

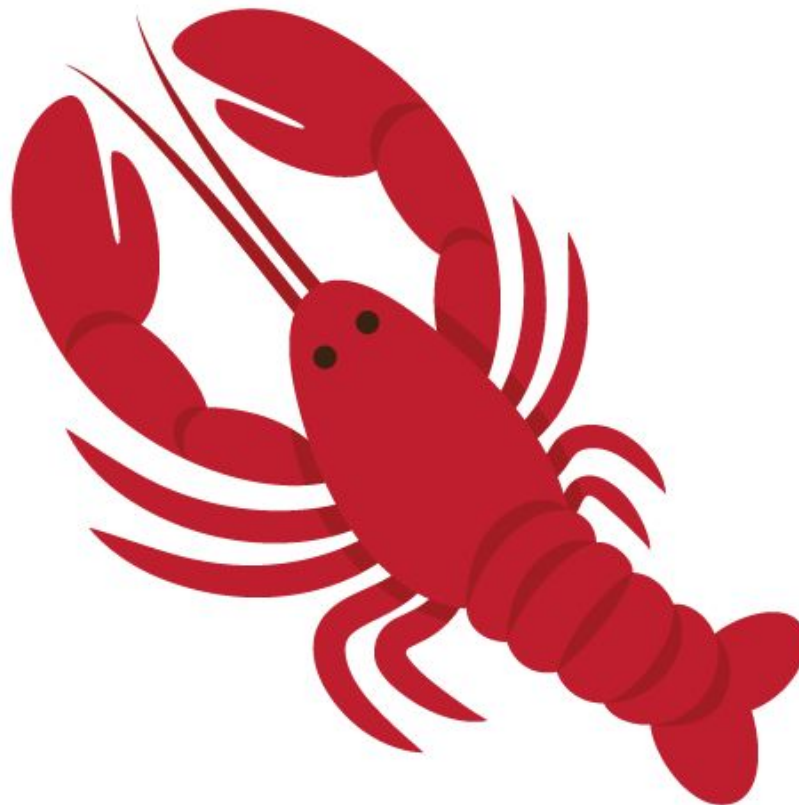
Proposal for Lobster Emoji

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1. Abstract

This proposal requests the addition of the lobster to the Unicode emoji library. Lobsters are a class of large marine crustaceans which are well-known for their distinctive coloration, appearance and flavor in seafood cuisine. Various species of lobster are found on the seafloors and beaches of every ocean in the world, and in the markets and kitchens of many countries.¹ Adding a lobster emoji will complete the representation of popular crustaceans in the emoji collection.



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¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobster>

² Image credit: Aphelandra Messer

2. Introduction

The lobster has secured a notable place in the popular imagination, inspiring art, music, toys, books and more. In the seafood industry lobster is sought after for its subtle flavor and has come to be an expensive delicacy.

Lobsters are well known for their red color, large claws and long segmented tails. There are many species of lobster, the most well known being the American lobster or “Maine lobster.”

Lobsters live in burrows on the seafloor, and are found in every ocean in the world. Until the 19th century, lobsters were considered low quality food in Europe and the Americas and were fed to prisoners and servants.³ An article in Pacific Standard describes how the lobster first rose to culinary popularity in the Atlantic:

When the railways started to spread through America, transportation managers realized something interesting: If no one knew what lobster was, trains could serve it to passengers as if it were a rare, exotic item, even though it was very cheap for those running the railroad to procure it. Inland passengers were intrigued. This lobster was delicious. Passengers, who didn't know lobster was considered trash food on the coast, started to love it and began to ask for it even after they left the train. It became a popular food.⁴

That popularity has continued into the 21st century. The revenue of the lobster industry in the U.S. state of Maine alone, historically a lobster powerhouse, is estimated at \$1.5 billion USD in 2016, with almost 300,000 tons caught that year.⁵ Canada has also become a big producer.

The global demand for lobster is growing steadily.⁶ Maine lobster in particular is becoming a popular luxury item in China.⁷ It is the most fished species of lobster, accounting for 41% of lobster tonnage in 2010. Other popular species include the Norway lobster, Caribbean spiny lobster and Japanese fan lobster, as shown in the table below.

