

Proposal for Emoji: SLIDE

Submitted by: Christian Krenek of Emojination

Date: 6/8/19 -- Revised 3/31/20

1. Identification

- a. **CLDR Short name:** SLIDE
- b. **CLDR keywords** sliding, playground, water slide, fun slide, amusement park

2. Images



Credit: Aphee Messer. Free for use in conjunction with this proposal.

3. Sort Order: In the ACTIVITIES-GAME category, after KITE

4. Reference Emoji: ELEPHANT

This proposal was updated 3/31/20 to update images and compare stats against ELEPHANT.

Abstract

This proposal requests the addition of the SLIDE emoji to the Unicode Library. One of the most popular playground toys in the world, the seemingly simple SLIDE has brought joy to children and adults for over a century. SLIDEs provide a fun, safe way for children to conquer fears of heights, and are remarkably easy to manufacture. In addition to “small” SLIDEs, larger versions of the attraction appear in theme parks and carnivals. But most importantly, the SLIDE could be the beginning of a new emoji set---the playground. As a healthy community spot where children of all ages and kinds can play together, parks and playgrounds provide crucial socialization areas for not just little ones, but their families. The SLIDE is the sigil of the playground, and so deserves a place on the Emoji list!

Introduction

“The reason playground slides are made is for us to experience the joy of falling even if there’s no one there to catch us.”—Anonymous.¹

The memory of waiting your turn to scale the ladder, then whipping down the scalding metal as fast you can, wind whipping your hair...it is all tied to that tallest of playground toys, the slide! Perhaps the simplest of all pieces----a slide is little more than an inclined plane designed for children (and some adults) to zip down at rapid speed----the playground slide is still a favorite, and has been for over a century. In addition to their place on playgrounds, slides of metal, plastic, and even inflated rubber can be found in amusement parks, carnivals, and birthday parties around the world, while companies like Playskool manufacture miniature, “safe” slides for backyards, where everyone from “big kids” to toddlers can play.

Despite their ubiquity around the world, the slide-----in both its playground and amusement park incarnations-----is a surprisingly contemporary invention (that is to say, a slide *specifically designed* as a toy; the use of inclined planes for transporting both large structures and people since at least the construction of the Great Pyramids of Giza, Egypt). The slide, like playgrounds in general, have their roots in the Industrial Revolution of the late nineteenth century and subsequent enforcement of child labor laws; adults feared (and in some cases rightly) that the rise of trolley cars and automobiles would lead to an increase in accidents involving small children.² To combat this danger, *settlement houses*-----the precursors to community centers, where people rich and poor could gather in a public space for conversation, education, and play-----began to emerge across the United Kingdom and United States.³ Children were popular attendees of these settlement houses, and playgrounds were quickly built for them-----including slides.

Exactly who “invented” the slide is a question lost to history; similar structures appeared near-simultaneously in various locations, making it impossible to name a single progenitor. In any event, though, records of the first playground slides appear as early as 1903, when, in the Neighborhood House of Washington, D.C., an African-American man known only as “Uncle Richard” installed “a piece of apparatus...[consisting] of a long, smooth plank, the lower end about twelve inches from the ground and the other placed at an elevation of about twelve feet.” Though Uncle Richard called this invention “Shooting the Chutes,” it was-----right down to the ladder used to access the top-----nothing less than a slide.⁴

¹ <https://boardofwisdom.com/togo/Quotes/ShowQuote?msgid=345183#.XOtMGo8pCUk>

² <https://esnpc.blogspot.com/2017/08/cellar-doors-and-trolleys-history-of.html>

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

⁴ https://esnpc.blogspot.com/2017/08/cellar-doors-and-trolleys-history-of.html#_edn4

