

Axe Emoji Submission

Submitter: Brandon Gamm

Date: November 20, 2017

Introduction

The axe is one of the first tools used by man. Its original form dates back to the stone age and has evolved in form and usage over time.¹² A versatile tool, it was originally used to fell trees, shape wood, clear brush, till soil, and hunt. Since then, it has also been used as a weapon and ceremonial object.

Identification

CLDR Short Name

axe | ax

CLDR Keywords

axe | ax | fire axe | logging | camping | maul | hatchet | adze | tomahawk | tool

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axe>

² <https://www.gransforsbruk.com/en/axe-knowledge/the-history-of-the-axe>

Images

Example



License

I drew the image and hereby release it for use under the [CC0 license](#).

Selection Factors — Inclusion

A. Compatibility

I could not find examples of axes in the emoji sets of any major social networks.

B. Expected Usage Level

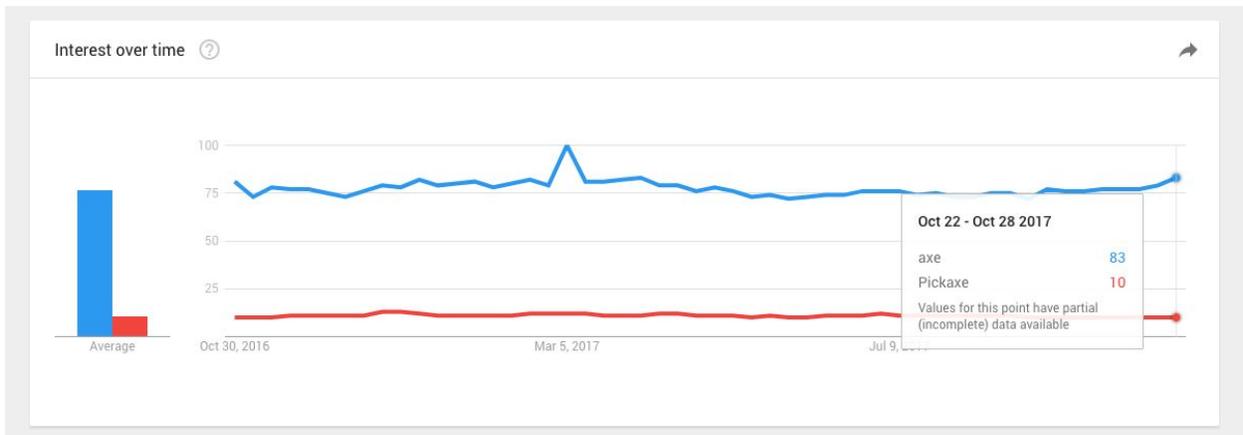
Frequency

Hashtag searches of “axe” and related search terms on Instagram reveal its versatility and possible application to related trades.



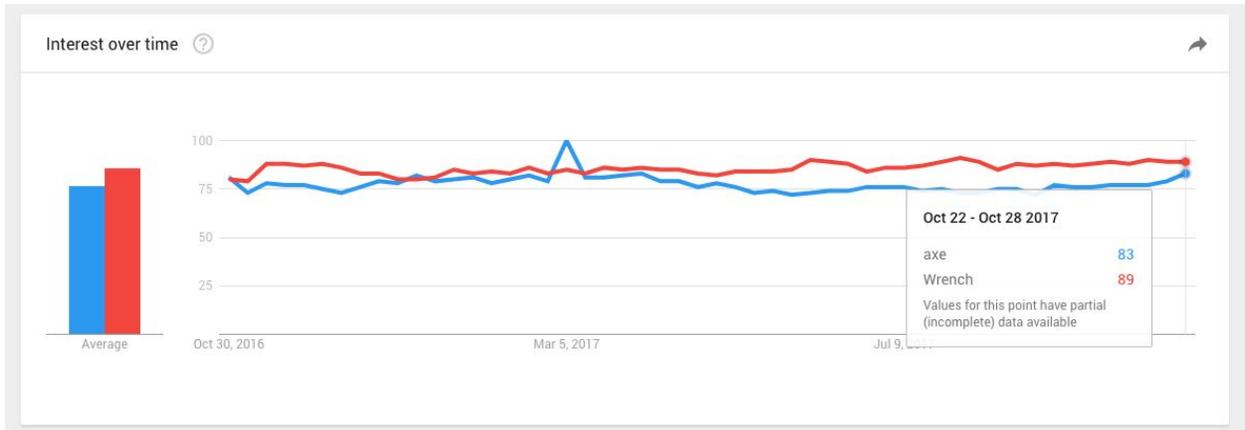
3

A Google Trends comparison of existing tool emojis reveals that “axe” by far outranks “pickaxe”.



It is comparable in popularity to the “wrench” tool emoji. In both instances, its popularity has remained steady over time.

³ Screenshots taken from Instagram searches made on October 26, 2017.



Multiple Usages

The axe is first and foremost a tool, used for felling trees and shaping wood. It has also been adopted as a weapon, such as the Native American tomahawk, Viking battle axe, etc.

Colloquially, it is used to indicate a destructive or negative action. For example, when someone has been fired, i.e. “Patrick was axed in the latest round of layoffs.” Or, “Let’s axe that feature.”⁴ Both of these uses allude to the traditional use of a large axe in executions.⁵

⁴ <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/axed>

⁵ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decapitation>



“Phew! For a minute there I thought the boss was going to give me the ax.”

6

Culturally, the axe symbolizes self-reliance, outdoorsmanship, and toughness. Its emerging use as a decoration suggests it has become an icon of “off the grid” lifestyle ideals, particularly among millennials.⁷

⁶ <https://www.cartoonstock.com/cartoonview.asp?catref=dre2429>

⁷ <https://www.bestmadeco.com/products/the-straight-hold-hatchet>



8

Use in Sequences

The axe could be combined with “woman” or “man” to depict a logger or lumberjack.
The axe could be combined with “hammer” (similar to “hammer and pick”).