Lobsters have been featured culturally in a variety of non-culinary contexts. Influential artists including Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali and Jeff Koons have all depicted lobsters in their work.⁸

³ <https://www.history.com/news/a-taste-of-lobster-history>

⁴ <https://psmag.com/economics/how-lobster-got-fancy-59440>

⁵ <http://www.pressherald.com/2017/02/17/maine-lobstermen-oppose-increase-in-cost-of-commercial-fishing-licenses/>

⁶ <http://www.pressherald.com/2016/12/21/global-demand-for-lobster-keeps-surging-despite-record-high-prices/>

⁷ <https://qz.com/931920/china-has-finally-developed-a-taste-for-lobster-and-its-keeping-maine-fishermen-flush-with-cash/>

⁸ <http://www.dailyartdaily.com/famous-lobsters-art/>

The great American poet Anne Sexton penned a poem entitled “Lobster,”⁹ and the well-known author David Foster Wallace published a somewhat controversial essay called “Consider The Lobster” for Gourmet magazine in 2004, now available in a book by the same name.¹⁰ In music, the song “Rock Lobster” by The B-52s reached the top 40 list in several countries in 1979.¹¹ Lobster has been referenced as a sign of opulence in several recent hip-hop songs by artists like Beyoncé and Trinidad James.¹² The 2015 film “The Lobster” brought in \$15.7 million at the box office.¹³ One of the nine original Beanie Babies was a lobster aptly dubbed “Pinchers,” pictured below.¹⁴ June 15 is National Lobster Day in the U.S.¹⁵

Global lobster harvest by species, 2010¹⁶

<i>Common name</i>	<i>Weight (tons)</i>	<i>Weight (percent)</i>
American lobster	115651	41.25
Norway lobster	66544	23.73
Caribbean spiny lobster	35642	12.71
Tropical spiny lobsters	22128	7.89
Japanese fan lobster	9114	3.25
Australian spiny lobster	5502	1.96
European lobster	5083	1.81
Southern rock lobster	4368	1.56
Cape rock lobster	3418	1.22
Red rock lobster	2871	1.02
Others	10043	3.60

⁹ <https://genius.com/Anne-sexton-lobster-annotated>

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consider_the_Lobster

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_Lobster

¹² https://www.buzzfeed.com/venessawong/after-beyonce-shout-out-red-lobster-makes-lobsterworthy-shir?utm_term=.knreavEEv#.is3LpKkkK

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lobster

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beanie_Babies

¹⁵ <http://www.neaq.org/blog/june-15-national-lobster-day/>

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobster_fishing#Distribution_and_species



"Pinchers" the lobster¹⁷

3. Names

CLDR short name: lobster

CLDR keywords: lobster, food, shellfish

4. Selection Factors: Inclusion

A. Compatability

While there have been many requests for a lobster emoji, most popular messaging services have not included a lobster emoji yet. This proposal seeks to rectify that.

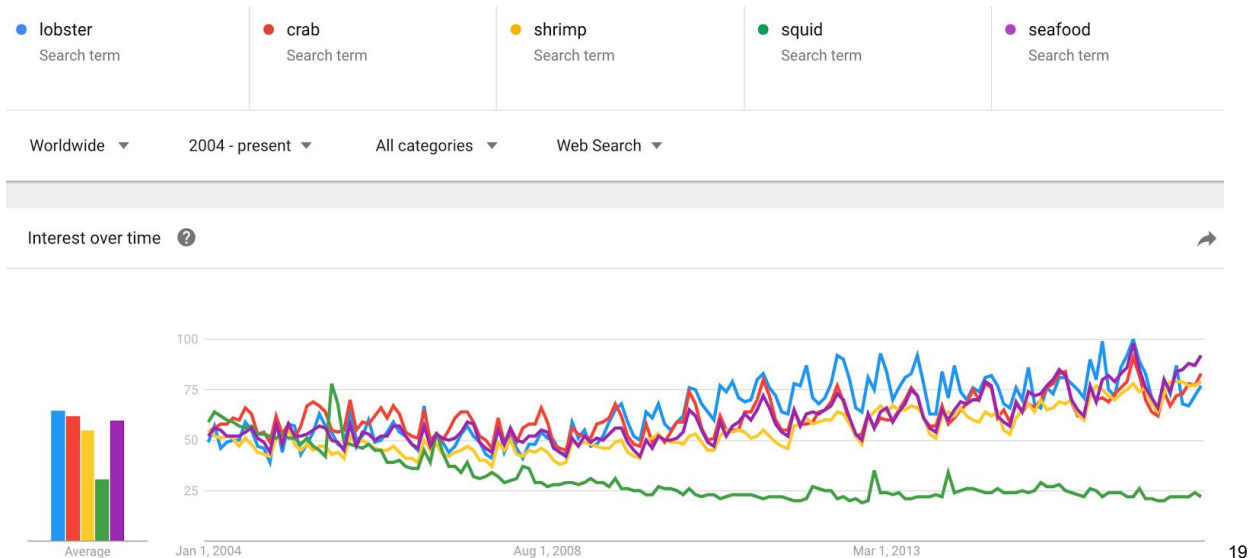
¹⁷ Image credit: <http://www.tycollector.com/buddies/pinchers-9424.htm>

B. Expected Usage Level

B1. Frequency

We expect use of the lobster emoji to be high in coastal regions throughout the world, as lobster is found in every ocean and is a popular featured ingredient in seafood. List25.com cites the lobster as the 20th most Googled animal in 2014.¹⁸

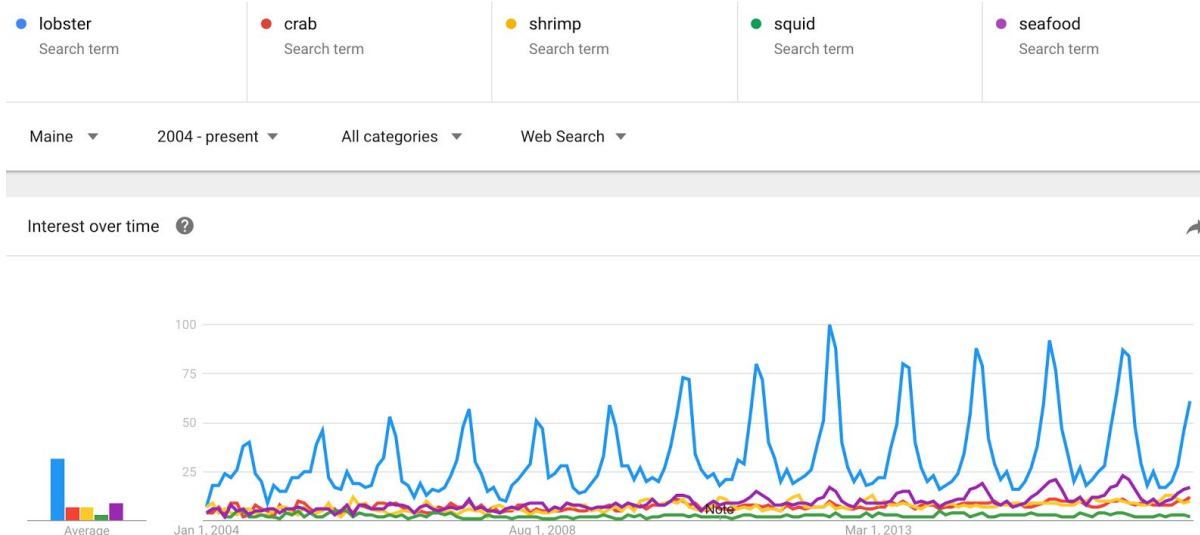
The following Google Trends data shows the term “lobster” (blue) is more popular worldwide than “crab”, “shrimp”, “squid” and even “seafood”, since roughly July 2009. The same is true for the U.S. as a whole and many European nations.



Google Trends shows “lobster” is a particularly popular search term in Maine. The annual trend shows increased interest in the summers when tourism is at its peak.

¹⁸ <http://list25.com/25-most-popular-animals-on-google-search/>

¹⁹ <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&q=lobster,crab,shrimp,squid,seafood>, June 2017



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B2. Multiple Usages

The lobster emoji would be used heavily by restaurant-goers, chefs, fishermen and women, sea divers, and anyone in a coastal region. Additionally, the lobster has inspired the name for an eclectic mix of things. The “lobster mushroom”, “Lobster lake” in Minnesota and “lobster graph” in mathematics are all named for resembling the lobster in shape.²¹ A record label in California and a record store in the U.K. both go by the name “Lobster Records.”²²

Lobsters have also entered our love life, if they weren’t there already. The television show “Friends” popularized the use of lobster as a slang term referring to “your true love that you will always go back to,”²³ due to the claim that lobsters mate for life. While this has been shown by marine scientists to be inaccurate,^{24,25} the slang term remains.

