

Proposal for Emoji: Source code symbol in application window

Submitters: Marijn Kampf; Michal Charemza; Soumaya Mauthoor

Date: 15th April 2026

1. Identification

a. Keywords

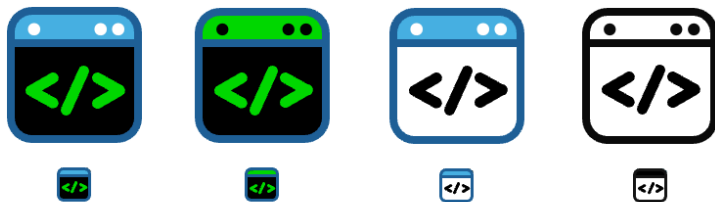
source code, app, instructions, ai prompt, blueprint, program, software, codebase, digital source, source text, application, lines of code, technology, rules, algorithm, programming language, text editor, code editor, integrated development environment, IDE.

b. Category

computer

2. Images

a. Color and black & white example images in 18×18 and 72×72



b. License

The icons proposed are the authors' own work.

3. Factors for Inclusion

a. Expresses multiple concepts































Source code, algorithms and software: Source code is the human-readable text-based set of instructions that make up the blueprints for computer programs, often referred to as applications or simply "apps". Therefore the emoji could also be used to express the related concepts of computer programs, apps, instructions, rules, algorithms, or software in general.

Code editor: Because the proposed emoji is a source code symbol in an application window, the emoji could also express the applications used to write code: text editors, code editors or integrated development environments (IDEs).















Prompt: The proposed emoji is visually and semantically similar to the symbol for prompt ">_", which is a request for instructions especially in computer-related contexts.

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





There are many related concepts that could be conveyed when combined with other emoji:

1.  : Software package - an easy to (re)use collection of code
2.  : Code change approved - code changes often go through a review process
3.  : Code smell - a term for a pattern of code that is undesirable
4.  : Tech debt - a term for the result of short term focus in code/software architecture
5.  : Dangerous or insecure code
6.  : Buggy code
7.  : Code that caused a major incident, or conversely impressive code
8.   or  : Open source - the code itself, or its related policies or communities
9.  : Closed source
10.  : Person who writes code or the action of writing code
11.   or   or   or  : AI prompt

And the emoji could be used in sentences:

12.   ? : Could you review my code please?
13. Did you  the  ? : Did you see the leaked source code?
14.      : Today's code will be tomorrow's tech debt.
15. If you want trust show the .
16. My  is powered by !

