Proposal for Emoji: ROCK

Submitted by: Christian Krenek of Emojination

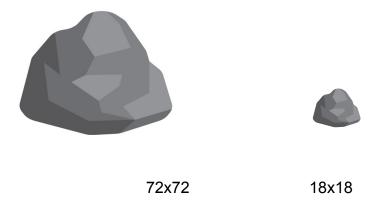
Date: March 31, 2019

Emoji Name: ROCK

Sort Order: In the OBJECT-OTHER category, after MOAI

Reference Emoji: TOOL-WRENCH

Keywords: rock, stone, boulder



Credit: Aphee Messer. Free for use in conjunction with this proposal. Black and white images will be forthcoming on request.

Abstract

This proposal requests the addition of the ROCK emoji to the Unicode emoji library. A part of the very foundation of planet Earth (and even other planets!), rocks and stones can be found on every continent on the planet, the depths of the oceans, and even floating in outer space in the form of asteroids. Humanity--and even other creatures--have long used rocks as tools or to further create items--there is a reason that one of the earliest periods of human history is called

the *Stone* Age. Despite the (quite literally) global presence of the rock, though, there is no existing emoji that comes anywhere close to representing it (the closest is MOUNTAIN, and even this fails to accurately capture the idea--mountains are essentially massive rocks!); this reflects a greater problem within the emoji library, which lacks a "nature" category beyond that of plants. In addition to the rock's worldwide presence and use throughout history, the word "rock" has been used in metaphor ("like a rock," "a rock in a sea of chaos"), famous locations (Uluru or Ayers Rock, the Dome of the Rock), and even people's names (Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson, Rock Hudson). A ROCK emoji, then, will not only fill an important gap in the Emoji Unicode Library, but possibly create an entirely new section of the library, allowing for greater expression of a crucial part of the human experience.

Introduction

"Geologists have a saying--rocks remember."--Neil Armstrong1

It is the very foundation upon which we stand, and the thing that we used to build our earliest homes and tools. It is the embodiment of the classical element of earth, and the "building block" of the inner planets. To put it in one word...the rock. This object, also referred to as the stone, forms much of the surface of the planet Earth, and, over the course of millions of years, been used to capture the past (the fossil record is surrounded by rock) and create the future (elements from gold to silicon have long been extracted from rocks and stones). In a more metaphorical sense, rocks are used to represent stability, foundations, and peace among chaos.

Rocks and stones consist of various aggregate minerals which, over time, form bonds with one another and compress into larger solids; the individual minerals are used to name the rocks individually.² There are three major types of rocks: *sedimentary*, which are formed over time by materials including minerals, organisms, and even older rocks being compressed and solidifying into individual units³; *igneous*, which are created through the cooling and solidification of magma ⁴; and *metamorphic*, which "morph" from igneous or sedimentary under certain conditions (including heat and pressure) into a new form over the course of centuries.⁵

Given the ubiquity of rocks across the world, it is unsurprising that humanity has used them since its earliest existence; indeed, the *Paleolithic Age*, one of the earliest phases of human history--or, to be strictly technical, *pre*-history-- begins with the creation of tools from stone, some 3.3 million years ago.⁶ These early tools included simple carving knives, adorned jewelry,

¹ https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/rocks

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock (geology)

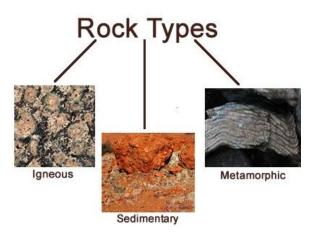
³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sedimentary_rock

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Igneous rock

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metamorphic rock

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paleolithic

arrowheads, and blunt objects used to break or shape other rocks. On a larger scale, some of the earliest--and longest-lasting--human creations include the Pyramids of Giza, the United Kingdom's Stonehenge, the ziggurats of Machu Picchu, and the Great Wall of China. Early human habitations, too, were often made of stone, which lasted longer than plants and wood (as any of the Three Little Pigs would be able to tell you!). Even burial sites are frequently marked with engraved stones, signifying humanity's "return to the earth" and the permanence of rock over the passage of time. The trend of rock as a construction material has continued throughout all of history, as even contemporary buildings are made of bricks, concrete, and reforged rock mixed with metal..