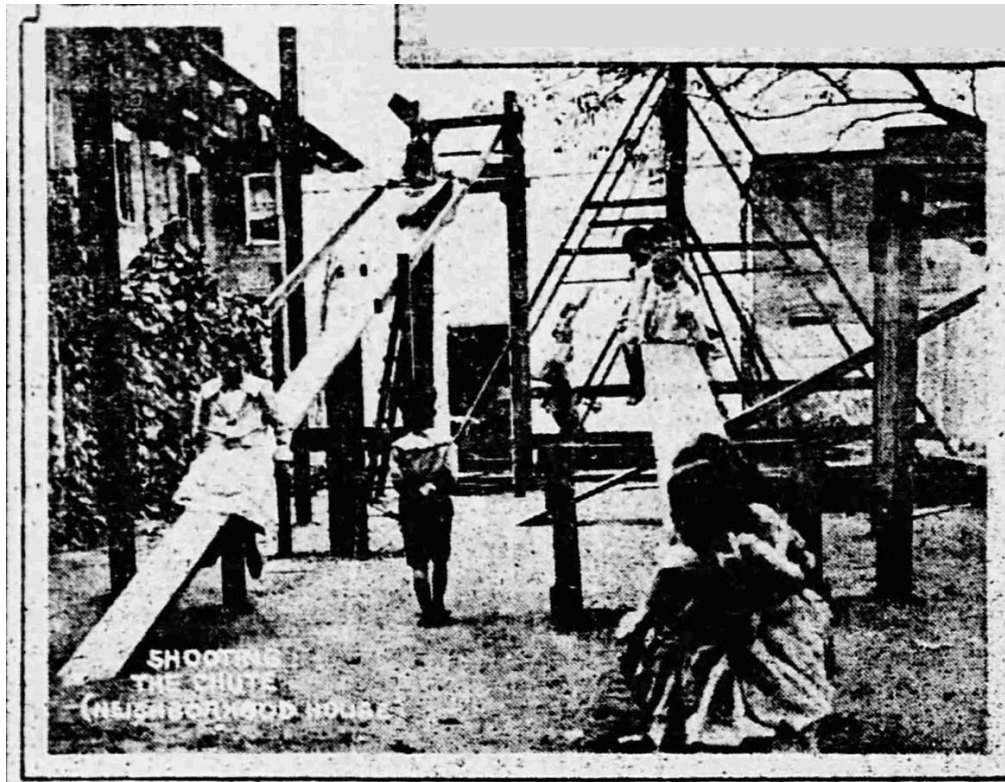


Image from the Evening Star of Washington, D.C., 1903; on the right of the image, we see one of the earliest slides. There were no guardrails of any kind-----and yet the children seemed to enjoy it!⁵

In addition to their presence on playgrounds, slides were also a staple of amusement parks at the turn of the twentieth century (and remain so today). The earliest records of an amusement park slide comes from the legendary Coney Island, where, on Luna Park (the area's ride center), a "quaint old Dutch windmill" housed "a slippery bamboo chute with a sharp incline and many devious turns"; on opening night, over 3,000 children took a ride on this first amusement slide.⁶

⁵ <https://esnpc.blogspot.com/2017/08/cellar-doors-and-trolleys-history-of.html>

⁶ <https://www.westland.net/coneyisland/articles/lunapark.htm>



 alamy stock photo

M1T2CB
www.alamy.com

The “Old Mill” on Luna Park, Coney Island, which housed the world’s first amusement-park slide. Photo circa 1906.⁷

Though the years have changed the slide——massive structures of metal have given way to plastic and safe foam, while amusement parks have moved from bamboo (and its potential splinters) to smoother synthetic materials——the joy of riding down a slide is still unmatched around the world. Inflatable slides are part and parcel of birthday parts and street fairs, and companies such as Playskool continue to manufacture slides for children of all ages, including babies. As long as children need playgrounds, they will need slides——to climb and see the world, to ride back down and know that descent does not always mean failure, and, above all, to have *fun*.

