Title: Rubber Duck Emoji Proposal

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I.   Identification

Sample Image	Proposed Unicode and CLDR name	Possible CLDR English keywords	Closest Unicode Emojis
	Rubber Duck	Rubber ducky, ducky, rubber ducky, duckie, rubber duckie, bath, debugging	(duck)

II.   Images

72px	18px	72px, bw	18px, bw
72px, flat	**18px, flat**		

Category

This emoji may be categorized as <u>game</u> and appear after 🧸 *teddy bear* or as

<u>household</u> and appear after 🛁 *bathtub*.

III. Selection Factors - Inclusion

A. Compatibility

According to Emojipedia, a previous version of the Samsung duck design featured a yellow rubber duck (Emojipedia). This emoji is not currently in use. No other platforms were found to use a rubber duck emoji.

B. Expected usage level

The expected usage of a rubber duck emoji is likely to be on the order of other hygiene, bath, and toy emojis. The following sections provide metrics to quantify interest in rubber ducks and rubber duck imagery.

1. Frequency

The following table shows search result counts for Google, Bing, and Google Video searches. These search result counts were found by entering "rubber duck" into the search engine and taking the search result count.

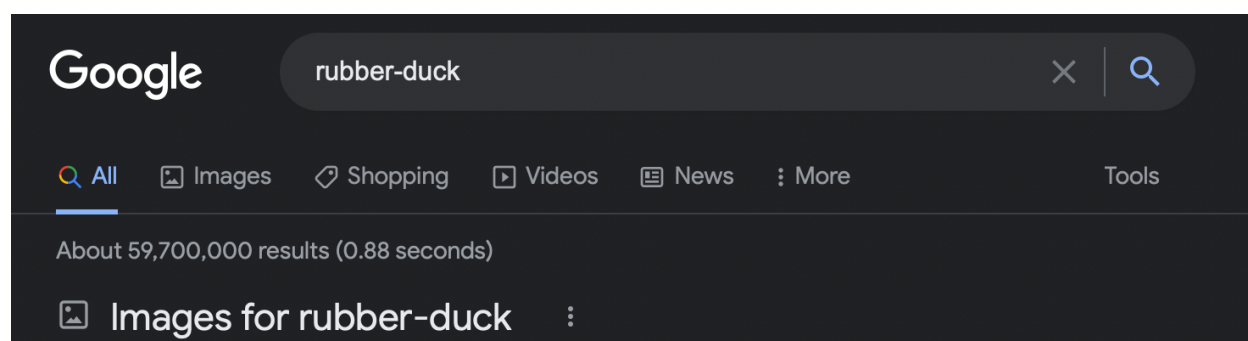| Search Term	a. Google Search (Google)	b. Bing Search (Bing)	c. Google Video Search (Google)
Rubber duck	59.7 million	7.9 million	2.7 million

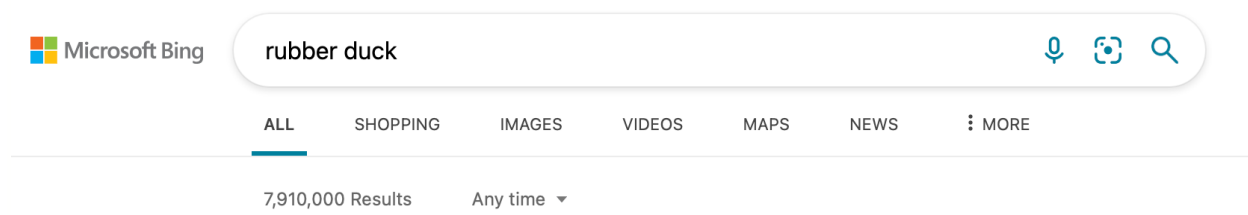*Figure 1: "Rubber Duck" Google Search Results (Google)*

