

[WWD.com/retail-news/specialty-stores/jack-wills-expands-in-the-us-6882127](http://www.wwd.com/retail-news/specialty-stores/jack-wills-expands-in-the-us-6882127)

April 4, 2013

## Jack Wills Expands in the U.S.

By DAVID MOIN



The Jack Wills store in New Haven.

Photo By Kyle Erickson

Jack Wills, the British brand playing to the preppy college crowd, has a new wrinkle in its U.S. expansion — shopping centers.

Not the big enclosed kind, at least for now. Instead, the company has opted for Suburban Square, an outdoor shopping center in Ardmore, Pa., housing Macy's, Trader Joe's, a farmer's market, Apple and J. Crew, among other stores. "This is not at all a push to open in malls, but we think this a smart move," Jim Hardy, president of Jack Wills Inc., told WWD.

Ardmore is a Mainline suburb of Philadelphia, and not far from Villanova University and Bryn Mawr College, which should provide the audiences Jack Wills targets. Suburban Square is one of the nation's oldest shopping centers, built in the Thirties, Deco-style, with outdoor gardens and seating. It's also close to King of Prussia, one of the nation's largest malls, which Hardy says, is "not our cup of tea at this point in time. We are still concentrated in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic but we know as we continue to push further south and west, the shopping center of some kind, call it a mall, or an outdoor center, is part of the American landscape." In some locations, an enclosed mall might be the "only game in town" and the right play for Jack Wills, Hardy acknowledged. But currently, "There's nothing on our radar that is big and enclosed."

Still, Ardmore marks a shift in the real estate strategy, which generally has opted for quaint and historical buildings. The 1,300-square-foot Ardmore shop will open in late May. Even before, on April 26, Jack Wills will open a 1,000-square-foot unit in Princeton, N.J., in a location that seems typical to the brand. Hardy called it "perfect," noting that it's at 46 Nassau Street, in the Palmer Square complex adjacent to Princeton University.

For character, the Princeton and Ardmore stores will be designed with fireplaces, repurposed flooring from old schools, vintage fixtures from the United Kingdom and the signature pink and navy striped cash wraps. The Princeton shop will mount moose antlers above its entrance. Both locations will carry the full assortment of women's and men's apparel and home products. Jack Wills currently owns and operates 77 stores in the U.K., Ireland, Hong Kong, the Middle East and the U.S. With Princeton and Ardmore, the U.S. count grows to 15 stores.

WWD

Copyright © 2013 Fairchild Fashion Media. All rights reserved.