Selection Factors – Inclusion

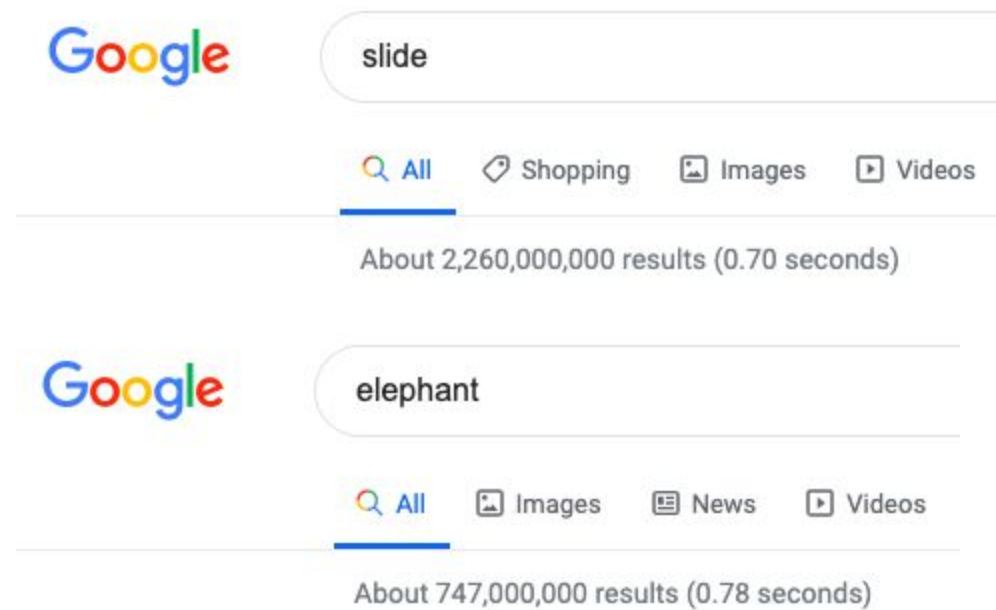
Compatibility

Not applicable.

Expected Usage Level

Frequency

Google Search



Google Video Search



slide

All Shopping Images Videos News

About 534,000,000 results (0.38 seconds)



elephant

All Images News Videos Shopping

About 145,000,000 results (0.29 seconds)

