

Proposal for Emoji: FOLDING HAND FAN

Submitter: Stephanie Jou; Matthew Mikolay

Date: July 5, 2021 -- Revised August 31, 2021

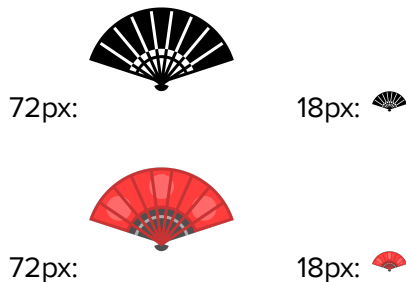
This proposal was updated on August 31, 2021 based upon feedback from the Unicode Emoji Subcommittee to propose a FOLDING HAND FAN emoji instead of an ELECTRIC FAN.

1. Identification

- A. **CLDR Short name:** FOLDING HAND FAN
- B. **Other keywords:** handheld fan, fanatic, groupie, supporter, spread

2. Images

- a. **Zip File:** See ZIP file included with this submission.
- b. **License:** The following images are the original works of the authors of this proposal. They have appropriate licenses for use by the UTC. See “Lack of Required Rights” section.
- c. **Images**



Category: In the “clothing” category, after CLUTCH BAG

Abstract

The authors of this proposal request the addition of the FOLDING HAND FAN emoji. In addition to its function as a handheld object used to cool oneself, the hand fan also has strong historical and cultural significance. In English, *fan* possesses a second meaning as the shortened form of the word *fanatic*¹; this term describes devoted supporters and admirers of specific artists, celebrities, teams, etc.

¹ “Fan (person)”. Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fan_\(person\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fan_(person))

Introduction

Fans have existed for thousands of years across many societies, dating as far back as 3000 BC.² While the exact origins of the folding fan are unclear, it is believed to have first appeared between the 7th and 10th centuries in Asia.³ Folding fans were common after the 12th century in Japan and the 15th century in China.⁴ From Asia, the fan was exported to Europe; records of the East India Company show fans were being shipped to Europe by 1614.⁵ The fan's popularity in Europe grew over time, transitioning from an article of luxury reserved for the wealthy aristocracy to a more approachable, everyday fashion accessory.⁶



Buchaechum, a Korean traditional dance for Royal court of Joseon Dynasty
([Korean.Dance-Buchaechum-01](#) by photoren is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).)

Despite its age, the folding hand fan continues to offer a convenient and portable way to cool oneself down, even in the modern era of electric fans and air conditioning. Beyond its affordance to create a cooling air, the folding hand fan has shown remarkable versatility. The Korean dance of buchaechum⁷, the

² "HISTORY OF FANS". The Fan Museum. <https://www.thefanmuseum.org.uk/fan-history>

³ "HISTORY OF THE HAND FAN IS LONG AND COLORFUL". Chicago Tribune. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1987-07-05-8702190283-story.html>

⁴ "Japanese Fans". The Fan Circle International. <https://www.fancircleinternational.org/history/japanese-fans/>

⁵ "Fans in 17th Century Europe". The Fan Circle International. <https://www.fancircleinternational.org/history/fans-in-17th-century-europe/>

⁶ "Fans in 17th Century Europe". The Fan Circle International. <https://www.fancircleinternational.org/history/fans-in-17th-century-europe/>

⁷ "The Met Lunar New Year Festival: Year of The Rooster". <https://www.koreanculture.org/performing-arts/2017/1/17/the-met-lunar-new-year-festival-year-of-the-rooster>

Maranao dance of the Singkil⁸, and the classical Japanese dance of nihon-buyō⁹ all make use of the folding hand fan. The tessen, or war fan¹⁰, was used for both military signaling and self-defense in feudal Japan,¹¹ and the folding hand fan is one of many weapons that appears in Chinese tai chi.¹² More recently, the LGBTQ community has embraced the folding hand fan as a form of expression in both drag performances and dance.¹³

Folding hand fans are frequently works of art in themselves. Many Chinese fans were embellished with birds, flowers, and mythical creatures such as dragons, while others recounted ancient stories through Chinese calligraphy.¹⁴ 17th-century European fans were often lavishly decorated with scenes from mythology, Roman history, or the Bible.¹⁵



*Pleated fan. Paper leaf with chromolithograph showing decorative designs and Turkish scenes.
(Pleated Fan, mid- 19th century by Unknown Artist is in the public domain.)*

⁸ “Muslim Mindanao”. http://www.seasite.niu.edu/tagalog/cynthia/dances/muslim_mindanao_dances.htm