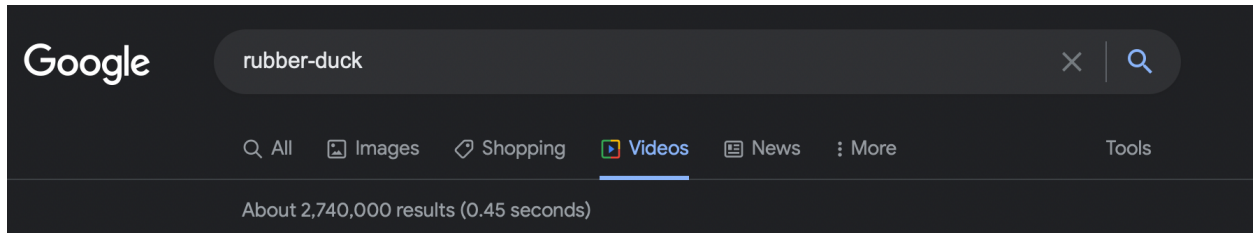*Figure 2: "Rubber Duck" Bing Search Results (Google)*

Figure 3: "Rubber Duck" Google Video Search Results (Bing)

d. Google trends: web search

The following chart shows interest over time of "mallard duck" vs. "rubber duck" search terms. The mallard duck being the duck commonly used for the *duck* emoji suggests the mallard duck as a useful comparison point. This is intended to show that a "rubber duck", in addition to being a common household item, symbol of hygienic practices, childhood, and computer code debugging, and a cultural institution in its own right, is a subtype of duck more commonly searched than the mallard duck which is the form the existing *duck* emoji takes.
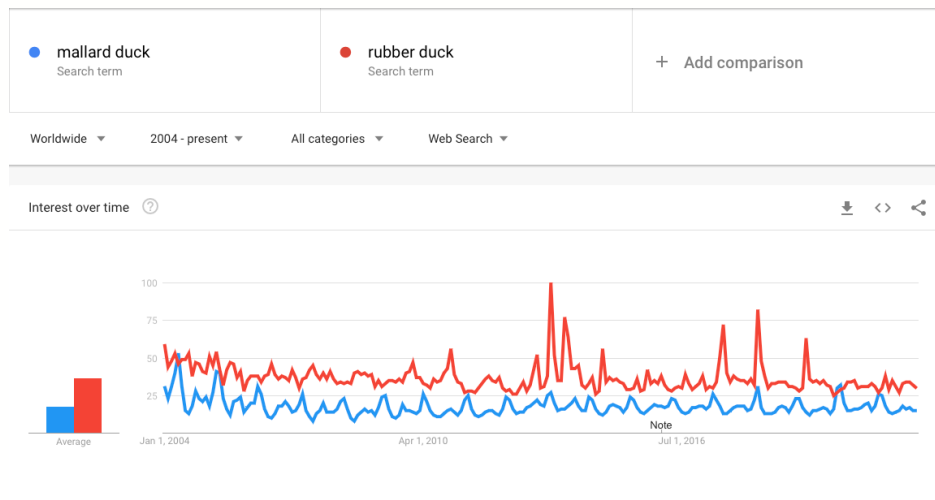

Figure 4: Google Trends "Mallard Duck" vs. "Rubber Duck" Interest Over Time (Google Trends)

Note in the regional interest breakdown, virtually all regions show more interest in "rubber duck" over "mallard duck".
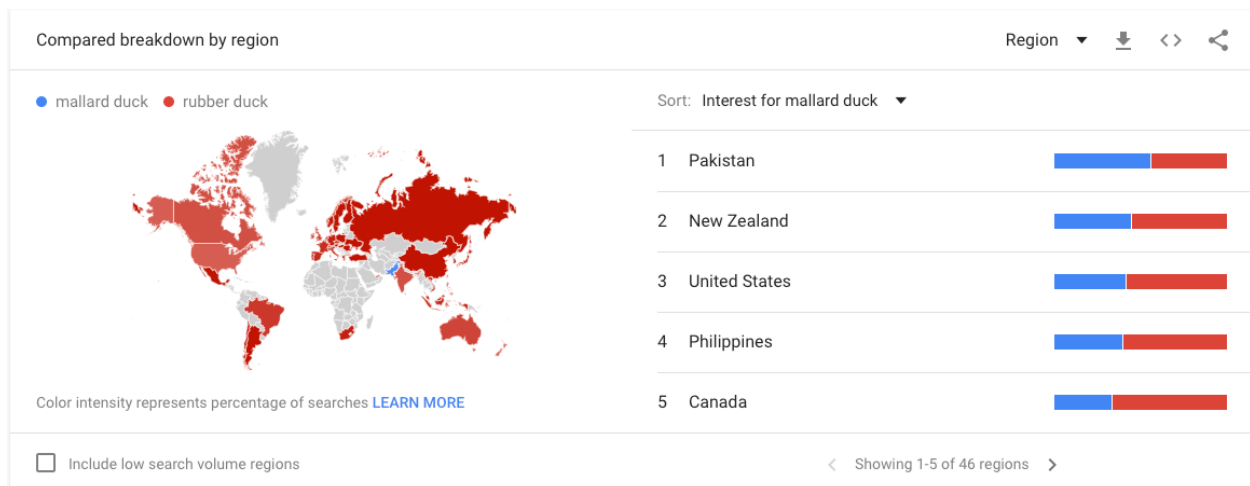
Figure 5: Google Trends "Mallard Duck" vs. Rubber Duck" Compared Breakdown by Region (Google Trends)

