Title: Proposal for New RGI Emoji Sequences: WASHING HANDS

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Abstract

Handwashing saves lives. Agencies including WHO, UNICEF and CDC have invested huge amounts of resources on promoting simple handwashing practices. Knowledge and awareness around the importance of handwashing has escalated in recent months due to escalation of the coronavirus pandemic. There is already evidence that increased handwashing due to the coronavirus outbreak has reduced transmission of other infections. We seek to ride this wave of engagement, keeping handwashing on people’s minds and sharing its importance. Handwashing seems simple but it matters: from birth, handwashing with soap can be the difference between life and death\(^1\). Up to 50% of cases of malnutrition around the world are due to poor hygiene and sanitation, and diarrhea is one of the biggest killers of children in poorer countries. Handwashing can reduce the risk of diarrhea by 40%. We can take handwashing for granted in wealthy countries where access to clean water and sanitation is easy. Yet around the world 900 million children can’t wash their hands at school, 35% of hospitals have no running water or soap, and around 50% of households in the poorest countries lack access to clean water and soap\(^2\).

When it comes to health, combating malnutrition, and keeping children in school, handwashing promotion is the mainstay of viral control for Governments, agencies and experts. Millions are spent each month communicating online about the importance of handwashing and an emoji would be a very important step towards a common understanding of its importance throughout the world - particularly in developing countries. It is an everyday skill needed for hundreds of millions of children and families around the world, and a bedrock of them achieving a healthy, happy life. Handwashing will never go out of fashion.

\(^1\) [https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html)
Proposal for New RGI Emoji Sequences: WASHING HANDS

1. Identification
   A. CLDR short name: WASHING HANDS
   B. CLDR keywords: hand-washing | handwash | wash-hands | hand
   C. Code points:

   🧼 U+1F9FC BAR OF SOAP
   U+200D ZERO WIDTH JOINER
   👏 U+1F44F CLAPPING HANDS SIGN
   Optionally, one of:
   U+1F3FB EMOJI MODIFIER FITZPATRICK TYPE-1-2
   U+1F3FC EMOJI MODIFIER FITZPATRICK TYPE-3
   U+1F3FD EMOJI MODIFIER FITZPATRICK TYPE-4
   U+1F3FE EMOJI MODIFIER FITZPATRICK TYPE-5
   U+1F3FF EMOJI MODIFIER FITZPATRICK TYPE-6

2. Images

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>144px</th>
<th>72px</th>
<th>36px</th>
<th>18px</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tone modifier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color with skin</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image6.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image7.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image8.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tone modifier</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(medium-dark)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black and White</td>
<td><img src="image9.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image10.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image11.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image12.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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Handwashing emoji images by [lemi.travel](https://lemi.travel) are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0).
3. **Sort location.**

   Category: **hands after 😃 clapping hands**

4. * (leave blank)

5. **Selection factors — Inclusion.**
   
   A. Compatibility

   Twitter have implemented as a Twitter emoji using the hashtag #safehands and #handwashing recommended by the World Health Organization.

   B. Expected usage level
      
      ■ Frequency
      
      ■ B.1.a Google Search

      ![Google Search](image)

      About 683,000,000 results (0.53 seconds)

      ■ B.1.b Bing Search

      ![Bing Search](image)

      8,080,000 Results
Proposal for New RGI Emoji Sequences: WASHING HANDS

- **B.1.c Google Video Search**

  ![Google Video Search](https://www.google.com)

  - Handwashing - Clean Hands Save Lives | CDC
    - [https://www.cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
    - **Jan 14, 2020** - Uploaded by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
    - Handwashing can help prevent illness. It involves five simple and effective steps (Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse ...)
  
  - WHO: How to handwash? With soap and water - YouTube
    - [https://www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)
    - **Oct 20, 2015** - Uploaded by World Health Organization (WHO)
    - Hand hygiene, either with soap and water or with alcohol-based handrub, is one of the best ways to avoid ...
  
  - How to wash your hands - NHS
    - [https://www.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)
    - **Wash your hands** is one of the simplest ways you can protect yourself and others from illnesses such as ...

- **B.1.d Google Trends: Web Search**

  ![Google Trends](https://www.google.com)

  - Search terms: elephant and hand washing
  - Interest over time: Graph showing trends from 2004 to 2018.
Proposal for New RGI Emoji Sequences: WASHING HANDS

- **B.1.e Google Trends: Image Search**

![Google Trends Image Search](image)

- **Multiple usages**

  Metaphorically to wash your hands of someone or something is to say or show that you do not want to be involved with them and that you are not responsible for them.

- **Use in sequences**

  Not available.

- **Breaking new ground**

  Yes. We believe handwashing is conceptually different to existing emojis, it represents an action as opposed to existing cleanliness emoji such as "bar of soap" or "shower" which only represent the objects involved in the action.
C. Distinctiveness

There are 6 existing emojis in the “hands” category where both hands are visible. The proposed emoji is distinct from all of them. It is closest in appearance to the “clapping hands” emoji and there is a risk of confusion at small sizes due to the small “sound” triangles used to indicate clapping. However we believe the large blue water bubbles mitigates against confusion, similar to existing hand-prop emojis being clearly distinguishable from hand emojis.

D. Completeness

This is an iconic representation of an action which is common and important to all of humanity.
   A. Petitions or “frequent requests”
      ■ We note that a previous request was rejected as "already representable".
      ■ However we believe that implementing this as a Emoji ZWJ sequence is the right approach
      ■ There is strong interest and advocacy for this proposal from a range of stakeholders including small businesses who want to promote good hygiene amongst staff and customers, NGOs, and medical education professionals.
      ■ The addition of hand hygiene emojis has been the subject of scientific study³.
   
   B. Overly Specific
      ■ We do not believe this to be overly specific. It captures an action which cannot be communicated with a current single emoji.
   
   C. Open-ended
      ■ It is unlikely that this would lead to additional "washing body-part" emojis such as "washing nose U+1F443)" or "washing tongue (U+1F445)" or "washing mechanical leg (U+1F9BF)" since only washing of hands is typically mandated by clinical guidelines to stop the spread of infectious diseases.
   
   D. Already representable
      ■ Yes, which is why this is being proposed as a ZWJ sequence
   
   E. Logos, brands, UI icons, signage, specific people, specific landmarks, deities
      ■ Not applicable as per instructions for ZWJ sequences.
   
   F. Transient
      ■ Not applicable as per instructions for ZWJ sequences.
   
   G. Faulty comparison
      ■ No, we are not proposing this in comparison to other emojis but in its own right.

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H. Exact Images
   ■ Not applicable as per instructions for ZWJ sequences.

I. Region Flags Without Code
   ■ Not applicable.

7. Other Information

Note the Twitter version of the emoji uses more soapy bubbles. We recommend for general interchange the use of more watery blue bubbles which are clearer at small sizes.

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<tr>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>Proposed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>![Twitter Emoji]</td>
<td>![Proposed Emoji]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHO, UNICEF and the CDC support the proposal to Unicode.

This is CDC’s formal statement:

“During the current COVID-19 public health crisis, handwashing is a key prevention message from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We strongly request that Unicode develop a handwashing emoji, with diverse options showing soapy hands under running water. The addition of such an emoji would help to promote universal hygiene and disease prevention around the world. CDC joins UNICEF and others in this request.”