A chart demonstrating the three types of rock--sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic.8



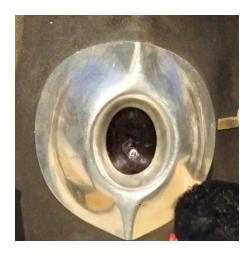
An array of various early stone tools, including arrowheads and jewelry.9

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stone tool

⁸ http://www.windowtonews.com/news.php?id=46176&cat id=31

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stone_tool#/media/File:N%C3%A9olithique_0001.jpg

From a metaphorical perspective, rocks and stones are used in cultures across the world to signify strength, stability, and foundation. The legendary Black Stone of Mecca, Saudi Arabia, is the very cornerstone of the Grand Mosque, destination of the Islamic *hajj*; Muslims circle the Stone's resting place and attempt to kiss it, as the Prophet Muhammad was said to do the same. Another "kissing rock" is Ireland's Blarney Stone, located in Blarney Castle and rumored to give the "gift of the gab" to anyone who is able to place their lips upon it¹¹; Irish culture also cites the *Lia Fáil*, or "Stone of Destiny," as a divinely-presented relic used to coronate the Kings of Ireland. These are but three examples of historically-important stones used around the world; others include Uluru (a truly massive sandstone structure in the Australian Outback, sacred to the Pitjantjatjara Anangu people of that region¹³), the Foundation Stone (revered in Jewish tradition as the very point where God created Adam, the first human¹⁴), and the Aztec Sun Stone (an elaborately-carved rock which contains glyphs depicting the universal order of the Mexica people¹⁵).





The Black Stone (left)¹⁶ and the Aztec Sun Stone¹⁷, two rocks revered by Islamic and Mexica peoples, respectively.

Given the long history of rocks and stones in human culture, it is perhaps unsurprising that they hold an important presence in art, literature, poetry, and religion across the world. In the Gospel of Matthew, one of the text of Christianity's New Testament, Jesus Christ tells Simon Peter that "[he is] Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome

17

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black Stone

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blarney Stone

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lia F%C3%A1il

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uluru

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foundation Stone

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aztec sun stone

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black Stone#/media/File:The Blackstone.jpg

it"18; Peter would go on to become the first pope and "foundation" of the Church. The phrase "like a rock," used by Chevrolet in their advertising campaigns, has come to mean "strong, unflinching, and unfailing"19; a Chinese proverb declares the same sentiment, remarking that "Slander cannot destroy an honest man; when the flood recedes the rock is there."20 American poet Emily Dickinson's "Simplicity" uses rocks as its central symbol--"How happy is the little stone/ That rambles in the road alone…"21 Even certain individuals used the phrase "Rock" as a name; the most famous example might be Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, a Samoan-African-American wrestler and entertainer famed for his incredible size and muscular strength. Thus, from the very beginning of time, rocks have been shaped by humanity--and rocks themselves have shaped humanity as well.



Wrestling and film superstar Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson, famed for his incredible size and strength (he stands at 6'5") and "rock"-like muscles.²²

Selection Factors – Inclusion

Compatibility

Not applicable.

