# Proposal for Emoji: WINDOW

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Emoji Name: WINDOW

Keywords: FRAME | TRANSPARENT | VIEW | OPENING

**Sort Order:** in the Household category, after DOOR

Reference emoji: LAPTOP COMPUTER



Image Credit: Steven Chu of Emojination. Free for use in context of this proposal.

#### **Abstract**

We are requesting the addition of a WINDOW to the emoji character set. Windows are an integral and ancient feature in almost any building in the world, but the "household" category of the current emoji library has no window. We believe the window has extensive real-world, metaphorical and artistic significance and will be widely used as a construction feature and a symbol of other concepts.

#### Introduction

Windows are almost as old as human construction itself. According to Merriam-Webster, it is simply defined as "an opening especially in the wall of a building for admission of light and air," but glass-paned windows have been used since Roman times or earlier. The English word "window" was first recorded in the 13th Century.

Windows take several different shapes and materials, but we believe the one in our proposal is iconic and instantly recognizable. Our depicted emoji variants include glass

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/window

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Window

panes and wooden frames, but does not specify how it opens or closes. This leaves the icon open to be interpreted as a sash window, which slides one frame behind another; a fixed window, which does not open; or a casement window, which opens like a door. We also believe is is universal enough of a shape to stand in for a transom window, which hangs above a door, or a stained-glass window, which is made of many colors.



A sliding sash window, the traditional window of a household window in the UK. Image from pxhere.



A fixed window, a common feature in churches, image from <u>Wikimedia Commons</u>, and a casement window, which opens like a door. Image from <u>Marvin Windows</u>.



A transom window fixed above a door, from Nick's Building Supply, and a stained glass window, from Bay Images.

Despite the wide range of window types, we believe these could still be represented using our proposed emoji due to its recognizable glass frame and shape.

Perhaps because they are so ancient and so universal, windows are very commonly found in literature, music and other forms of art as a metaphor. The eyes as the "windows into the soul" was such a common metaphor that it became a well-known saying.

"As a breeze or an echo rebounds from the smooth rocks and returns whence it came, so does the stream of beauty, passing through the eyes which are the windows of the soul, come back to the beautiful one."

- Plato, "Phaedrus", 370 BC<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Plato

"Mistress, look on me; Behold the window of my heart, mine eye, What humble suit attends thy answer there: Impose some service on me for thy love."

- William Shakespeare, "Love's Labour's Lost", 1597

"You cannot believe in honor until you have achieved it. Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world."

- George Bernard Shaw, "Man and Superman", 1922<sup>5</sup>

Windows are also common in visual art like paintings, perhaps because light itself is such an integral element to any real-life visual. "Chiaroscuro" is a Renaissance painting style that features dramatic light through a window into a dark room, which later influenced other art forms like photography and film.<sup>6</sup>

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https://www.opensourceshakespeare.org/views/plays/play\_view.php?WorkID=loveslabours&Act=5&Scene=2&Scope=scene&LineHighlight=2780#2780

https://books.google.com/books?id=KS9HAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA233&lpg=PA233&dq=%22Better+keep+yourself+clean+and+bright;+you+are+the+window+through+which+you+must+see+the+world.%22&source=bl&ots=KiaNJRW\_PK&sig=zMgsQ2\_Gjx27jXusvOeebl9rPuE&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwja4qfUltjfAhVNG6wKHRQ6Chc4ChDoATAFegQlBRAB#v=onepage&q=%22Better%20keep%20yourself%20clean%20and%20bright%3B%20you%20are%20the%20window%20through%20which%20you%20must%20see%20the%20world.%22&f=false

<sup>6</sup> http://sensesofcinema.com/2009/feature-articles/chiaroscuro-caravaggio-bazin-storaro/



"The Calling of St. Matthew", Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, 1600. Image from Wikimedia Commons.



"Phantom Lady", Universal Pictures, 1944. Image from IMDB.

Windows themselves were also art, as stained glass windows awed viewers well before even the Medieval Age. Early medieval churches used windows to educate the non-reading classes on Bible stories.<sup>7</sup>



The famous south rose window in the Notre Dame Cathedral depicts the 12 apostles as well as many people who knew Jesus Christ. Image from Wikimedia Commons.

In the current day, windows have an additional meaning in technology. Microsoft's Windows, first released in 1985, was named for the "windows" that allowed users to interact different applications on a computer screen. This visual "point-and-click" interface was a huge leap forward in usability, compared to the text-oriented DOS or command lines systems. Today, Windows is still by far the dominating operating system on desktop computers, with more than 80% of the market share.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stained glass

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> https://www.pcworld.com/article/241845/why is it called windows .html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usage\_share\_of\_operating\_systems#Desktop\_and\_laptop\_computers



The original Microsoft Windows logo, released in 1985, is a stylized representation of a multi-paned window. Image from Microsoft.

#### **Selection Factors - Inclusion**

### A. Compatibility

We are not aware of an existing WINDOW emoji or icon.