e. Google trends: image search

The Google Trends for image searches of "mallard duck" vs. "rubber duck" show similarly favorable results for "rubber duck" as the web search trends. There was a spike in "rubber duck" searches from 2008 to mid-2010. This could be due to a NASA JPL glacial flow study conducted in 2008 which was the subject of several science articles, both in science news publications and technical literature (Zabaernko). As 2008 was also an election year in the United States, another possible explanation for this peak in interest is a collective seeking of solace from the election news cycle through rubber duck imagery consumption. This is speculation.
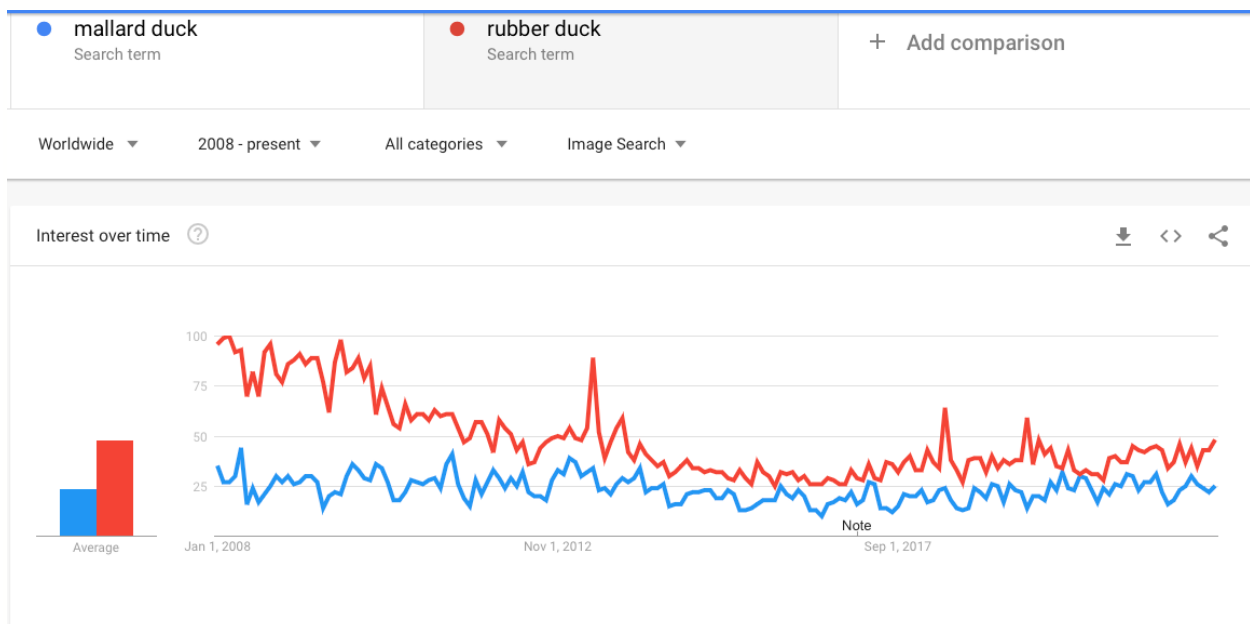

Figure 6: Google Trends Image Search "Mallard Duck" vs. "Rubber Duck" Interest Over Time (Google Trends)

In the case of Google Image search trends, all regions favor "rubber duck" over "mallard duck".
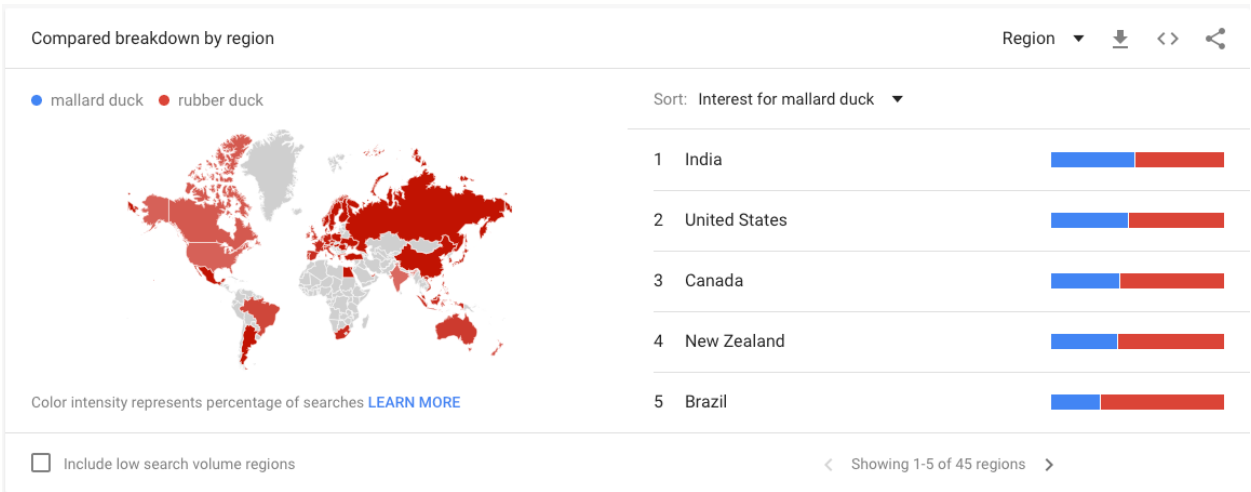

Figure 7: Google Trends Image Search "Mallard Duck" vs. "Rubber Duck" Compared Breakdown by Region (Google Trends)

The following images compare the Google and Google Image search trends of "elephant" to "rubber duck". "Rubber duck" is searched with less frequency than "elephant".
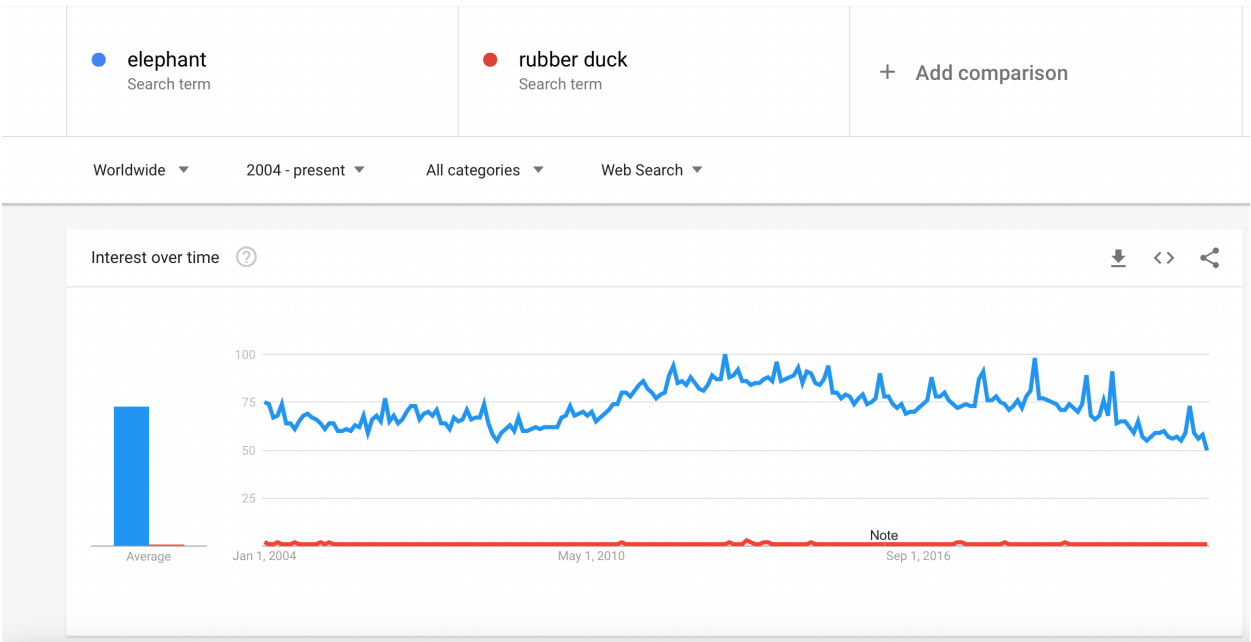

Figure 8: Google Trends Search "Elephant" vs. "Rubber Duck" Interest Over Time (Google Trends)
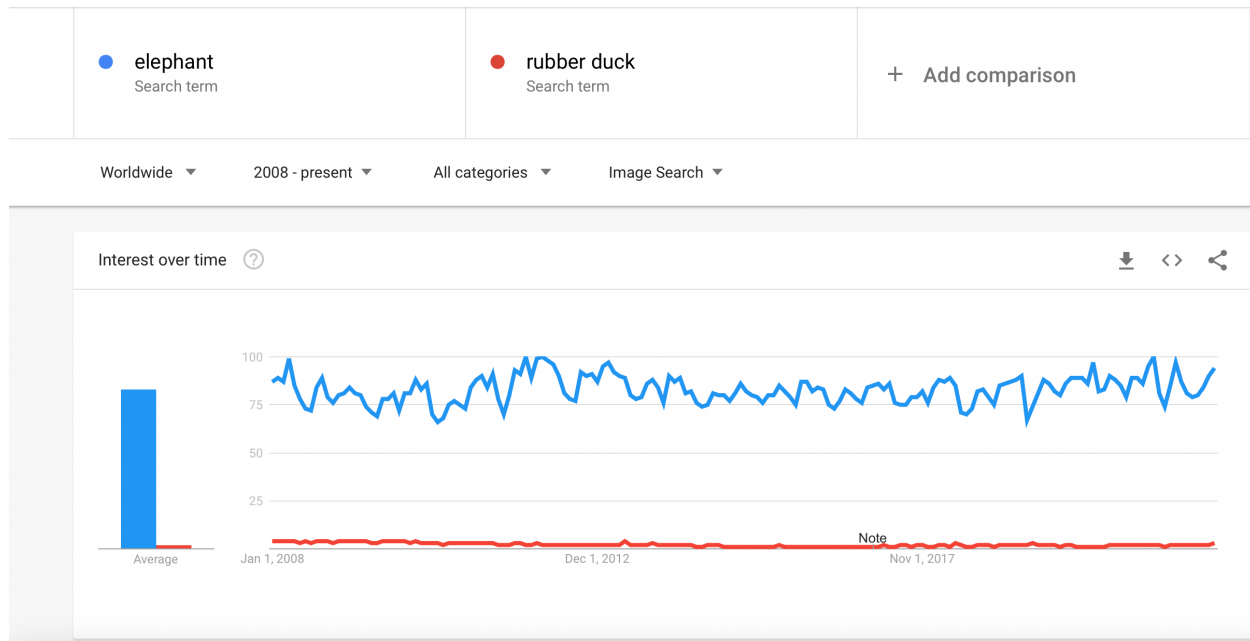
Figure 9: Google Trends Image Search "Elephant" vs. "Rubber Duck" Interest Over Time (Google Trends)

2. Multiple usages

The rubber duck was originally introduced as a bath toy for children and children-at-heart, and this is still its primary use. The iconic yellow rubber duck we know and love today first appeared in the 1940's (The Strong). Rubber ducks solidified their place in pop culture in the 1970's with the release of the Sesame Street song "Rubber Duckie", performed by the inimitable Ernie (The Strong) (Sesame Street). This history of bath time and childhood associations emphatically declares the rubber duck an excellent emoji for use in hygiene, self-care, childhood, and play contexts.

Additionally, this emoji would be useful for the software engineering community and adjacent communities as "rubber duck debugging" is a debugging technique in which an engineer problem solves by attempting to articulate a programming issue to a willing listener, real or imagined (Wikipedia). This term comes from a book called The Pragmatic Programmer in which a programmer practiced rubber duck debugging with a rubber duck he kept for this purpose (Wikipedia). As examples, the rubber duck could be used to express that one is engaged in this practice or to indicate that one is willing to be a rubber duck, or listening ear, for the recipient of the rubber duck emoji.