¹⁸ https://biblehub.com/matthew/16-18.htm

¹⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=locCC1-jeTY

²⁰ http://www.special-dictionary.com/proverbs/keywords/rock/

²¹ https://discoverpoetry.com/poems/poems-about-rocks/

²² http://toofab.com/2017/05/26/dwayne-johnson-the-rock-baywatch-critics-bad-reviews-twitter/

Expected Usage Level

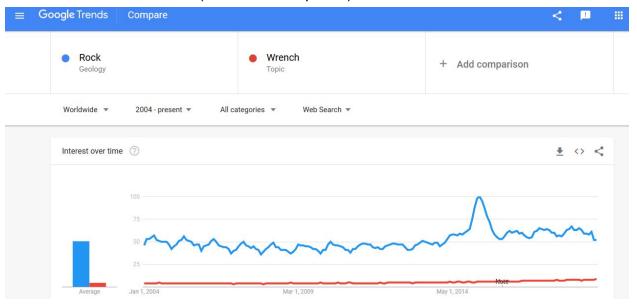
Frequency

I have selected WRENCH as the **reference emoji** for ROCK. It is clearly not an ideal comparison, but given that nothing else represents "natural, non-living object" in the current reference emoji list, it is the best choice. Rocks were also among mankind's earliest tools, so connecting them to "tool" emoji is a tribute to our distant ancestors!

Rocks are found all over the world, and as such, the emoji will quickly find a global audience. I anticipate that geologists and other earth scientists will use it frequently; other groups might include "rock" musicians (there are no emojis that represent different genres of music, so ROCK + INSTRUMENT can fill this gap), nature enthusiasts, archaeologists and paleontologists, and athletes who enjoy *rock*-climbing.

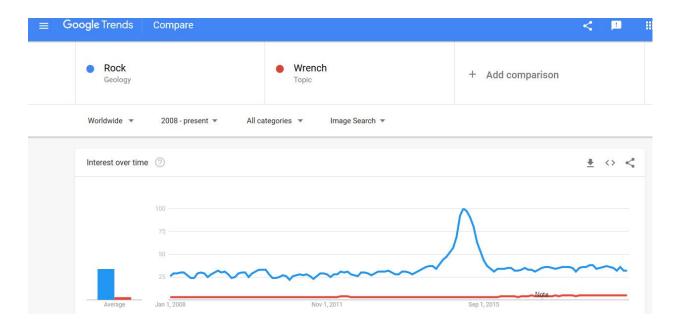
Google Trends: Web Search

ROCK has been searched far more frequently than WRENCH across time. Both are generally stable across time (excluding a massive spike in 2015), but WRENCH remains far lower than ROCK. Note that I have used the term ROCK (GEOLOGY) to differentiate between rocks (the mineral deposits) and rock music.



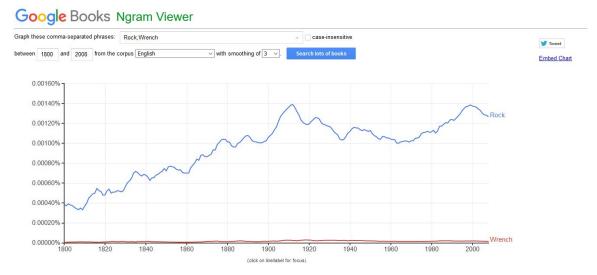
Google Trends: Image Search

The Image Trend search indicates similar patterns to that of Web Trends. ROCK (GEOLOGY), as opposed to Music, again outperforms WRENCH, and its overall percentage remains stable over time.



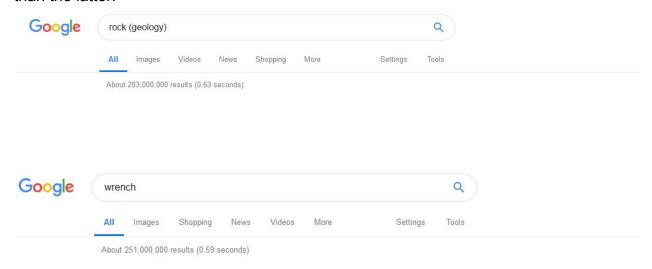
NGram Viewer

ROCK again outperforms WRENCH, although the movement is more interesting--note that ROCK has a peak in both 1911 and 1999. WRENCH remains stable throughout.



