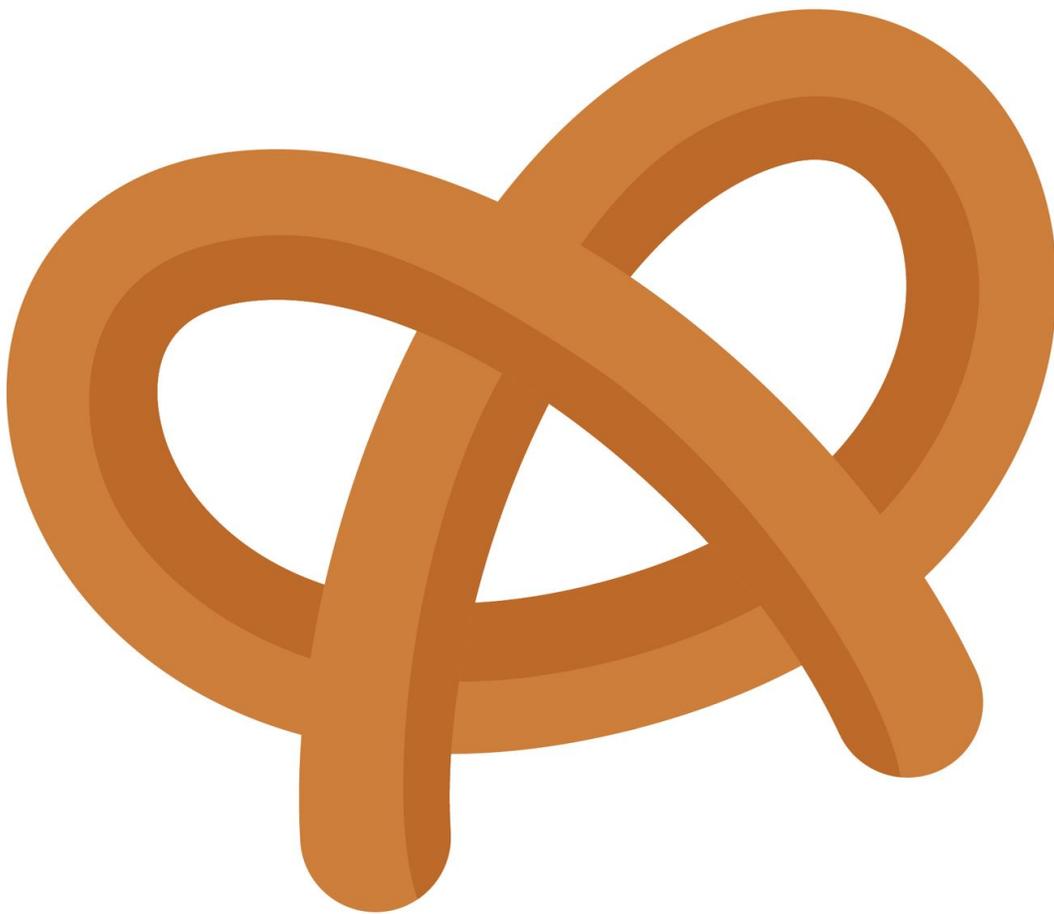


Proposal for a PRETZEL Emoji

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Abstract

The intention of this proposal is to advocate for the inclusion of an emoji, the pretzel, as a Unicode emoji character. The recognition of the pretzel, imbued with versatile symbolism, is widespread and cross-cultural, despite its long European tradition. The pretzel, a timeless and widely appreciated baked food, has emotional and cultural significance for a lot of people across the world, especially in Europe and America. The pretzel emoji has a potential for versatile usage due its unique looped shape which can be reinterpreted to stand for many things.

Introduction

There are pretzels found all around the globe. Even though the details of the pretzel's advent have been lost somewhere in the pages of history, there is a legend which ties its origins to an VII century Italian monastery, where a monk once decided to presents his pupils with baked goods shaped like crossed arms, a traditional prayer gesture. With the increasing popularity of the pretzel, the three pretzel holes eventually came to symbolize the Holy Trinity. They were then consumed during the Lent, when the Catholic Church placed severe restriction on the consumption of meat and dairy.

The story of the pretzel's arrival in the US hints at the time of first Pilgrims. They were believed to have brought those baked knots with them and use them for trade with the Native Americans. Since then, they have played an important role in Americans' life. In 1935, Reading Pretzel Machinery Company developed first automated pretzel machine which increased their productivity to 245 pretzel per minute, as compared with the maximum of 40 pretzels per minute for an average human worker.¹

While there are many emojis for various baked goods such as shortcake emoji, birthday cake emoji, and cookie emoji, the pretzel emoji is sadly lacking, and the unique shape of the pretzel makes it difficult to exchange or approximate with the others.