⁹ Terman, Jennie. “A Beginner's Guide to Japanese Classical Dance”. National Endowment for the Arts Blog. <https://www.arts.gov/stories/blog/2015/beginners-guide-japanese-classical-dance>

¹⁰ Martin, Rey & Samurai Swords Store. “Sensu and Tessen in Combat: A Japanese Fan Became a Deadly Weapon In the Right Hands”. Ancient Origins. <https://www.ancient-origins.net/artifacts-ancient-technology/tessen-0010670>

¹¹ Comment in r/AskHistorians Reddit by user wotan_weevil. https://www.reddit.com/r/AskHistorians/comments/cob7xf/a_common_trope_in_japanese_martial_arts_fiction/ewh_g9te?utm_source=share&utm_medium=web2x&context=3

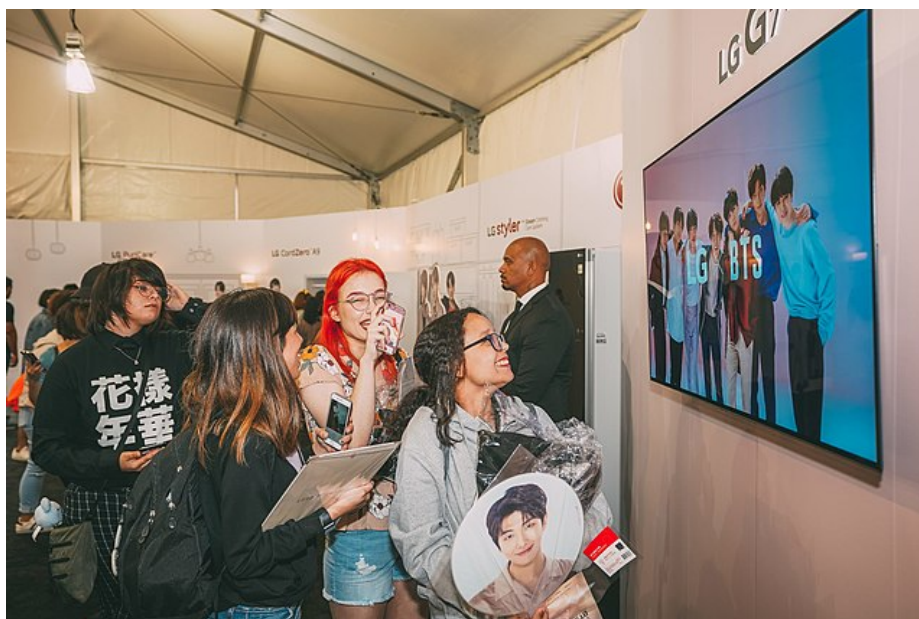
¹² “Introduction to Tai Chi Flying Fan (Shan)”. Cold Mountain Internal Arts. <https://www.coldmountaininternalarts.com/single-post/2020/03/19/Introduction-to-Tai-Chi-Flying-Fan-Shan>

¹³ Box, Bobby. “The Mysterious Origins Of The Folding Fan In Gay Culture”. IN Magazine. <https://inmagazine.ca/2019/11/the-mysterious-origins-of-the-folding-fan-in-gay-culture/>

¹⁴ Taggart, Emma. “Get a Handy Look at the History of Traditional Chinese Folding Fans”. My Modern Met. <https://mymodernmet.com/chinese-folding-fans-history/>

¹⁵ “Fans in 17th Century Europe”. The Fan Circle International. <https://www.fancircleinternational.org/history/fans-in-17th-century-europe/>

In the English language, the word *fan* also refers to devoted supporters and admirers of specific artists, celebrities, teams, etc. This use of *fan* is widely regarded as a shortened form of the word *fanatic*, which in turn originates from the Latin word *fanum* for “sanctuary, temple”.¹⁶ While *fanatic* first appeared in the English lexicon during the 16th century, the shortened form *fan* assumed its modern meaning in the late 19th century when it began being used to refer to sports enthusiasts.¹⁷ Variations such as *fan boy*, *fan girl*, *fanfiction*, and *fanart* are widely used on the internet at the present, but this kind of modification is not a new invention: the term *fan mail* appeared around 1920, and *fan club* around 1930.¹⁸



Fans at the BTS world tour concert 'Love Yourself' in Los Angeles

(방탄소년단 월드투어 콘서트서 '美 젊은 층 마음 사로잡는다' by LG전자 is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/).)