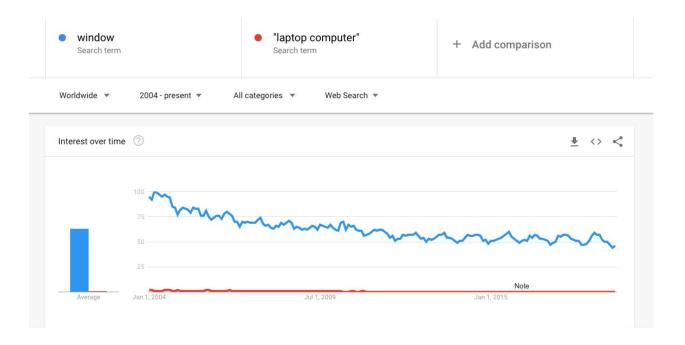
#### B. Expected Usage Level

#### Evidence of Frequency

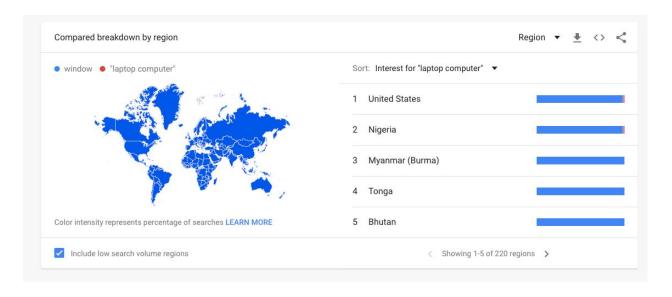
Here we compare usage of the term "window" with that of "laptop computer", an emoji of median usage.

#### Google Trends Web Search:

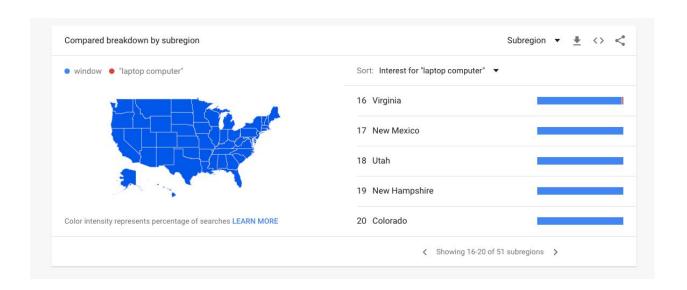
Far more people have searched Google for "window" than "laptop computer", an emoji of median usage, worldwide since 2004. There is both a "laptop computer" and a "desktop computer" emoji in the current library, which are very similar in both visual and meaning, and yet there is no emoji even approaching a window.



The difference between searches for "window" and searches for "laptop computer" is extreme. Out of the 220 countries measured by Google Trends, only two had enough laptop searches to register above zero. These are the United States and Nigeria, where "laptop computer" accounted for 1% of the total searches for "window" and "laptop computer."

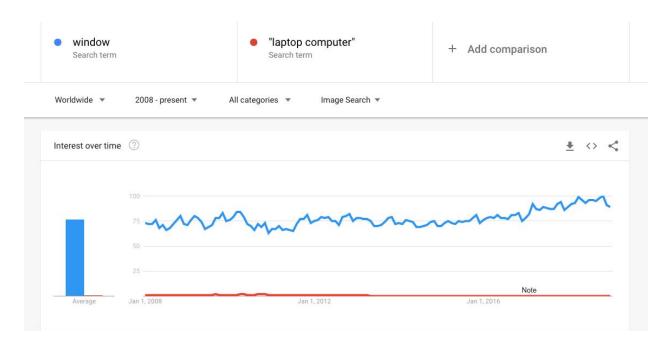


In the United States, where "laptop computer" was actually searched the most, most of the country's 50 states did not search the term enough for it to register above zero. This is all to say that "window" is Googled far, far, far more than "laptop computer", an emoji of median usage.



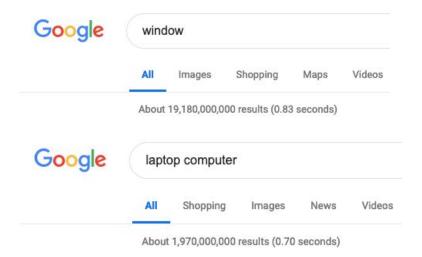
#### Google Trends Image Search:

The same is true for searches of "window" and "laptop computer" in Google Images since 2008. "Laptop computer" never accounted for more than 2% of the total searches for those two terms.



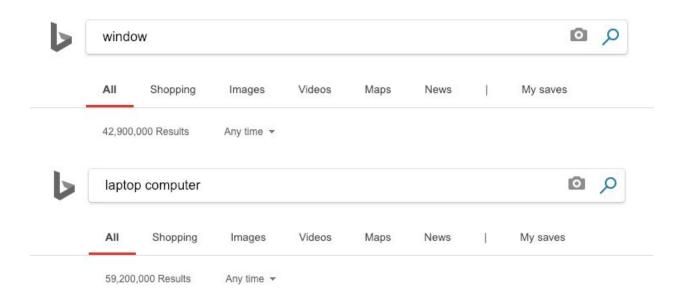
#### Google Search:

Google returns almost 20 times as many web results for "window" as it does for "laptop computer."



