

# Proposal to Define Emoji Variation Sequences for PLAYING CARD BLACK JOKER

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## 1. Background

When the Japanese carrier emoji were incorporated into the UCS, the Mahjong tile symbol from those sets was unified with the existing character U+1F004 MAHJONG TILE RED DRAGON. As such, this character was subsequently outfitted with variation sequences to allow it to retain its pre-emoji text-style display when needed.

The same did not happen with U+1F0CF PLAYING CARD BLACK JOKER because it was encoded simultaneously with the rest of the core emoji set. Since U+1F0CF defaults to emoji display, this has the unfortunate consequence that the set of playing card pips cannot be represented in a consistent style in plain text without the use of higher-level protocols. I believe this is a serious defect in the encoding model, which is why I propose adding the necessary variation sequences.

While there are many other characters that would benefit from such variation sequences (which may become the subject of future proposals), I consider the black joker to be the most urgent example because it is the sole emoji-style member of an otherwise text-style group of characters. The *Playing Cards* block forms a well-defined and closed set, and U+1F0CF is an integral part of it.

## 2. Proposal

I propose adding the following two lines to *emoji-variation-sequences.txt*:

```
1F0CF FE0E ; text style; # (6.0) PLAYING CARD BLACK JOKER
1F0CF FE0F ; emoji style; # (6.0) PLAYING CARD BLACK JOKER
```

No other property changes are necessary.

## 3. Usage Examples

**Spades: 699 Rules**

A 52-card deck using 2 Joker cards. Discard Two of Clubs and Two of Hearts from deck before deal. Two of Diamonds becomes Third Joker.

Big Joker (Black/Colored), Little Joker (White/Plain/Red), Deuce of Diamonds, and Deuce of Spades are the top Trump cards. Remaining Spades rank: A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3.

Remaining three suits have 12 cards each.

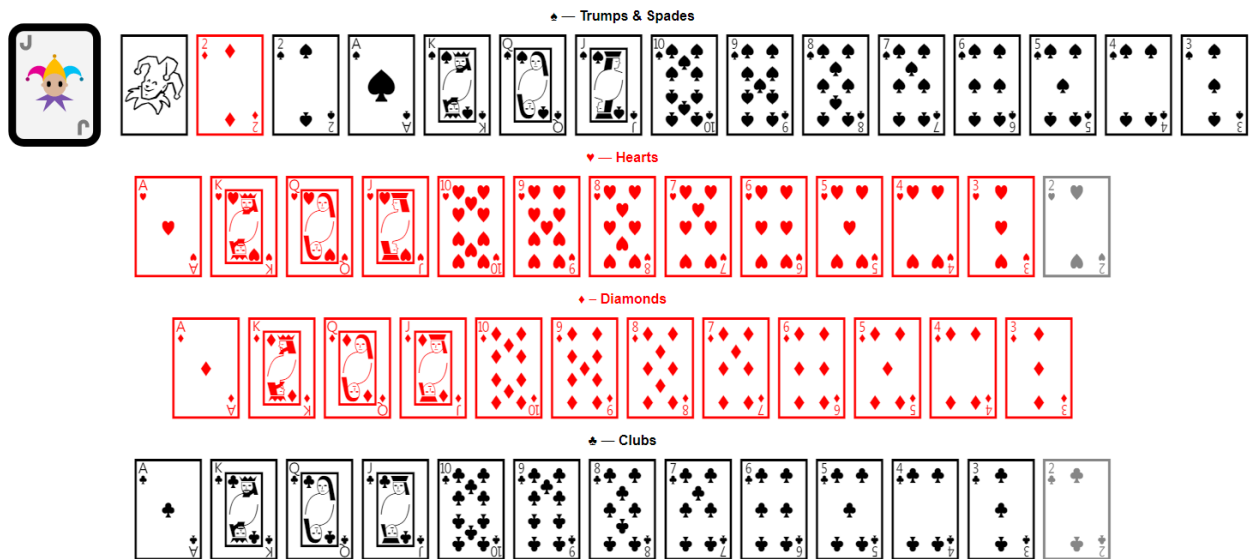
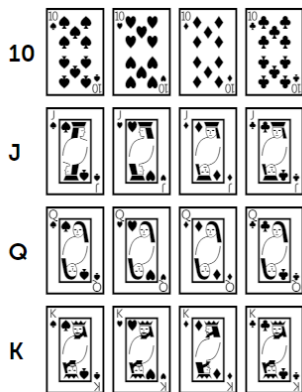


Fig. 1: Screenshot of a website using Unicode playing cards to visualise different card decks.

PLAYING CARD BLACK JOKER looks widely out of place. Note the use of text colour (grey) to mark ♡2 and ♣2 as to be discarded; this would not be possible if the black joker was among the discarded cards. The bottom of the page mentions that “[t]his page will use the *Apple Symbols* font to override Emoji rendering of Black Joker”, but this font does not exist on the Windows machine used to view the page.

(<https://codepen.io/ogab/full/peXpqW>)



The Unicode playing card symbols above can be copied and pasted into Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Microsoft Word, e-mails, and pretty much anywhere else. If you’re copying these cards into a text editor like Word, you can change the size by increasing or decreasing the font, just like you would with normal text! We told you Unicode was oh so cool. PS: Remember to shuffle, and don’t forget your jokers:



Fig.2: Another website running into the same problem.

(<http://blog.verytextual.com/2016/01/24/playing-cards-with-unicode/>)