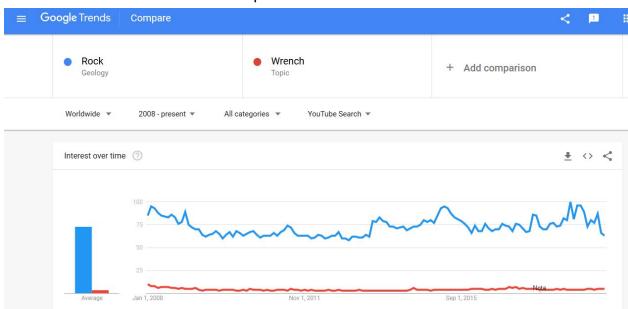
Google Search

ROCK (GEOLOGY) again outperforms WRENCH, producing over 30 million more hits than the latter.



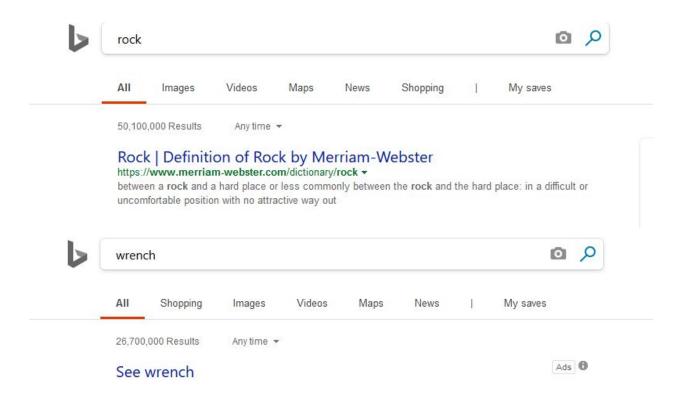
YouTube Search

This is the greatest clash after Ngram Viewer. ROCK (GEOLOGY) remains relatively high across time, with peaks of 100 and never dipping below 50, while WRENCH remains under 10 across the entire period.



Bing Search

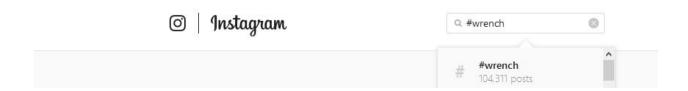
ROCK has nearly double the search hits (over 50,000,000) to WRENCH (around 26,000,000) when using Bing.



Instagram Search

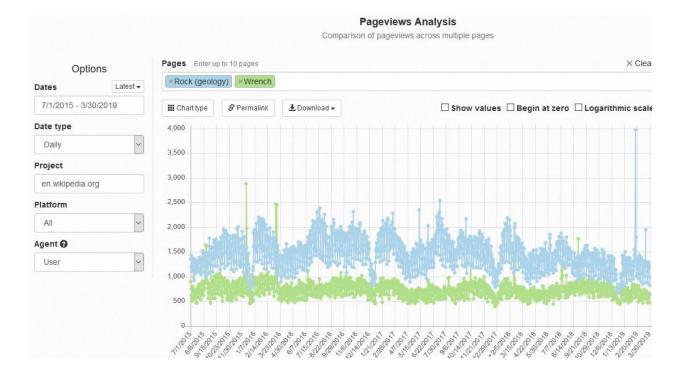
In another resounding rout, ROCK outperforms WRENCH by over 40.5 million searches on Instagram!





Wikipedia Search

In a continuation of the trends described above, ROCK (GEOLOGY) outperforms WRENCH across almost the entire trend search, with the latter briefly eclipsing the former in late 2015 and early 2016. However, ROCK in general is the clear winner.