Bing



slide

ALL SHOPPING IMAGES VIDEOS

166,000,000 Results Any time ▼

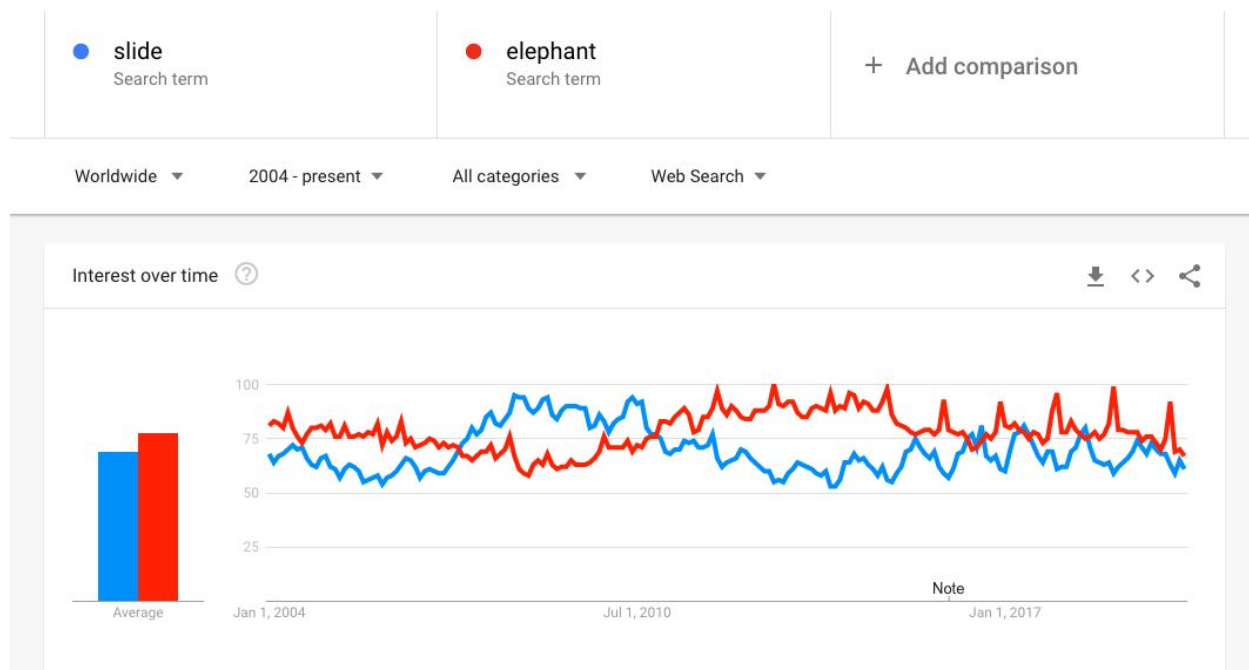


elephant

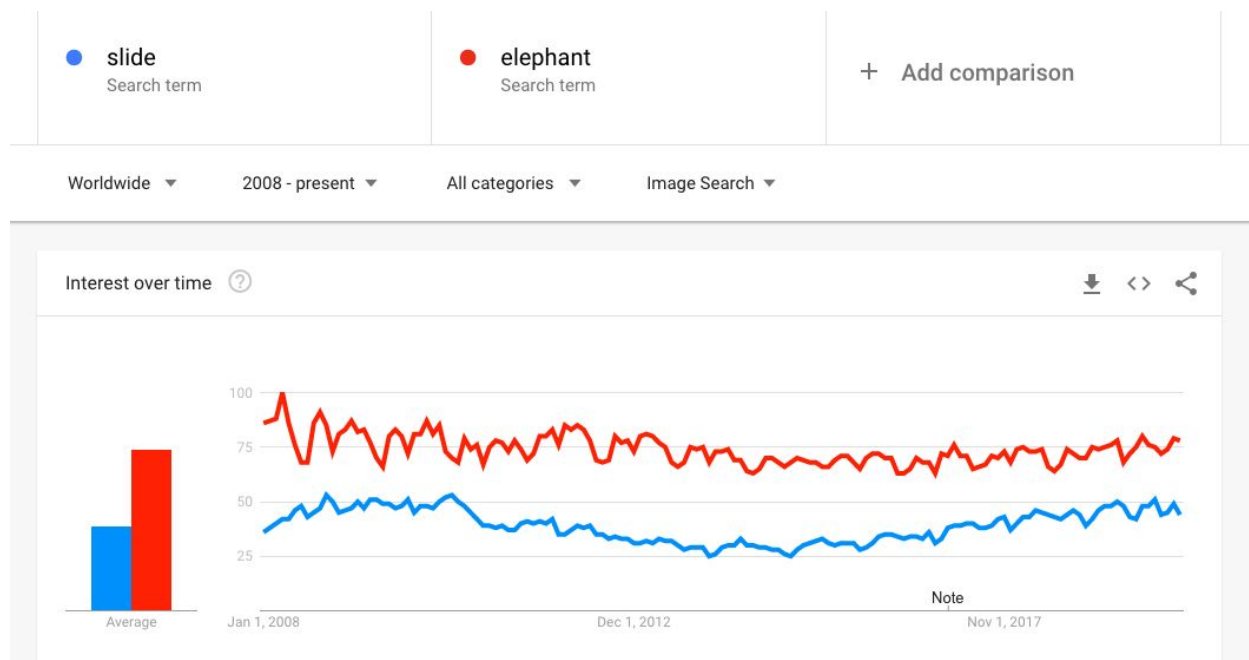
ALL SHOPPING IMAGES VIDEOS

9-22 Of 116,000,000 Results Any time ▼

Google Trends: Web Search

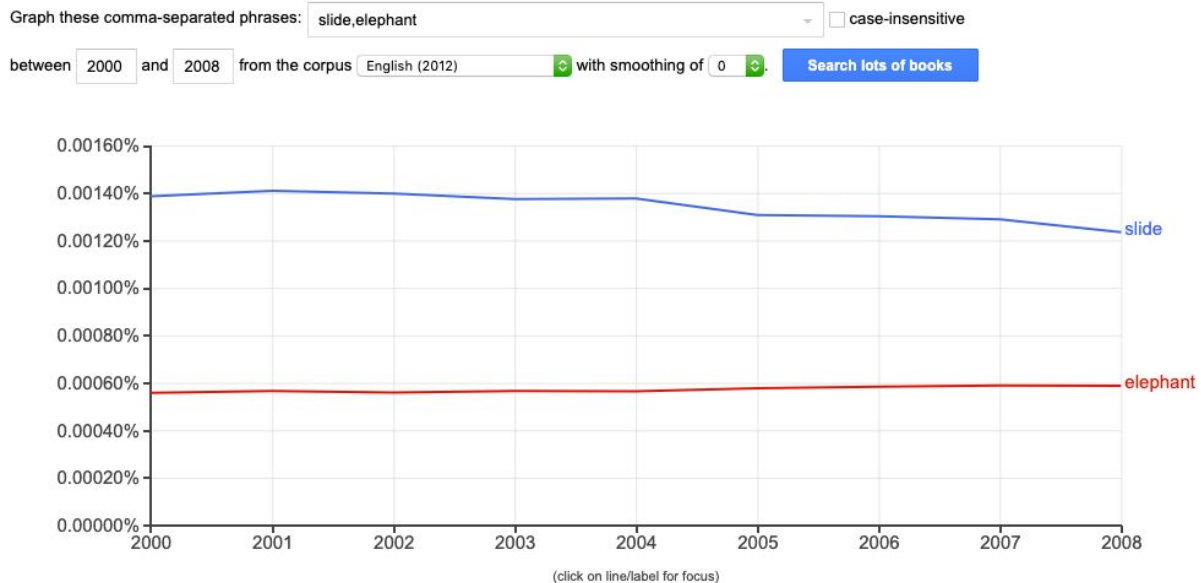


Google Trends: Image Search



NGram Viewer

Google Books Ngram Viewer



Multiple Usages

The SLIDE, as a simple tool, can be used not only in multiple contexts, but as part of phrases as well. Playground SLIDES are popular toys in both public parks and schools worldwide, meaning that children, parents, and teachers will have use for this emoji. Amusement parks are also a large source of SLIDES——often called “fun SLIDES,” these entertainments can be found on every continent except Antarctica. Inflatable SLIDES are also popular entertainments at carnivals and fairs, which, again, are globally ubiquitous. Speaking more metaphorically, the phrase SLIDE could refer to office and archival work (where data and presentations are presented on SLIDES), dances (the “SLIDE” is a popular term, including “Electric” and “Cha-Cha”), and a sign of general downturn (“a downward SLIDE” is often referring in polling and economics when fortunes change for the worse). Finally, the SLIDE whistle and SLIDE guitar are both popular musical instruments and styles, suggesting usage among musicians.