Factors for Inclusion

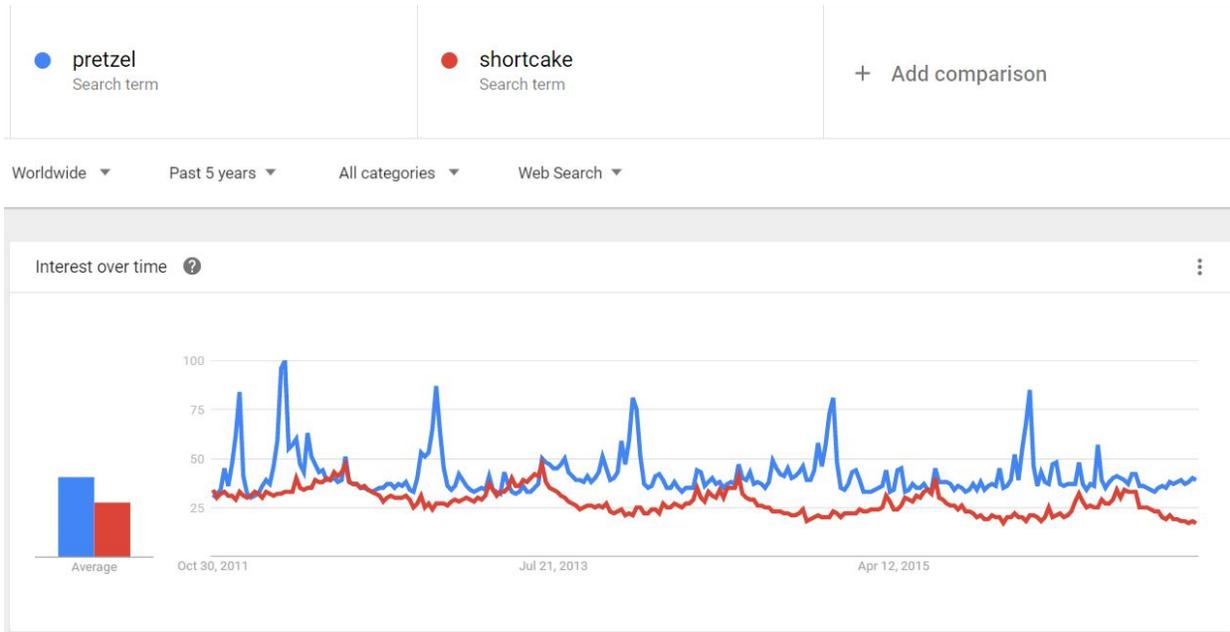
Compatibility

N/A. There are no compatibility issues with major platforms. However, there unofficially is a pretzel emoji in the -themed emoji keyboard. Making it an official emoji would allow it to be more accessible to those without the app.

¹ <http://www.history.com/news/hungry-history/the-pretzel-a-twisted-history>

Expected Usage Level

We expect the usage level to be fairly high. “Pretzel” is more frequently searched on Google than many other baked goods that are emojis—for example, “shortcake.”



In addition, one can glean from the many tweets that desire a pretzel emoji that it will indeed be used.



Dude Broman
@haydenmclain

Is anyone else as bothered as I am that there is no pretzel emoji

10/18/16, 16:28

1 RETWEET 1 LIKE



amanda serene
@amanda_serene



my life would be complete if there was a pretzel emoji

10/11/16, 23:20

Also telling are tweets that treat the pretzel emoji as so necessary that its existence is already assumed.



SofiGEIST 🌸
@pinkpetalssivan



wtf I can't find the pretzel emoji (is there even a pretzel emoji tho)

10/26/16, 17:39

Frequency

We expect that the emoji will enjoy widespread usage. It is a cross-culturally popular baked good, with a long history and an emotional content for many people. It can be combined with other emoji as well as stand on its own, endowing it with a great number of contexts for usage. Its unique looped shapes allows for its adaptation for various other purposes where the shape carries a symbolic load and the culinary aspect of the emoji becomes downplayed. In addition, the tweets in the previous section are a testament to the fact that the pretzel emoji will enjoy frequent use.

Multiple Usages

There can be multiple usages of the pretzel emoji. First, it can straightforwardly represent the unique snack for which the pretzel is. Currently, there is no good replacement or approximation for the pretzel.

Second, it can be used to signify convolutedness, confusion, or twistedness due to its unique knotted twist shape. Its topological structure stands, therefore, for something more abstract than the food item itself. For instance, the tweet below shows a possible

abstract or figurative meaning associated with the pretzel (which the soft ice cream emoji fails to fully capture).