Finally, in New England, lobster is slang for “sunburn.”²⁶

²⁰ <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&geo=US-ME&q=lobster,crab,shrimp,squid,seafood>, June 2017

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypomyces_lactifluorum, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobster_Lake, <http://mathworld.wolfram.com/Lobster.html>

²² <https://lobsterrecords.co.uk/pages/about>, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lobster_Records

²³ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=lobster&defid=1403217>

²⁴ <http://www.snopes.com/critters/wild/lobster.asp>

²⁵ http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/08/0824_040824_lobster_2.html

²⁶ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=lobster&defid=4192861>



Desirea
@Desirearose

Follow



Can we please get a lobster emoji so I can properly tell people when I'm burnt af
[#thanks](#) [#emoji](#) [#lobster](#)

Retweet

1



6:56 AM - 14 Jun 2015



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B3. Use in Sequences

Below is a list of possible sequences which are made possible by the inclusion of the lobster emoji:

1. Cooking lobster: some combination of WOMAN COOK or MAN COOK, COOKING, LOBSTER, FIRE, HOT SPRINGS, POT OF FOOD, SHALLOW PAN OF FOOD, FACE SAVORING FOOD
2. Lobster in a restaurant: FORK AND KNIFE WITH PLATE, WOMAN COOK or MAN COOK, LOBSTER, FACE SAVORING FOOD
3. Seafood: in combination with SHRIMP, FRIED SHRIMP, CRAB, SUSHI, ODEN, FISH CAKE WITH SWIRL, SQUID, OCTOPUS, FISH
4. Cracking the shell of a cooked lobster: combination of HAMMER, PICK, HAMMER AND WRENCH, WRENCH with LOBSTER
5. Lobster roll: LOBSTER with a bread like BREAD, BAGUETTE BREAD, SANDWICH, HOT DOG
6. Lobster ravioli or pasta: SPAGHETTI or DUMPLING, LOBSTER
7. Lobster pizza: LOBSTER, PIZZA
8. Fishing for lobster: MOTOR BOAT, WATER WAVE, ANCHOR, FISHING POLE, LOBSTER
9. Indication of lasting love for a romantic partner: combination of RED HEART, TWO HEARTS, HEART WITH ARROW, COUPLE WITH HEART, FACE BLOWING A KISS, LOBSTER
10. Sunburned on the beach: BEACH WITH UMBRELLA, SUN, SLEEPING FACE, SWEAT DROPLETS, TWELVE O'CLOCK, ONE O'CLOCK, TWO O'CLOCK, THREE O'CLOCK, LOBSTER

²⁷ <https://twitter.com/Desirearose/status/610083479183839232>

C. Image Distinctiveness

Lobsters are markedly different in appearance from the other crustaceans in the emoji list, crabs and shrimp. In comparison to crabs, lobsters have entirely different body shapes. Relative to shrimp, lobsters have large front claws and larger tails. Most shrimp seafood dishes present the shrimp with their tails curled under their bodies. Many shrimp emoji designs depict shrimp with their tails curled.²⁸ In contrast, lobsters are typically seen with their tails extended.

D. Completeness

The lobster represents a major category of aquatic life and culinary experience which is not represented in the current emoji list. Shrimp and crab appear different, have different flavor and are used in different contexts conversationally than lobster.

E. Frequency Requested

There have been several petitions on Change.org requesting a lobster emoji totaling to hundreds of supporters.²⁹ A lobster emoji was included in a Business Insider piece entitled “19 Emojis That Really Should Exist.”³⁰ Numerous Twitter messages mention both the #lobster and #emoji hashtags and showcase the frustration that a lobster emoji doesn’t exist.³¹ Several tweets are displayed below.³² In fact, people have started using a #lobsteremoji hashtag to communicate.³³ This clearly demonstrates a popular demand for a lobster emoji.