Multiple Usages

ROCKs are found on every continent and in every ocean, used both in their literal (geologists, other scientists, and the general public) and metaphorical ("strong as a rock," "rock amid the storm," etc.) senses in many cultures. As the list below indicates, there are plenty of opportunities for rocks to be used in both of these ways! However,

for the purposes the emoji, I am largely focusing on the rock as a mineral deposit/geological feature, as rock music is an entirely different subject, taking its name from the verb "to rock"--that is, to move rhythmically or sway. These latter examples have little to do with the emoji itself, although they *can* be used in sequences to signify these ideas.

Use in sequences

In addition to its literal application--a large, heavy stone found in nature--the ROCK emoji could be used to signify various concepts:

ROCK + MUSICAL NOTES (possibly, + AMPLIFIER and MICROPHONE)= ROCK MUSIC (an extremely popular genre of music categorized by loud beats)

ROCK + GUITAR= ROCK GUITAR (a special type of guitar used in rock music, described above)

ROCK + CROISSANT= ROCK AND ROLL (another term for rock music--this involves a pun!)

ROCK + SIGN OF THE HORNS= "ROCK OUT" (a slang term meaning "let's go wild!", frequently said while making this gesture)

ROCK + PAGE FACING UP + SCISSORS= ROCK PAPER SCISSORS (also known as *rochambeau*, this children's game involves throwing one of three symbols at random, with paper covering rock, rock smashing scissors, and scissors cutting paper)

ROCK + PERSON CLIMBING= ROCK CLIMBING (a popular indoor sport, used to practice climbing actual mountains; rock climbing facilities can be found across the world)

ROCK + BOXING GLOVE= ROCKY (a film series about Rocky Balboa, an "underdog" boxer who climbs to the top through grit and determination)

ROCK + HERB= "STONED" (a joking reference to the phrase "stoned," referring to being under the influence of marijuana)

ROCK + CONSTRUCTION WORKER= MINER (one who digs underground to extract minerals and precious metals from rocks)

ROCK + SHAMROCK= BLARNEY STONE (a legendary rock from Irish culture, said to grant the "gift of the gab" to anyone who can kiss it)

Breaking new ground.

I also happened to write the NEST emoji, and faced a similar problem in writing this proposal--there is no "Nature" category to signify non-living objects found in the great outdoors, which required me to categorize ROCK under "Other." The creation of ROCK, then, could fill a noticeable gap in the current emoji library, opening the door for new

symbols to represent some of the most universal objects in the human experience (nearly everyone has seen a rock, but at present, they cannot talk about them with emoji).

Image Distinctiveness

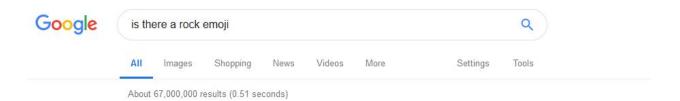
The closest emoji to ROCK is currently MOUNTAIN--but this is a false equivalency, as mountains are *made* of rocks! A rounded, somewhat craggy shape could easily represent a rock. While the default image is gray, it would also be possible to offer different colors, including tan, black, and white, to represent different types of rock (sandstone, obsidian, and marble, respectively).

Completeness

We currently have three emoji representing the classical elements of the Western and Eastern traditions: SWEAT DROPLET and DROPLET, representing *water*, FIRE, representing fire, and WIND FACE and CYCLONE, representing *air/wind*. Earth, the fourth classical element, has no such representation, beyond the actual planet (which does not succinctly capture the idea of earth as in "soil and rock"). Similarly, we have many vegetables and animals, but lack minerals (the third general classification in sorting algorithms). We also have BRICK, and WOOD is forthcoming--more building materials would be appreciated.

Frequently Requested

The phrase "Is there a rock emoji?" receives roughly 67,000,000 results on Google; the closest result is gemstone.