Use in sequences

A SLIDE might be used in the following sequences:

SLIDE + CAROUSEL = PLAYGROUND (this is a poor comparison-----see below for further arguments-----but as of now, it is the only thing that creates this idea)
SLIDE + ROLLER COASTER = AMUSEMENT PARK (both of these are found in these parks)
SLIDE + DROPLET= WATER SLIDE (a special form of slide where people rush down with the aid of water)
SLIDE + SCHOOL (possibly + TEACHER)= RECESS/SCHOOL PLAYGROUND (many schools have play areas)
SLIDE + FILM PROJECTOR= SLIDE SHOW/POWERPOINT (“slides” are terms for the individual pages of this data)
SLIDE + LIGHTNING BOLT= ELECTRIC SLIDE (a popular dance----- “come let me take you on a party ride!”)
SLIDE + WOMAN/MAN DANCING= CHA CHA SLIDE (another popular dance----- “two hops this time!”)
SLIDE + CHART DECREASING= DOWNWARD SLIDE (a term referring to a downturn in fortune, usually economically or politically)
SLIDE + WHISTLE = SLIDE WHISTLE (a woodwind musical instrument)
SLIDE + GUITAR = SLIDE GUITAR (a form of guitar playing often seen in the blues)
SLIDE + BASEBALL= “SLIDING INTO BASE” (a popular move in baseball games, involving diving through the dirt to have the hands or feet touch the base before the runner can be tagged)

Breaking new ground.

The SLIDE could be the beginning of an entirely new classification of emoji: the playground. Playgrounds and public parks are integral parts of communities and societies all over the world, but as of now, there are no symbols to represent them in the Unicode Library. SLIDE could easily lead the way for SEESAW and SWINGS.

Image Distinctiveness

A SLIDE is easily represented: a simple inclined plane of metal, fringed with a bright color (red or blue are popular choices), attached to a ladder immediately conveys the idea. While there are different models of SLIDEs-----covered plastic or “tube” types, for instance-----the SLIDE depicted above is ubiquitous enough to represent the whole concept.

Completeness

As there are no “playground” based-emojis, the SLIDE can begin to fill a crucial gap in the emoji library. It could easily be the beginning of a whole new emoji set that is globally recognizable, and SLIDEs and other forms of playground equipment are found throughout the world!

Frequently Requested

N/A.

Selection Factors – Exclusion

Overly Specific

The general shape, design, and purpose of a SLIDE are matched by the emoji suggested. Since there are SLIDEs of different sizes, shapes, materials, and colors, this “generic” one matches a good balance of recognizable, but not overly specific.

Open Ended

As mentioned above, the SLIDE comes in various sizes (from massive amusement park attractions to baby-sized attractions), materials (plastic, metal, and wood are popular), and styles (spirals, covered and uncovered, and steep inclines appear frequently). However, since the SLIDE fulfills largely one purpose-----amusement going downward-----there is no need to create separate emojis for all of these types.

Already Representable

The SLIDE, with its unique shape and function, is not represented by any other existing emoji. Furthermore, the thing the SLIDE represents most-----the playground-----is barely represented at all!

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

The SLIDE is a popular symbol of playground equipment, but no one group owns it. Similarly, while different dances and songs use SLIDE in their titles, there is no entity so famous that it dominates the cultural concept.

Transient

Records suggest that the earliest personal SLIDEs were created at the turn of the twentieth century-----just when much larger SLIDEs were opening at amusement parks across the United States. Given that it has been over a century and children (and adults!) are still playing on and with SLIDEs, they are clearly staying put in playgrounds and backyards around the world.

Faulty Comparison

Nothing does what a SLIDE does-----it is a larger-than-usual structure specifically designed for amusement, but lacks the mechanical aspects of the ROLLER COASTER or CAROUSEL. It is, in short, playground equipment, and no emojis of any sort appear in the current library.

Exact Images

SLIDES can be short, tall, metallic, plastic, amusement rides, personal toys, and everything in between. But since the general purpose of a SLIDE is for a rider to accelerate downward for fun, no one specific picture of the toy is necessary!

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) can still remember the best slides of his childhood (Castle Park had the most, but Pirate Ship Park had the tallest one, and the one on the beach would give you static shocks if you weren't careful). A scholar of children's theatre and the theory of play, he understands the vitality of games and toys not just for children, but adults as well. Christian hopes his proposal prompted happy memories for you!