Saldado Jefe
@NINETYSIX_ERA



@LIISHAA__ my minds twisted like a pretzel .. They ain't no pretzel emoji so you can have an ice cream cone 🍦

6/4/13, 16:29

Its “closedness” can also be understood to symbolize wholeness, completeness or unity.

Third, it can be used in combinations with other emojis or words to express more complex ideas, e.g. “pretzel logic.” To provide another example, its twisted shape can be used to express “a twist” and combined with the film projector emoji to express a “plot twist.”

Four, the pretzel can be used for purposes of locational reference. A lot of Americans think of NYC when they think of pretzels. Europeans, on the other hand, are more likely to associate them with central European countries, especially Germany.

Emotional Content

Depending on the culture, the pretzel might take on multiple meanings. In Germany, pretzels have been an integral part of culinary traditions for centuries. In some areas, people exchange and eat pretzels on January 1 to attract good luck and fortune.² Outside of Europe, the pretzel may also be a source of local pride for people of various localities. For example, Freeport, IL, is known as Pretzel City USA.³ In addition, the soft pretzel is commonly associated with Philadelphia and New York City.⁴

For fans of [Seinfeld](#), the pretzel provides a humorous reference to the episode “The Alternate Side,” in which the line “These pretzels are making me thirsty!” is shouted. (In fact, this reference is so popular, the [Seinfeld](#) emoji keyboard has a pretzel.⁵)

² <http://www.toledoblade.com/Dan-Neman/2010/12/21/Quest-for-New-Year-s-Pretzels-has-many-twists.html>

³ <http://www.ci.freeport.il.us/visitors/>

⁴ <http://www.villagevoice.com/restaurants/street-foods-of-nyc-a-short-history-of-the-soft-pretzel-6556973>

⁵ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/22/seinfeld-emoji_n_5610986.html

Persistence

There is no reason to worry about low persistence when it comes to pretzel. The exact birthplace of the pretzel has been lost somewhere in the pages of history, but there are good reasons to suspect that it dates back at least to the Early Middle Ages.

Multiple sources relate a legend that ties the advent of the pretzel to a 7th century monk, who rewarded children with that baked good. In addition, one of the earliest depictions of the pretzel goes back to the 12th century from the manuscript

. It is therefore unreasonable to fear the transience of the pretzel. Pretzels have proven themselves to be a timeless snack and as such deserve recognition.

Image Distinctiveness

The pretzel emoji would hardly look like anything else. The pretzel's unique twisted shape makes it impossible to confuse it with other foods as well as other emojis.

Completeness

There is a number of baked goods emojis, such as bread, donut, cookie, and shortcake, some of which are more specific and occasion-restricted than Pretzel (e.g. birthday cake). Pretzel would complement the emoji set of baked good, as well as stand alone due to its ability to symbolize many other concepts when combined with other emojis.

Frequently Requested

It has already been requested in a Huffington Post amongst 8 other emojis "we desperately wish were real".⁶ There has even been a petition started to include the pretzel emoji.⁷ Furthermore, as alluded previously, Twitter offers a nearly endless supply of requests, demands, and inquiries about the pretzel emoji.

⁶ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/05/18/new-emoji_n_7306370.html

⁷ <https://www.change.org/p/unicode-consortium-pretzel-emoji-the-perfect-twist>



Corinne Cervantes

@24_corinne



Dear people who create emojis can you please create a Pretzel emoji I would greatly appreciate it

[#emojisistillneedinmylife](#) thank you 😊

10/28/16, 17:56 from [Glendora, CA](#)

Factors for Exclusion

Overly Specific

“Pretzel” is not overly specific. It is one of the baked goods, many of which have already been given their own emojis. Pretzels cannot be mistaken for any other baked good, nor can they be classified as a subtype of one, and are recognized as such across cultures.

Open Ended

The pretzel is a timeless baked good that has accompanied us for centuries. It is a key hiatus in the baked good set of emojis which should most definitely be filled in. Many other baked goods which are not in the set can either be replaced by already existing emojis (e.g. a bread roll can be expressed with the bread emoji) or by a combination of emojis (e.g. a chocolate cake can be expressed by combining the chocolate and cake emojis). The pretzel, on the other hand cannot be expressed in these ways because to convey the idea of a pretzel one crucially has to convey the idea of its shape and for that there is no such emoji.

Already Representable

There are no things than can be used to represent the pretzel. It is distinguished not only by its history and cultural ties people have to it, but most significantly by its shape. Trying to represent a pretzel with an emoji that is not pretzel-shaped, would be like trying to represent a ball with an emoji which is not round, or a pyramid with an emoji that is not triangular.

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

N/A. Not used as any of the above to the best of our knowledge.

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: