

Proposal for emoji: DRONE



Submitter

Jonathan P. Dandois

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1. Identification

- A. Keywords: *drone*, *uav*, *uas*, *multirotor*, *quadcopter*, *multicopter*
- B. Category: *transport-air* (<https://unicode.org/emoji/charts/emoji-ordering.html#transport-air>)

a After Flying Saucer 🛸



2. Images

- A. ZIP File: see attached zip of 18x18 and 72x72, RGB and black & white PNG images included with submission
- B. License: These drone images were created by Jonathan Dandois. I certify that the images are public domain, thereby making the images suitable for incorporation into the Unicode Standards.
- C. Document: 18x18 and 72x72 RGB and BW PNGs

3. Factors for Inclusion

This purpose of this proposal is to suggest that a new **drone** emoji be added to the Unicode Standards. The proposed emoji art takes the form of a multirotor "quadcopter" distinguished by 3 main components: 1. A chasis or frame with a body, arms, and legs, 2. motors and propellers located on the ends of the arms, 3. A camera or other sensor payload mounted below the frame and between the legs.



These 3 components and imagery do not reflect the style or brand of any one vendor (for example DJI, Parrot, Yuneec, Autel, Skydio, etc.). The author feels that this is a ubiquitous symbol that can be recognized around the world to represent a small, consumer-grade flying machine that may be flown manually or autonomously and most likely carries a camera sensor.











A. Expresses Multiple Concepts

1. Referring to flying device itself: "weather looks great, let's go fly 🚁"
2. To "drone-on". e.g, "this lecture: 🧑🏫 🚁 🚁 🚁 aka: "this professor drones on"
3. To refer to someone as a drone or mindless follower:
"all these mindless 🚁 🚁 🚁 lined up for the next *Gamestation* 1000"

B. Can be used with other emoji to convey additional concepts

1. To refer humorously to, or in the near future to the reality of, a drone delivery:
🚁 🧊 🍺 pls (ice-cold beer drone delivery please)
2. A gift / new toy: Someone getting a new drone as a gift and flying it around:
🎄 🧑🏻 📺 🚁 time to 🚁! "Santa brought a drone for Christmas, time to fly!"
3. For discussing (in favorable or unfavorable terms) drones in the context of Law Enforcement activities, privacy, surveillance:
🚁 👁️ 📍 pls (drone over here please)
👮 🚁 👁️ (police drone, look out)
🚁 📍 🧐 📍 (drone up there, eyes up!)
4. For reporting on drones in the news / media (e.g., drone footage is frequently shared in social media in the current Russia-Ukraine conflict):
this new 🚁 footage 💣 🧑🏻

C. Breaks New Ground

1. 🚁 is not equivalent to existing emojis for airplane    or helicopter 
2. A drone is a different concept in our relationship with aviation and technology.
3. Drones are small, local, personal.
4. They are almost always associated with cameras/video and as such are more likely to be associated with concepts of surveillance, privacy, pictures, art, selfies.
5. Combinations of existing emojis (e.g., airplane-camera or helicopter-camera  ,  ,  ) may represent the concept of a "flying camera that is overhead".
6. But these do not convey the sense of closeness, personal use or technology of 🚁
7. The use of a drone emoji to refer to an object that is nearby the author or reader, represents something nearby that you could see, hear, or throw a shoe at!

D. Is legible and visually distinctive

The proposed drone emoji is a *distinct, recognizable, and visually iconic entity*.

Distinct

- The proposed emoji is **distinct**, it is not represented by any other emoji or combination of current emoji. As outlined above, the use of airplane or helicopter emoji, whether by themselves or with another emoji like a camera, do not represent the same concept as a small personal consumer drone.
- 🚁 Is something I can buy at a big box store, fly at the park, or harass my neighbor with.
- Drones are increasing in conversation in the media, for example in the US with recent legislation aimed at banning drones from certain countries: <https://apnews.com/buyline-shopping/article/dji-drone-ban-in-the-us>

Recognizable

- As outlined above, the proposed emoji 🚁 reflects a major visual paradigm and construct, a new piece of technology, and a new tool. While sales of drones are in the millions annually, and not every person around the world owns a drone, most people have seen one at shopping centers, at parks, or in the news.

Visually Iconic Entity

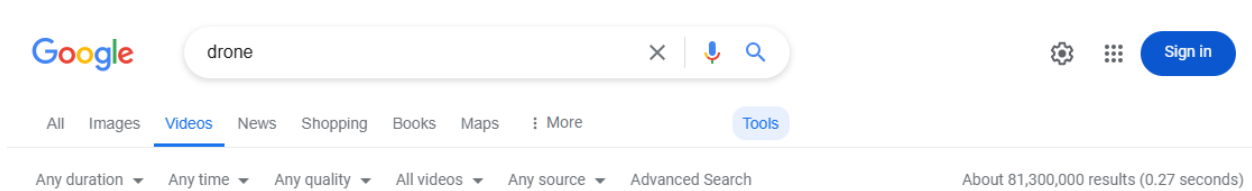
- While 🚁 can represent an activity unrelated to the piece of technology, e.g., "to drone on", Unicode requires this emoji because it is such an iconic tool and piece of technology in society today.
- While not everyone owns a 🚁, most people are going to be familiar with them from a quick visual glance, whether in digital format as an emoji, or in real life.
- As a new emoji entity in the Unicode Standard, 🚁 will be used to refer to the technology itself in social media (SMS, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.)

E. Has a high usage level

1. Frequency

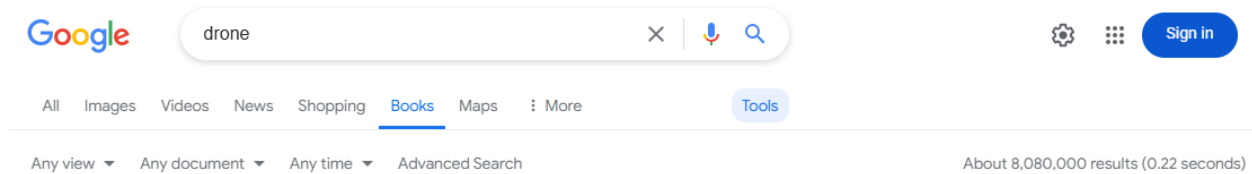
1. Google Video Search:

<https://www.google.com/search?tbm=vid&q=drone>



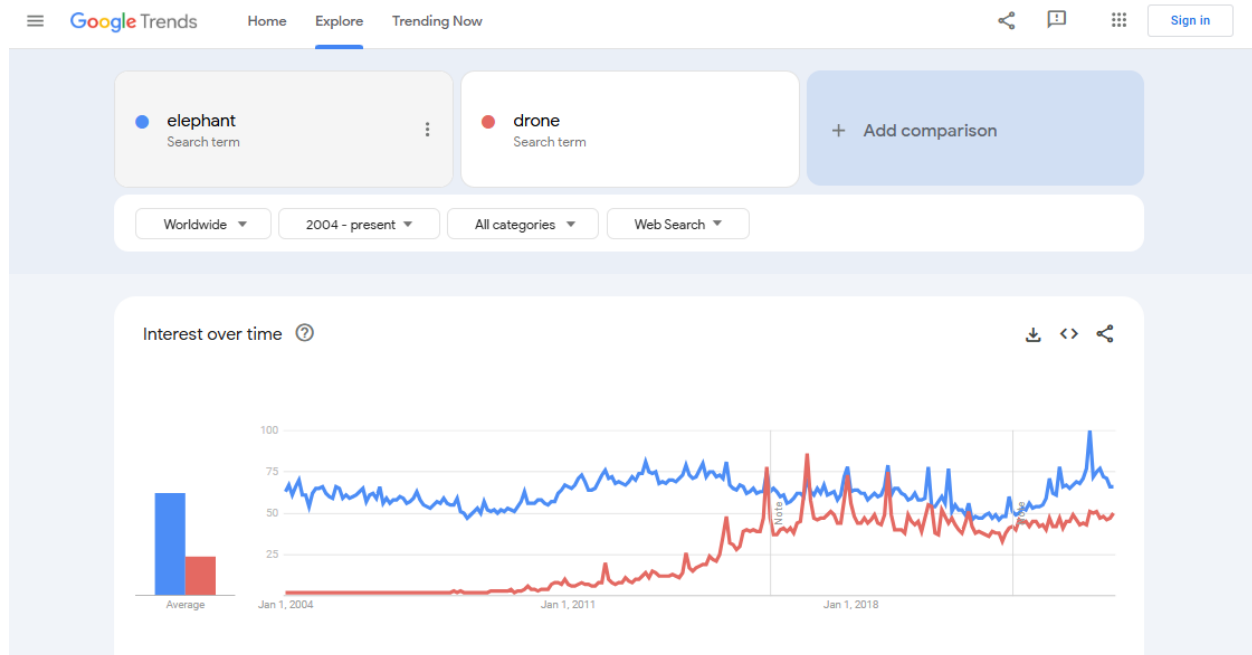
2. Google Books

<https://www.google.com/search?tbm=bks&q=drone>



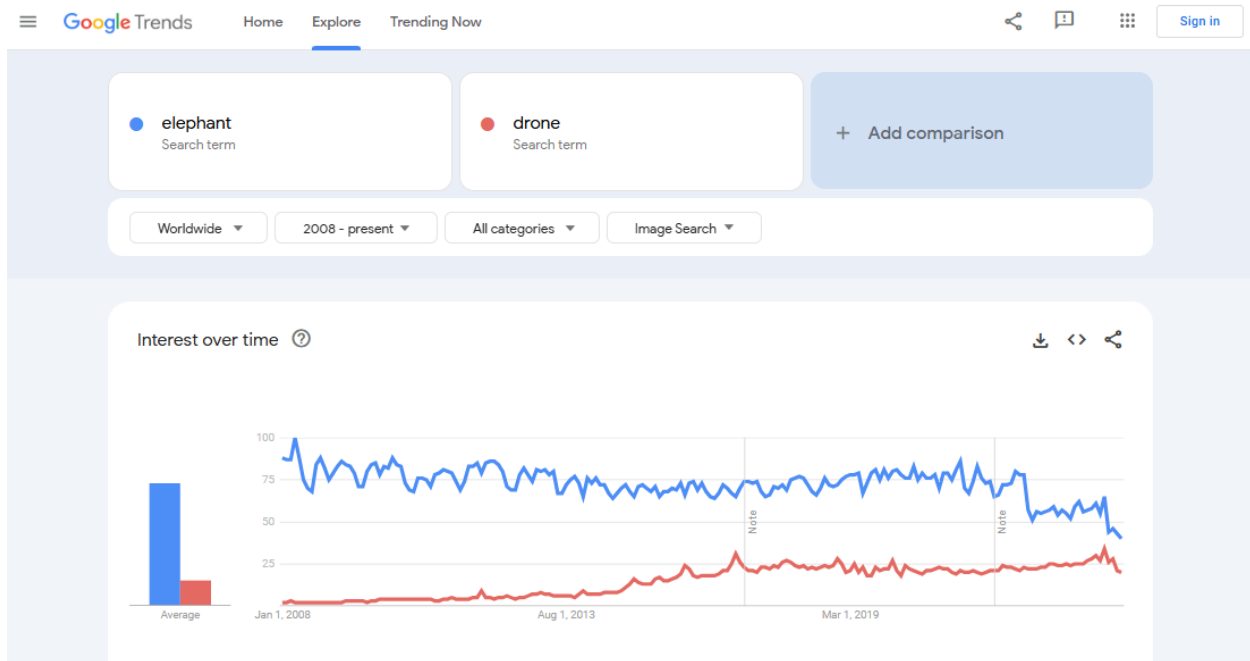
3. Google Trends: Web Search

<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all&q=elephant,drone>



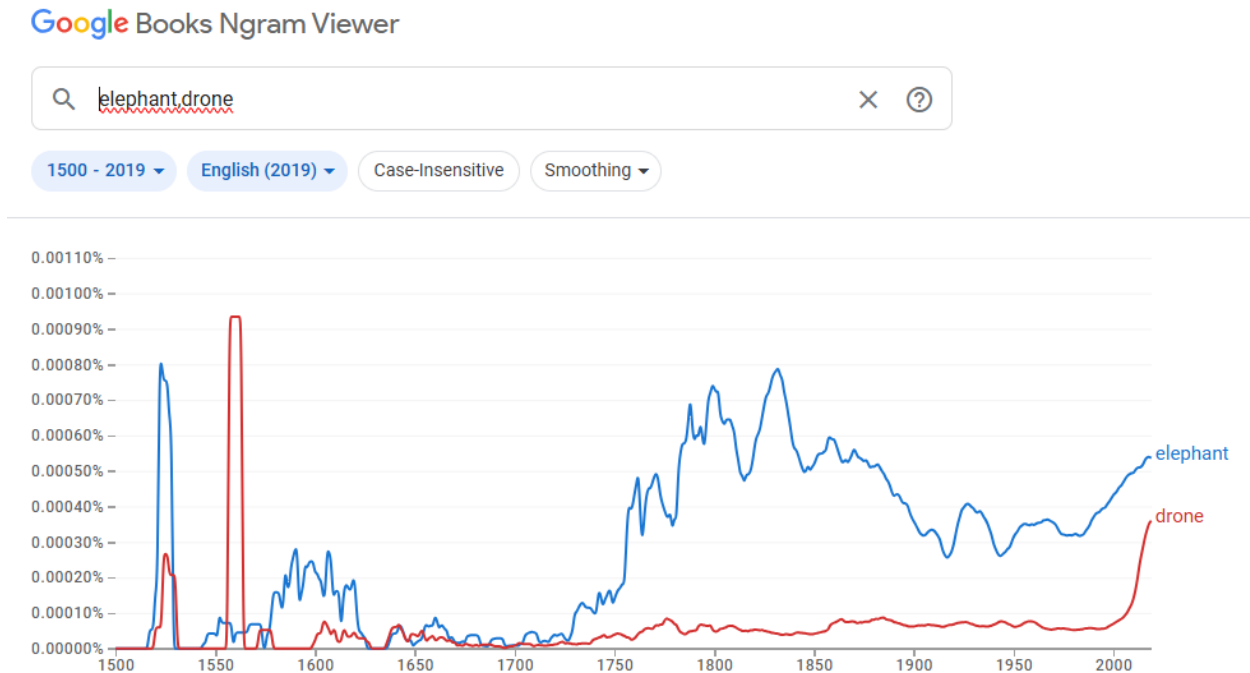
4. Google Trends: Image Search

https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=all_2008&qprop=images&q=elephant,drone