The squeak of the rubber duck makes the rubber duck a useful onomatopoeic symbol for a squeak sound. The iconic yellow of the rubber duck makes it a cute pairing with other cheerful and/or yellow emojis. These are likely fringe use cases.

3. Use in sequences

As described in the previous section, there are multiple contexts in which a rubber duck emoji would be useful. The following table presents possible sequences for its use.

Context	Possible Emoji Sequence
Bathroom, accessories, toiletries	🪒 🧻 🪥 🧼 🦆
Hygiene, bathing	🚿 🛁 🦆
Self-care	🧖‍♀️ 💅 💆‍♀️ 🛁 🦆 🛁 🍷 📚 🧖‍♀️ 🦆
Child, bathtime	🛁 🧒 🦆 🛁 👶 🧼 🦆
Child, playtime	👧 🧸 🧩 🦆
Coding, rubber duck debugging	👩‍💻 🦆 💻 🦆 🖥️ ❓ 🦆

4. Breaking new ground

There is not an emoji to express the joy of self-care and a luxurious and/or fun bathing ritual. There are also not bathroom emojis which convey the whimsy that often characterizes certain bathing activities, particularly in childhood. Currently, bath and hygiene emojis are limited to mundane depictions of bathroom fixtures and toiletries.

Toy emojis are limited, especially emojis for babies' and young children's toys. Emojis representing games for older children or adults are more common (*game die*, *video game*, and *slot machine*, for example). The *teddy bear* emoji is currently the toy emoji representing the toys of babies and young children. This is likely due to the difficulty in finding universally recognizable toys which are also iconic enough to be recognizable in emoji form. The rubber duck fits this bill.

Finally, rubber duck debugging is an industry term, but a delightful one, and the rubber duck emoji would allow for the use of this cheerful term in the programming community while performing the burdensome task of debugging.

The closest emoji to the rubber duck which currently exists, *duck*, does not address any of these use cases, and it is not a substitution or synonym for a rubber duck.

e. Distinctiveness

The rubber duck is iconic in appearance, and, as shown in the Google trend maps above, it is globally recognized.

The rubber duck emoji is distinct from all existing emojis, including the *duck* emoji.

f. Completeness

Although people and children commonly take joy in the use of rubber ducks at bath and play, and coders employ rubber duck debugging regularly, there is no emoji to capture what rubber ducks bring to our work, play, and daily ablutions.

IV.   Selection Factors – Exclusion

g. Petitions or "frequent requests"

A proposal for a rubber duck emoji was submitted to the Unicode Consortium in 2019 but was rejected. The effort put forward in 2019 from another community member to produce a rubber duck emoji proposal shows that there is passion and dedication to this cause, and could be considered an inclusion rather than exclusion factor.

Note that as the previous rubber duck proposal was submitted over two years ago, it is permissible to resubmit the concept.

h. Overly specific

The proposed character is not overly specific. It represents the most generic and traditional yellow rubber ducky.

i. Open-ended

The rubber duck emoji would stand on its own and would not necessitate further addition to the emoji canon in order to be useful and legible.

j. Already representable

A rubber duck is not currently representable. The *duck* does not function in the same contexts, and there are no other emojis or combinations of emojis that communicate the same meaning as a rubber duck as a bath object, a coding term, or a toy.

k. Logos, brands, other third-party IP rights, UI icons, signage, specific people, specific buildings and landmarks, deities

The rubber duck does not fall into any of these categories.

l. Transient

The rubber duck is a timeless symbol since its advent. Google Trends show steady interest over many years.

m. Faulty comparison

This does not apply. The rubber duck emoji is incomparable among emojis.

n. Exact images

An exact image is not required for a rubber duck emoji to be recognizable. It is a simple, iconic, and globally recognized object.

   o. Region flags without code

The rubber duck is not a flag.

   p. Lack of required rights or license for images

The image proposed was created by the author of this proposal.

   q. Variations on direction

The rubber duck is valid from any perspective and need only be pictured in profile to be easily recognizable as a rubber duck.

   r. Includes text

No, the rubber duck does not contain text, only squeaky subtext.

Other Information

The rubber duck should be yellow with an orange or red beak in color versions of this emoji; this is the most generic and iconic rubber duck. Black and white rubber duck emojis are recognizable by shape, as seen in the enclosed images.

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r=1&virtualBrandChannel=0>.