Selection Factors - Exclusion

Overly Specific

Groups that might use the ROCK emoji include geologists and their offshoots (including *petrologists*, those who specifically study rocks²³), nature enthusiasts, archaeologists and paleontologists (who work with rocks on a daily basis), miners and excavators (who dig for and extract minerals from rocks), and rock collectors. More metaphoric users could blend the emoji with instruments, including the guitar and microphone, to represent "rock music." As of now, there is no single emoji that captures the ubiquity of the rock or stone; a new emoji is needed to represent these timeless objects.

Open Ended

While there are countless rocks in the world--"there is no agreed number of specific types of rocks"²⁴--the first 20 image results on Google closely match Aphee Messer's depiction of the concept: a roughly round (or trapezoidal) "blob", gray or grayish-brown, with lines representing the various sediments and crags found within the rock. It is not necessary to symbolize particular types of rock--the word "diatomite" rarely comes up in casual conversation--and Messer's general-but-detailed concept succinctly captures the concept.

Already Representable

While rocks and stones are found around the world, they are surprisingly underrepresented in the current emoji library. It is true that a MOUNTAIN emoji exists--but as a mountain is, in essence, an extremely large rock or series of rocks, the two concepts cannot equally represent each other (a rock is not a mountain, and a mountain is *made of* rock). Describing individual rocks cannot be done with any existing emoji.

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

The sheer ubiquity of ROCK means that no one entity can copyright it--every culture, nation, and continent contains rocks. Also, the phrase "rock and roll" or "rock music" is used frequently, to the point where searching "rock logo" on Google results largely in

²³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Petrology

²⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List of rock types

images of rock music groups.²⁵ STONE is slightly more concrete (pun intended!)--several companies, including Blackstone and Stonegate, use images of stones in their logos²⁶; however, none have a copyright on the stone itself. Names are slightly more curious, as there are individuals, including Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson (described above) and actor Rock Hudson, who are titled after ROCK; however, as the word ROCK itself cannot be copyrighted, it is unlikely that anyone will confuse a large muscular wrestler or deceased movie idol for this emoji.

Transient

As described above, proto-humans began making their first tools out of stones some 3.3 million years ago--but their existence on this planet far predates hominids. In February 2014, geologists and geochemists discovered the oldest rock fragments in Earth history at 4.4 BILLION years old.²⁷ Considering that Earth herself is estimated to be 6.4 billion years old, rocks were among the first objects to be created by the natural processes of the planet. Similarly, rocks are not living things and thus can survive any mass-life-extinction event, including increased temperatures. Rocks will outlast us all, and deserve an emoji for that distinction.

Faulty Comparison

As indicated above, there are no entries under any emoji category--or indeed, any category at all--that can capture the idea of ROCK or STONE. It is an object, but as nature is not a category for objects (that is, non-living things found in nature), it lacks proper representation.

Exact Images

Rocks come in all shapes and sizes, but the general principle is easily represented--a rounded, gray "blob" with small lines drawn into it to denote crags. Other colors, including tan (for sandstone) or white (for limestone) might be used, but the simplicity of ROCK is one of its great strengths--because stones can be found all over the world,

https://www.google.com/search?g=rock+logo&source=Inms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjU4fKx2Kzh AhUCVN8KHcnRC3sQ AUIDigB&biw=1366&bih=625

https://www.google.com/search?biw=1366&bih=625&tbm=isch&sa=1&ei=U9ygXNi2Hous Qat6KPABg&g1..gws-wiz-img.O1mIQi59_2M 27 https://www.livescience.com/43584-earth-oldest-rock-jack-hills-zircon.html

users of all nations will be able to recognize it.

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:

Author Biographies

Christian Krenek (Christian.Krenek@gmail.com) took it for granite that a ROCK emoji already existed; he marbled at the lack of one, and was ready to (feld)spar with people when he found that this wasn't the case. Realizing that this absence could be chalked up to confusion, he prepared this document based on his love of nature and childhood hours finding interesting rocks in his Grammie's garden (a few definitely had magical powers). He left no stone unturned in his research, and hopes that you rocked out while reading this proposal!