <div>(Chairman)</div> <div>Steve Smith</div> <div>(President and CEO)</div>
<b>Products</b>	Clothing and Outdoor Equipment
<b>Revenue</b>	<span>▼</span> <span>US\$</span> 1.6 billion (FY 2016) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Number of employees</b>	5,100 (2016) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Website</b>	<span>www.llbean.com</span> ( <span>http://www.llbean.com</span> )



Leon Leonwood Bean (1872-1967)

L.L.Bean is a global company sourcing its products from the U.S. and across the globe. It is one of the last multi-channel merchants to still own and operate a manufacturing facility in the United States. Its Brunswick, Maine factory employs more than 450 people who hand-craft the company's iconic products such as the Maine Hunting Shoe, L.L.Bean Boot, Boat and Totes, dog beds, leather goods and backpacks.<sup>[10]</sup>

In 2000, L.L.Bean formed a contract with Subaru, making L.L.Bean the official outfitter of Subaru, spawning an "L.L.Bean edition" Subaru Outback and Forester for the USA market. The L.L.Bean trim levels on American Subaru vehicles are the top-spec versions, with leather and wood trimmed interiors and all available options offered as standard equipment. This relationship with Subaru ended June 28, 2008.<sup>[11]</sup>

In 2010, L.L.Bean established a more stylish sub-brand known as L.L.Bean Signature. The Signature line is a modern interpretation of L.L.Bean classics featuring a more modern fit.<sup>[12]</sup>

## Retail Stores

Along with a number of retail and outlet ("factory") stores, the company maintains its flagship store on Main Street in Freeport. This branch, originally opened in 1917, has been open 24 hours a day since 1951, with the exception of two Sundays in 1962 when Maine changed its blue laws; a town vote reinstated the store's open-door policy.<sup>[13]</sup> The flagship also closed to honor the death of President Kennedy, as well as that of Bean himself, as well as his grandson Leon Gorman.<sup>[14]</sup>

L.L. Bean, for its part, has invested heavily in activities for both visitors and residents in Freeport, including their Outdoor Discovery Schools, Christmas light displays, and their Summer Concert Series, which has attracted artists such as Grace Potter, Lake Street Dive, Edwin McCain, Great Big Sea, Buckwheat Zydeco, and Rockapella.

L.L.Bean opened its first Outlet store in North Conway, New Hampshire in 1988.

The L.L. Bean Bootmobile, which travels the country throughout the year, also serves as a mobile store during its college tour, selling Bean Boots, custom laces, and more.



An L.L.Bean store in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at Ross Park Mall.



Rockapella performs at the L.L. Bean Summer Concert Series, July 2003

## Political activity

In January 2017, there was a call from a group of political activists to boycott L. L. Bean after it was disclosed that Linda Bean, one of the descendants of founder Leon Leonwood Bean who sits on the Board of Directors, had donated \$60,000 to a political action committee that supported Donald Trump.<sup>[15][16]</sup> There were assertions that the contribution may be illegal.<sup>[17]</sup> Trump posted at twitter, in support of Linda Bean after calls for the boycott, "Thank you to Linda Bean of L.L.Bean for your great support and courage. People will support you even more now. Buy L.L.Bean." <sup>[18][19]</sup> The company said it had not donated to Trump, nor have any of the other directors or any of the 50 other Bean heirs.<sup>[20][21][22][23][24]</sup> The company had declined to say if the publicity hurt sales, but its sales were flat for a second straight year in 2016 after a relative's political contributions in support of U.S. President Donald Trump.<sup>[25][26]</sup>

## Outdoor Discovery Schools

L.L.Bean has education programs connected to many of its retail outlets to support the outdoor interests of its customers. Customers can sign up to participate in a number of outdoor activities: all equipment and instruction are provided. Activities include archery, clay shooting, fly casting, and sea kayaking. More advanced classes are conducted as well, and must be reserved in advance. Snowshoeing and cross country skiing are available December to March. All of the other retail stores (there are now 20 total outside of Maine) offer fly casting and kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding.<sup>[27]</sup>

## In popular culture

- Netflix Show *Luke Cage (TV Series)* references the company's return policy in Season 1, Episode 3. The character Cornell "Cottonmouth" Stokes (Mahershala Ali) is quoted saying "There ain't no return policy, this ain't L.L.Bean."<sup>[28]</sup>
- Netflix Show *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* character Jacqueline Voorhees (Jane Krakowski) jokes that the title character is "a model for L.L. Bean's performance fleeces" in Season 2 Episode 3.<sup>[29]</sup>
- The *Official Preppy Handbook*, an ironic description of upper-class and upper-middle-class life in America, describes L.L.Bean as "nothing less than Prep mecca."<sup>[30]</sup>
- Author Hunter S. Thompson referred to wearing L.L.Bean shorts in a number of his works, most notably during the "Wave Speech" featured in chapter 8 of *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*.<sup>[31]</sup>
- The 1990 Paul Rudnick novel *I'll Take It* was a humorous tale of a Long Island mother taking some of her children on a Fall shopping trip through New England with L.L.Bean being the final destination. As the plot unfolds, the mother divulges to her son that she is actually planning to rob L.L.Bean in order to update her and her husband's furniture in their retirement.<sup>[32]</sup>



L.L.Bean shoe car (Bootmobile) in Freeport, Maine, July 7, 2012

- The blog *Your LL Bean Boyfriend* features the male models of the LL Bean Catalog paired with captions that the perfect boyfriend might say.<sup>[33]</sup>
- In the film *Beetlejuice*, whilst looking around the horribly outdated house the interior designer character Otho exclaims "Ooo. *Deliver me from L. L. Bean!*"<sup>[34]</sup>

## Locations

### Retail and outlet stores

- United States
  - Colorado: Lone Tree <sup>[35]</sup>
  - Connecticut: South Windsor, Danbury ; Outlet Store(s): Orange
  - Illinois: South Barrington, Skokie (Old Orchard Mall)
  - Kansas: Leawood
  - Maine: Freeport (Campus of stores open 24 hours/day: Flagship Store with attached Hunting & Fishing Store; Bike, Boat & Ski and Home store); Outlet Store(s): Freeport, Ellsworth, Bangor
  - Massachusetts: Burlington, Mansfield, Dedham; Outlet Store(s): Wareham
  - Michigan: Clinton Township (Mall at Partridge Creek) <sup>[36]</sup>
  - Minnesota: Bloomington (Mall of America) <sup>[35]</sup>
  - New Hampshire: West Lebanon; Outlet store(s): Concord, Nashua, North Conway, North Hampton
  - New Jersey: Marlton, Paramus, Freehold
  - New York: Albany (Colonie Center), Victor (Rochester Metro), Yonkers, Fayetteville; Outlet Store(s): Lake George
  - Ohio: Columbus (Easton Town Center), Lyndhurst (Legacy Village), Cincinnati (Kenwood Collections)
  - Pennsylvania: Center Valley, Pittsburgh (Ross Park Mall), King of Prussia Mall
  - Rhode Island: Garden City Center, Cranston
  - Utah: Park City <sup>[37]</sup>
  - Vermont: Burlington <sup>[35]</sup>
  - Virginia: Charlottesville, McLean (Tysons Corner), Richmond, Virginia Beach

### International Presence

- Japan (25 stores)<sup>[38]</sup>

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## External links

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- Official website (<https://www.llbean.com/>) (Mobile (<https://m.llbean.com>))
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