The term *fan* also enjoys idiomatic use in phrases such as “fan the flames” (“To do or say something to make an argument, problem, or bad situation worse”)¹⁹ and “shit hits the fan” (“Things become suddenly very chaotic, disastrous, difficult, or controversial”).²⁰ This latter example, despite the uncomfortably vivid image it conveys, has been prevalent enough in the English vernacular to inspire more sanitized versions, involving “egg”, “soup”, and “stuff” hitting a fan.²¹ Like many idioms, the origin of this phrase is unclear, though some believe it to be inspired by either the agricultural manure spreader or a rather crass

¹⁶ “Fan”. Merriam-Webster. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fan#note-1>

¹⁷ Rutherford-Morrison, Lara. “Where Did The World [sp] ‘Fandom’ Come From?”. Bustle.

<https://www.bustle.com/articles/144396-where-did-the-word-fandom-come-from-behind-the-term-that-changed-the-internet-forever>

¹⁸ “fan”. Online Etymology Dictionary. <https://www.etymonline.com/word/fan>

¹⁹ “fan the flames”. Farlex Dictionary of Idioms. (2015). <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/fan+the+flames>

²⁰ “Shit Hits the Fan”. Farlex Dictionary of Idioms. (2015). <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/Shit+Hits+the+Fan>

²¹ Luu, Chi. “The Linguistic Case for Sh*t Hitting the Fan”. JSTOR Daily.

<https://daily.jstor.org/the-linguistic-case-for-sht-hitting-the-fan/>

joke involving a man in a bar.²² Lexicographer Eric Partridge identifies the phrase as Canadian in origin, circa 1930, in the 1967 edition of *A Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*.²³ There are multiple examples of the phrase and its variations used as United States military slang during the Second World War, suggesting the phrase began catching on as early as the 1940s.²⁴

Selection Factors – Inclusion

Compatibility

N/A

Expected Usage Level

Frequency

Google Search



hand-fan



[All](#)

[Shopping](#)

[Images](#)

[Videos](#)

[Books](#)

[More](#)

[Tools](#)

About 2,460,000,000 results (1.00 seconds)



elephant



[All](#)

[Images](#)

[News](#)

[Videos](#)

[Shopping](#)

[More](#)

[Tools](#)




About 586,000,000 results (1.00 seconds)

²² Answer to “What’s the etymology of ‘when the sh*t hits the fan’?” by user Hugo. Stack Exchange. <https://english.stackexchange.com/a/57442>

²³ “The meaning and origin of the expression: When the shit hits the fan”. The Phrasefinder. <https://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/when-the-shit-hits-the-fan.html>




²⁴ Answer to “What’s the etymology of ‘when the sh*t hits the fan’?” by user Hugo. Stack Exchange. <https://english.stackexchange.com/a/57442>

Bing Search

Microsoft Bing   

[ALL](#) [SHOPPING](#) [IMAGES](#) [VIDEOS](#) [MAPS](#) [NEWS](#)




2,360,000 Results Any time ▾

Microsoft Bing   

[ALL](#) [IMAGES](#) [VIDEOS](#) [MAPS](#) [NEWS](#) [SHOPPING](#)