5. Google Books; Ngram Viewer

https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=elephant%2Cdrone&year_start=1500&year_end=2019&corpus=en-2019&smoothing=3



F. Completes and incomplete category

- N/A, the proposed emoji does not complete any other sequences.

G. Is needed for compatibility with popular existing systems

1. N/A – no compelling examples

4. Selection Factors - Exclusion

1. Already representable

- Current emoji combinations that may be used to represent a "flying camera" (e.g., airplane-camera or helicopter-camera ✈️📷, 🚁📷, 🚁📷, 🚁📷) do not adequately capture the concept of a personal drone.

2. Overly specific

- The proposed drone emoji graphic is designed to be generic, capturing the broadest possible concepts of a drone device.

3. Open-ended

- There are variations on drones (drones with more arms and propellers, fixed wing planelike drones), but the concept of drone is so unique that the addition of a single drone emoji can be used across multiple configurations of actual equipment and contexts.

4. Transient

- It is hard to imagine that drones will stop being a part of consumer culture.
- Drone sales are estimated at over 60 billion USD per year: <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/drone-market-report>
- Multirotor-style drones with cameras are common in pop-culture. In a popular children's cartoon "Ricky Zoom" a main character "Scootia" has a multirotor-style drone with a camera docked in their scooter. "Scootia" and the other characters use this camera drone to solve problems and save the day. Other instances of drones in media include: Brooklyn Nine-Nine, Sesame Street Mecha builders, Paw Patrol, and many others.
- Nations around the world are developing more complete drone regulations for safe and legal use of drones within national airspaces.
- Drones also represent a powerful technology tool for mapping, surveying, science, observation, robotics, engineering, and programming that is accessible to a wide audience: <https://shemaps.com/>
- Drones are increasing in conversation in the media, for example in the US with recent legislation aimed at banning drones from certain countries: <https://apnews.com/buyline-shopping/article/dji-drone-ban-in-the-us>

5. Faulty Comparison

- The proposed drone emoji represents a sufficiently unique concept and entity that it is not being proposed in comparison to anything else, it is its own concept.

Addressing Reasons to Automatically Decline:

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

- There are multiple drone manufacturers, some with iconic designs and styles. This proposal suggests a generic design that is ubiquitous across different brands.

2. Flags

- N/A

3. Lack of required rights or license for images

- N/A, as above on page 1, I created this generic drone symbol on my own.

4. Exact images

- The authors used their limited graphic design skills to capture the fundamental components of the visually distinctive image of a "drone". There are numerous graphical representations of a drone, most of which follow a common theme: a piece of technology with multiple 'arms' with spinning elements at the end of the arms that has a main body and often a camera within or below the body. Refer to Google Image search for "Drone icon" for stylized examples <https://www.google.com/search?q=drone+icon>. A Google Image search for drone typically returns photographs of consumer drone products.

5. Includes text

- N/A

6. Variations on direction

- N/A

5. Other information

The proposed drone emoji is original artwork prepared by the submitter. A quick google search for concepts like “drone clip art” reveal multiple similar designs that reflect that the proposed emoji will be distinct, anyone seeing that emoji would agree immediately on its base definition:
<https://www.google.com/search?q=drone+clip+art>

As with actual drone aircraft, the “payload” that goes beneath the drone body and frame is often interchangeable, with different sensors, equipment, and accessories. The proposed image for the drone emoji shows a camera as the payload as this will be the most widely recognized type of drone and the graphic seems incomplete without some sort of payload. This infographic from the organization SheMaps shows the same basic drone shape with multiple “payload” types used in multiple contexts:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=4418456601544522>

<https://shemaps.com/>

About the submitter:

I am a Geographic Information System (GIS) IT Manager and FAA Part 107 certified drone pilot. I have been building and flying drones since 2010 for personal, academic, and commercial use. I am not currently employed or engaged in commercial activity that would benefit in any way from the acceptance of this 🚁 emoji proposal. I submitted a drone emoji proposal in 2022 and that was declined. I feel strongly that the time is right for a drone emoji to be included in the Unicode Standard.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my proposal.

Jonathan P. Dandois, PhD, GISP
Baltimore MD, USA