Breaking New Ground

There is currently no other emoji that depicts a logging or woodworking tool.

⁸ <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/f1/bf/b5/f1bf57e8e9c849c0e8fce01d0bb13a7.jpg>

C. Image Distinctiveness

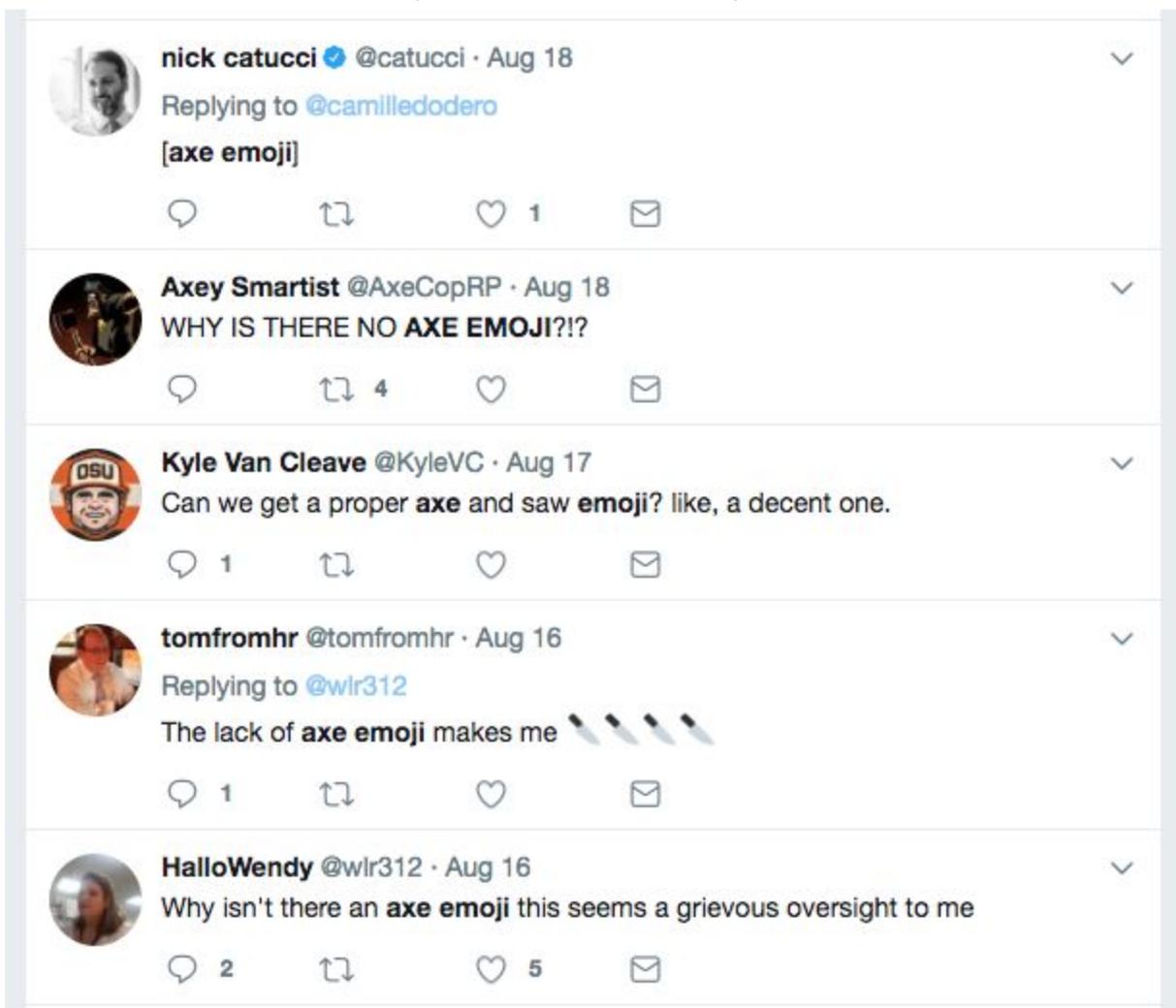
An axe emoji would be distinct from its nearest relatives, the “hammer” and “pick” emojis, because it is usually depicted with a single cutting edge. The pick, or pickaxe, as it is typically depicted, does have a blade, but it is horizontal. A pick is almost never used for woodworking, only for tilling the earth or chiseling away at rock (mining).

D. Completeness

The axe emoji would help round out the “tool” emoji category, which, with the exception of “hammer,” does not include any woodworking tools.

E. Frequency Requested

Twitter searches indicate a steady demand for an axe emoji.



Selection Factors Exclusion

F. Overly Specific

There are many different varieties of axes (hatchet, adze, maul, etc), but they all serve a similar function, for cutting wood. They share a similar iconic form that can be easily captured with a single glyph.

G. Open-ended

No, this is an addition to the current tool category.

H. Already Representable

The axe is not well-represented by any other emoji. The closest analogues are “pick”, “knife, and “sword”.

I. Logos, Brands, UI Icons, Signage, Specific People, Deities

No, the axe is an iconic tool independent of any specific logo, religion, or other usage.

J. Transient

The axe is the first tool made by humans. It is not likely to fall out of use as a symbol of logging, woodworking, and general outdoorsmanship.

K. Faulty Comparison

No, although more tools (drill, saw, chisel, shovel) could certainly be added to the “Tools” category.

Sort Location

Category

Tools

Emoji it should come after in that category

Pick (No. 2127)