11-24 Of 37,700,000 Results Any time ▾

Google Video Search

[All](#) [Shopping](#) [Images](#) [Videos](#) [Books](#) [More](#) Tools

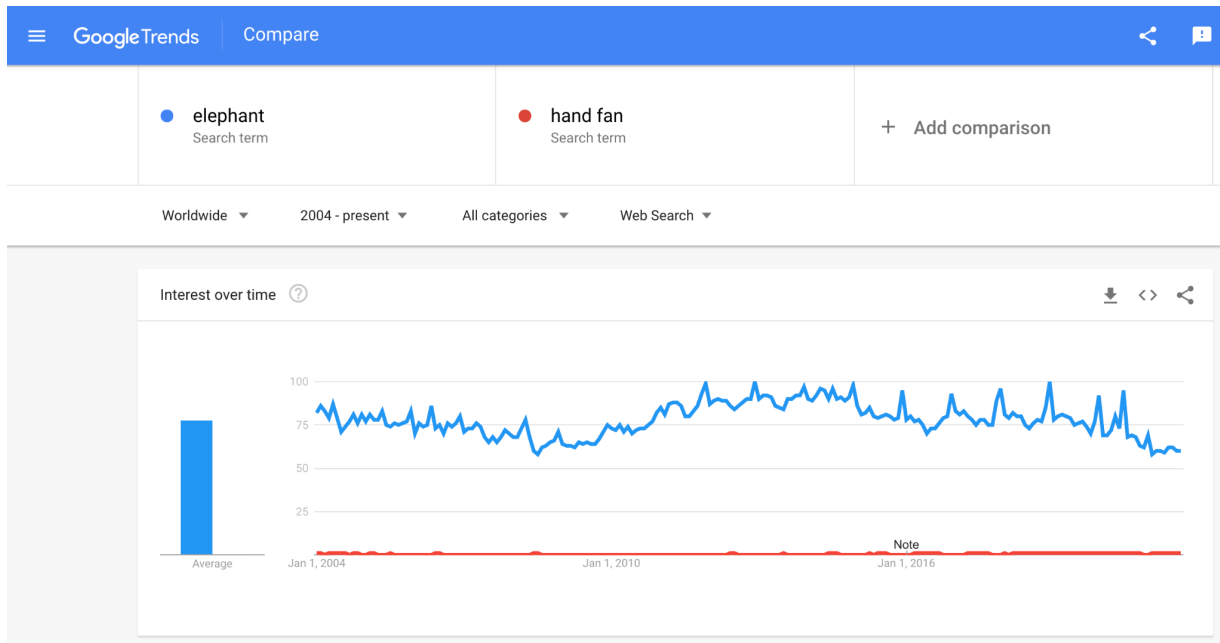
About 192,000,000 results (0.47 seconds)

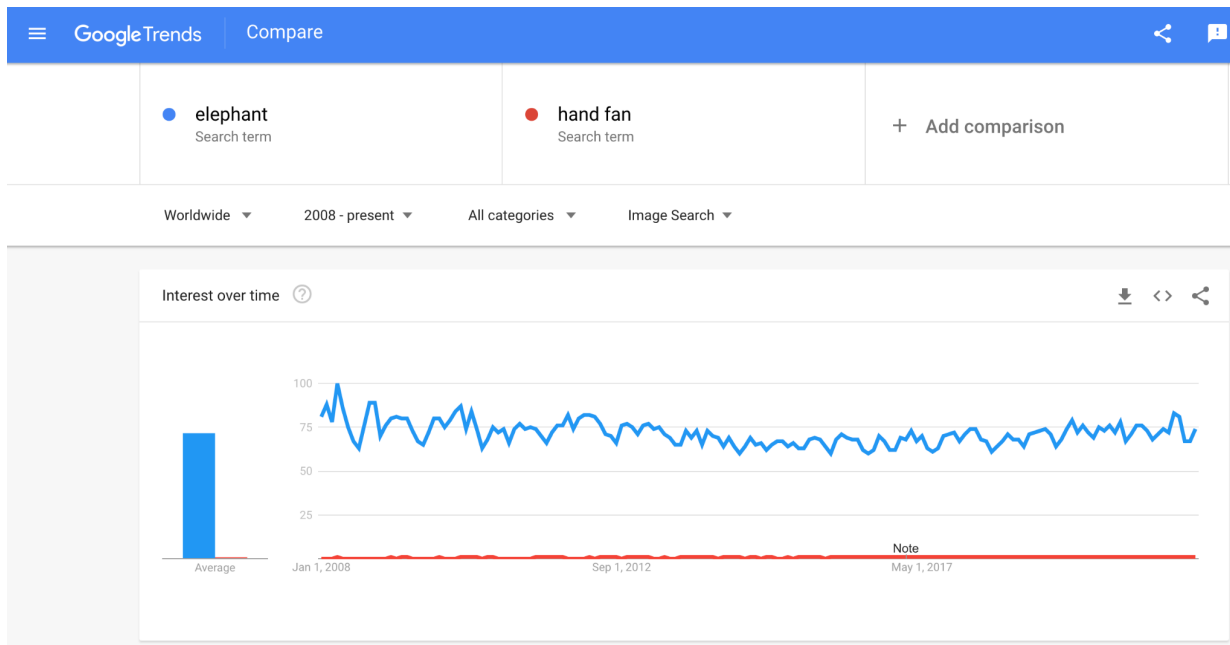
[All](#) [Images](#) [News](#) [Videos](#) [Shopping](#) [More](#) Tools

About 103,000,000 results (0.37 seconds)

Google Trends: Web Search



Google Trends: Image Search



Multiple Usages

The FOLDING HAND FAN emoji could be used to represent more than just the physical object:

- As a shortened form of the word “fanatic”, FOLDING HAND FAN can be used to represent devoted supporters and admirers of particular musicians, artists, celebrities, team, etc.
“I’m a big *fan* of K-pop music. 🎵”
- In fan-related idioms:
“When the shit hits the *fan*...”
“*Fan* the flames”
- To represent the actions of “fan out” or “spread out”