²⁸ <http://emojipedia.org/shrimp/>

²⁹ <https://www.change.org/p/unicode-a-lobster-emoji>,
<https://www.change.org/p/we-have-a-crab-emoji-now-it-s-time-for-a-lobster-emoji>

³⁰ <http://www.businessinsider.com/19-emoji-you-wish-existed-2014-1>

³¹ <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23lobster%20%23emoji>, June 2017

³² <https://twitter.com/racheldaniellee/status/738106560166039552>,
<https://twitter.com/naturallyhypex3/status/848715737392926720>,
<https://twitter.com/MarieCHorner/status/791210875982082048>,
<https://twitter.com/TartanSpoon/status/823550694296813568>,
<https://twitter.com/StriiipesParis/status/808705610611097601>,
<https://twitter.com/AnthonyPaesano/status/770415448156495874>

³³ <https://twitter.com/hashtag/LobsterEmoji?src=hash>

 **Anthony Paesano**
@AnthonyPaesano Follow

Why isn't there a #Lobster #emoji ? 🤔
Embarrassed to admit but Ive considered using the Crab or Scorpion in its place
#tuesdaytip #thoughts 🦀🦏

Likes **5**

5:18 PM - 29 Aug 2016

1 5

 **Amanda Lee**
@naturallyhypex3 Follow

I sincerely don't understand why we don't have a #lobsteremoji already!

•
#lobster #lobsterroll...
[instagram.com/p/BSZ9F7RFvJc/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BSZ9F7RFvJc/)

6:56 PM - 2 Apr 2017 from Milwaukee, WI

5


 **CousinsMaineLobster**
@CMLobster Follow

Super excited for the new #lobster #emoji.
Not a #Maine lobster, but I'll take it. ✨🦏✨

Likes **2**

2:08 PM - 10 Jan 2017

2

 **Tim Borden**
@tbchicago1 Follow

#WTF no #lobster #emoji????
#NationalLobsterDay

Like **1**

6:26 AM - 15 Jun 2017 from Chicago, IL

5. Selection Factors: Exclusion

F. Overly Specific

The exclusion of the lobster emoji from the current emoji list places an additional burden on communication for everyone who consumes seafood, works in the fishing industry, or lives in a coastal region.

G. Open-Ended

The lobster emoji would be the first of its kind. Currently there is no lobster-equivalent in the emoji list.

H. Already Representable

There is no equivalent in the current emoji set for the lobster. The Twitter messages above demonstrate the frustration and confusion of having to use the shrimp and crab emojis in place of a lobster emoji.

I. Logos, brands, UI icons, signage, specific people, deities

The lobster cannot be trademarked because it is an animal. Lobsters are shown in the logo of several seafood companies, such as the U.S.-based restaurant franchise Red Lobster. However the lobster is an animal found worldwide, and as such, a lobster symbol has a meaning is more extensive than any one company.

J. Transient

Lobsters have existed for longer than humans, and they've been a popular seafood for centuries. Lobsters will be a popular seafood as long as they are readily available.

K. Faulty Comparison

The crab and shrimp emojis are similar to the lobster emoji only in their taxonomic designation as crustaceans, and their use as featured ingredients in seafood. The similarities end there. The depiction of lobsters in popular culture, their historical significance and their place in the global seafood marketplace are all quite different from the depiction of the shrimp or crab.

6. Sort Location

Category: animal-marine

The LOBSTER emoji should appear after SPIRAL SHELL and before CRAB. This would order crustaceans by their typical physical size: LOBSTER, CRAB, SHRIMP. An alternate location would be after CRAB and before SHRIMP.

7. Other Information

We suggest the lobster emoji designs show the lobster in its prone, fully-extended position, with its claws, legs and tail extended, as exemplified in the image at the top of this document. This will provide the best contrast with the shrimp and fried shrimp emojis, which depicts the shrimp with a curled tail as is common in seafood.

Other Character Properties

The other character properties are suggested to be defined as follows.

General Category: So

Canonical Combining Class: 0

Bidirectional Class: ON

Decomposition Type: Decomposition Mapping:

Numeric Type:

Numeric Value:

Bidirectional Mirrored: N Unicode 1 Name:

ISO Comment:

Simple Uppercase Mapping: Simple Lowercase Mapping: Simple Titlecase Mapping:

8. Author Bios

Dylan Sherry (dylanjsherry@gmail.com) is a software engineer, data scientist, researcher and musician. Dylan grew up in the great U.S. state of Maine, known worldwide for its flavorful lobster seafood dishes. He has several childhood friends whose families made their living fishing for lobster in the Gulf of Maine. He is proud to help bring the lobster into the 21st century pictorial vocabulary.