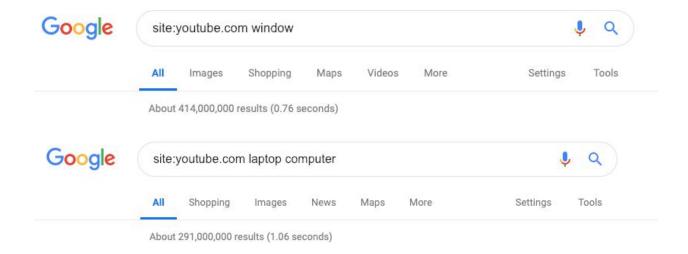
Bing Search:

Bing returns more results for "laptop computer" than it does for "window", but not many more.



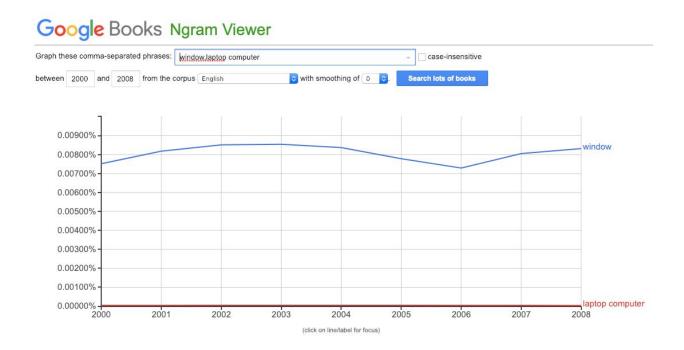
#### YouTube:

YouTube contains many more videos mentioning "window" than "laptop computer."



# Ngram Viewer:

Many more books contained the word "window" than "laptop computer" from 2000 to 2008, according to Google's Ngram Viewer. Again, "window" so outmatches "laptop computer" that occurrences of the latter are almost negligible.



#### Multiple Usages

As we saw in the Introduction, windows have served as metaphors for millennia. Some of the most common modern phrases include:

- "Window shopping" refers to perusing items for sale without serious interest in buying them
- "Windows" is the world's most widely used desktop operating system
- "Went out the window" means something ended quickly
- "Window of opportunity" is the time period when something is most likely to come true
- "The eyes are the windows of the soul" refers to windows' transparent nature
- "Window dressing" refers to inconsequential or decorative material

Currently, a "window" is also to describe a window on a computer, as well as the Microsoft operating system Windows. According to Google Trends, searches for "window" are most closely correlated with search terms like cleaning products, OS features and "incognito window." This suggests that people are using the word to represent literal household windows as well as technological features.

#### Use in Sequences

The WINDOW emoji can be used on its own, or in sequence with other emoji to create new meanings. For instance:

WINDOW + "Eyes" (€€) could mean "look out the window"

WINDOW + other household emoji like "Door" ( ■ ) and "House" (♠) could reference being home

# **Breaking New Ground**

The WINDOW emoji would not necessarily break new ground.

## C. Image Distinctiveness

Our window emoji is instantly recognizable as a window, because it has panes of glass set in a wooden frame. There is no emoji in the current library that is similar to this.

# D. Completeness

N/A

#### E. Frequently Requested

Windows are not on the lists of most requested emojis.

#### **Selection Factors - Exclusion**

### F. Overly Specific

A window is an extremely adaptable and common feature in any household, building or structure. We do not believe that this window emoji is overly specific in any way.

## G. Open-Ended

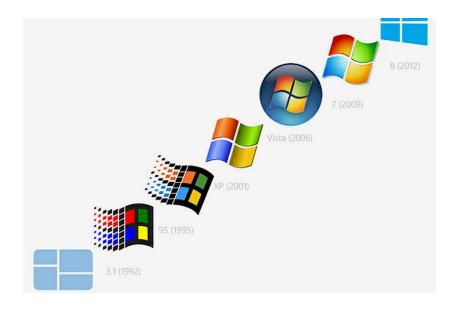
We do not believe that the addition of this core textile tool opens up a new category of emoji.

### H. Already Representable

The current emoji library contains a "door" ( ), which shares a few sayings and idioms with the window. However, there is no emoji either visually or materially similar to a window itself.

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

Windows are found in many brands and logos, including the iconic Microsoft Windows logo.



The logo for Microsoft's Windows has evolved over the past 30+ years, but has always revolved around the central figure of a window. Image from <a href="The Verge">The Verge</a>.

However, a window can take many shapes and is not copyrightable. There are no copyright, religious, or other issues that reference anyone historic or living that would influence our proposed emoji.

#### J. Transient

Human beings have used windows almost as long as they have used shelters themselves. There is no reason to believe the window will decline in popularity.

### K. Faulty Comparison

There is no existing window emoji.

#### **Exact Images**

N/A

#### Other Information

#### **Author Bios**

Samantha Sunne is a freelance journalist and an emoji enthusiast.

## **Character Properties**

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

**General Category:** 

Canonical Combining Class:

**Bidirectional Class:** 

Decomposition Type:

**Decomposition Mapping:** 

Numeric Type:

Numeric Value:

Bidirectional Mirrored:

Name:

**ISO Comment:** 

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