Use in sequences

The FAN emoji could be used in sequence with other existing emojis. For example:

- POOP 🍌 + DIRECT HIT 🎯 + FOLDING HAND FAN = SHIT HITS THE FAN
- FOLDING HAND FAN + FIRE 🔥 = FAN THE FLAMES
- FOLDING HAND FAN + BOOKS 📖 = FANFICTION
- FOLDING HAND FAN + ENVELOPE ✉️ = FANMAIL
- FOLDING HAND FAN + ARTIST PALETTE 🎨 = FAN ART
- FOLDING HAND FAN + BOY 🧑 = FANBOY
- FOLDING HAND FAN + GIRL 🧑 = FANGIRL
- FOLDING HAND FAN + CLUB SUIT ♣️ = FANCLUB
- HOT FACE 😳 + FOLDING HAND FAN = OVERWHELMINGLY HOT
- LIGHTNING BOLT ⚡ + FOLDING HAND FAN = ELECTRIC FAN

Breaking new ground.

Yes, the FOLDING HAND FAN emoji would break new ground. There are currently no emojis that represent FOLDING HAND FAN or other similar cooling devices, including “ceiling fan” and “electric fan”.

Image Distinctiveness

The FOLDING HAND FAN emoji would be distinct from other existing emojis. When compared to similarly-shaped emojis such as PEACOCK 🦚 and DRESS 👗, an emphasis on the opened hand fan’s pleated leaf connected to a single pivot point, as well as depicting the hand fan opened to a sub-180-degree angle, would make the FOLDING HAND FAN emoji’s design visually distinct.

Completeness

N/A

Selection Factors – Exclusion

Petitions or “Frequent Requests”

N/A

Overly Specific

The FOLDING HAND FAN emoji is not overly specific. Even in countries with cool climates, the hand fan is highly recognizable as a tool used to create cooling air. Many countries and cultures have connections to the hand fan, granting the FOLDING HAND FAN emoji strong historical and cultural value. Furthermore, the hand fan is not merely a cooling tool; its versatility is reflected by its presence in fashion, dance, martial arts, etc.

Open-ended

The authors of this proposal do not believe the introduction of an FOLDING HAND FAN emoji would justify the addition of other similar types of emojis. A hand fan is distinct in both form and function from other objects.

Already Representable

Few emojis can represent the concepts covered by the FOLDING HAND FAN emoji. The WIND FACE 🌬️ and ICE 🧊 emojis could be used to convey cooling air, and the PEACOCK 🦚 emoji possesses fan-like feathers, but these emojis do not represent an object specifically used to cool oneself. Furthermore, none of these emojis can be used flexibly in sequences, e.g. as a substitute for “fanatic” or as part of an idiom.

Logos, brands, UI icons, signage, specific people, specific landmarks, deities

The FOLDING HAND FAN emoji does not depict a logo, brand, UI icon, sign, specific person, specific landmark, or deity. The appearance of a hand fan is generic and commonplace.

Transient

The folding hand fan has appeared in numerous cultures and countries throughout history, but it shows no signs of disappearing. The design of folding hand fans has not changed for centuries. Even in the 21st century, when electricity has made appliances like the electric fan and air conditioner commonplace, the hand fan remains highly recognizable.

Faulty Comparison

N/A

Exact Images

This proposal does not request an exact image for the FOLDING HAND FAN emoji. Variations in the emoji's design will not affect its recognizability, provided the fan's unique shape is preserved and the folds are visible.

Region Flags

N/A

Lack of Required Rights

The authors of this proposal affirm that the attached images of the FOLDING HAND FAN emoji are the original works of the authors. The authors own all IP rights in this proposed FOLDING HAND FAN emoji and grants the Unicode Consortium and its licensees “a sub-licensable, irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide, non-exclusive, royaltyfree license in and to the IP Rights” as per the Emoji Proposal Agreement & License.

Variations on Direction

N/A

Includes Text

N/A

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the [Emojination](#) community for the suggestions on previous drafts of this proposal.

Author Biographies

Stephanie Jou (jou.stephanie@gmail.com) is a product data scientist based in New York. She's a *fan* of the 🍷, 🐒, and 🌊 emojis.

Matthew Mikolay (emoji@mattmik.com) is a software engineer based in New York. He's a *fan* of the 🍕, 😬, and 🧑 emojis.