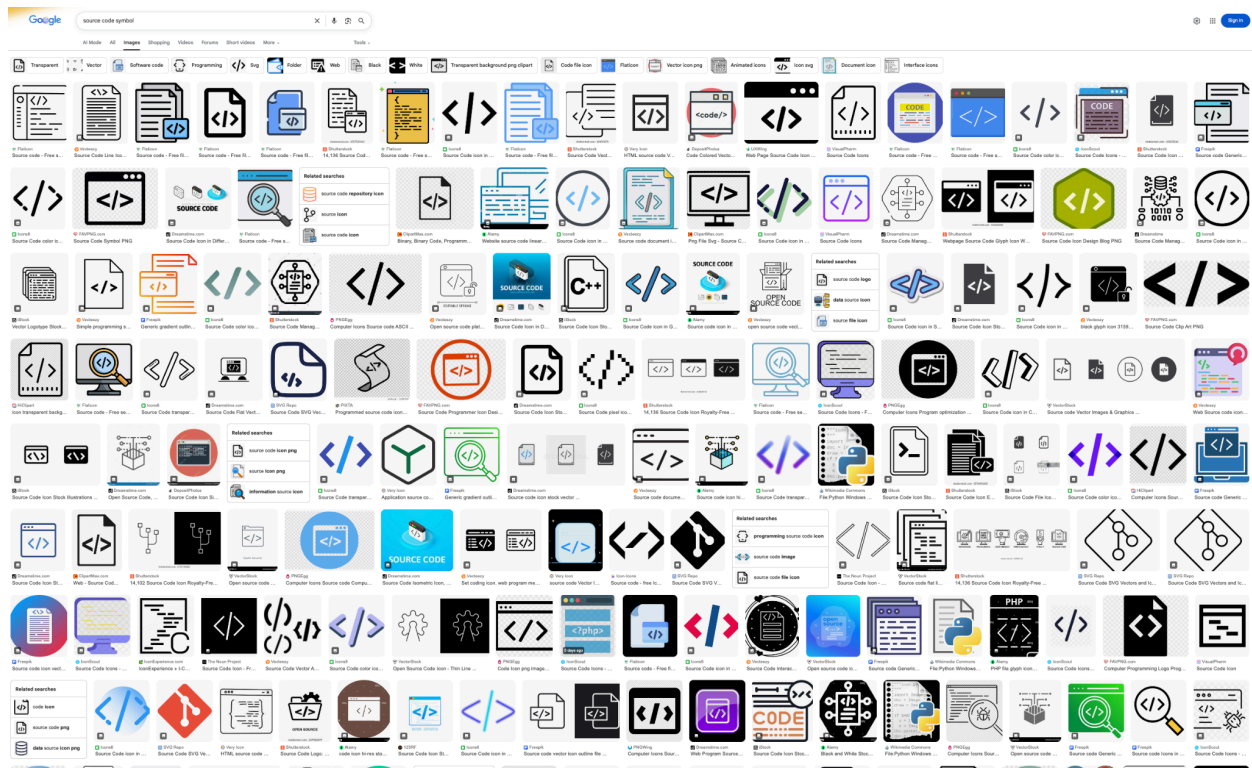
c. Breaks new ground

There are currently no emoji that represent source code or code editors. The compact disk  or floppy disk  could be used for representing software in general, but they are outdated media and are not specific enough to refer to source code: source code is more related to the creation of software, much like bricks  are related to the creation of a house .

d. Is legible and visually distinctive

The `</>` symbol is widely used to represent source code. While it appears to have been inspired by Hypertext Markup Language (HTML), which uses the 3 characters `</>` frequently, HTML never actually uses them exactly in that order, and is not limited to describing just code in that language.

For example searching for "source code symbol" returns many images that feature `</>` prominently.



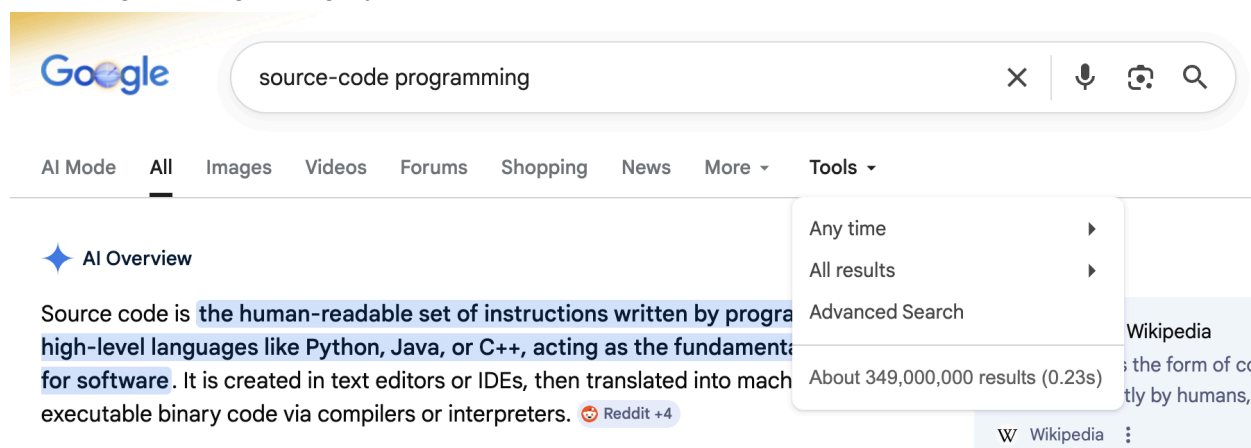
The foundation of the symbol is 5 straight line segments, and so there should not be a problem making the proposed emoji legible even in small sizes.

And as mentioned earlier, since it is visually (and semantically) similar to the symbol often used for prompts ">_", the proposed emoji would offer a reasonably clear way of referring to prompts, and especially Artificial Intelligence (AI) prompts when combined with 🤖 or ✨, which are emoji frequently used when discussing AI.

e. Has a high usage level

[Google Search for "source-code programming": about 349,000,000 results](#)

The "programming" category term is chosen to exclude results for the 2011 film "Source Code"



Google Video Search for "source-code programming": about 5,030,000 results

The screenshot shows a Google search for "source-code programming" with 5,030,000 results. The search bar is at the top, and the "Videos" tab is selected. The first video result is titled "What is SOURCE CODE? *simple explanation*" by Dimi Tech, uploaded on 18 Sept 2025. The video thumbnail shows a Discord server icon and a "4:43" duration. A "Tools" dropdown menu is open on the right, showing filters for duration, time, quality, and source. Below the video, a second search result is visible with the text "how does source become code?".

source-code programming

AI Mode All Images Books **Videos** Forums Short videos More Tools

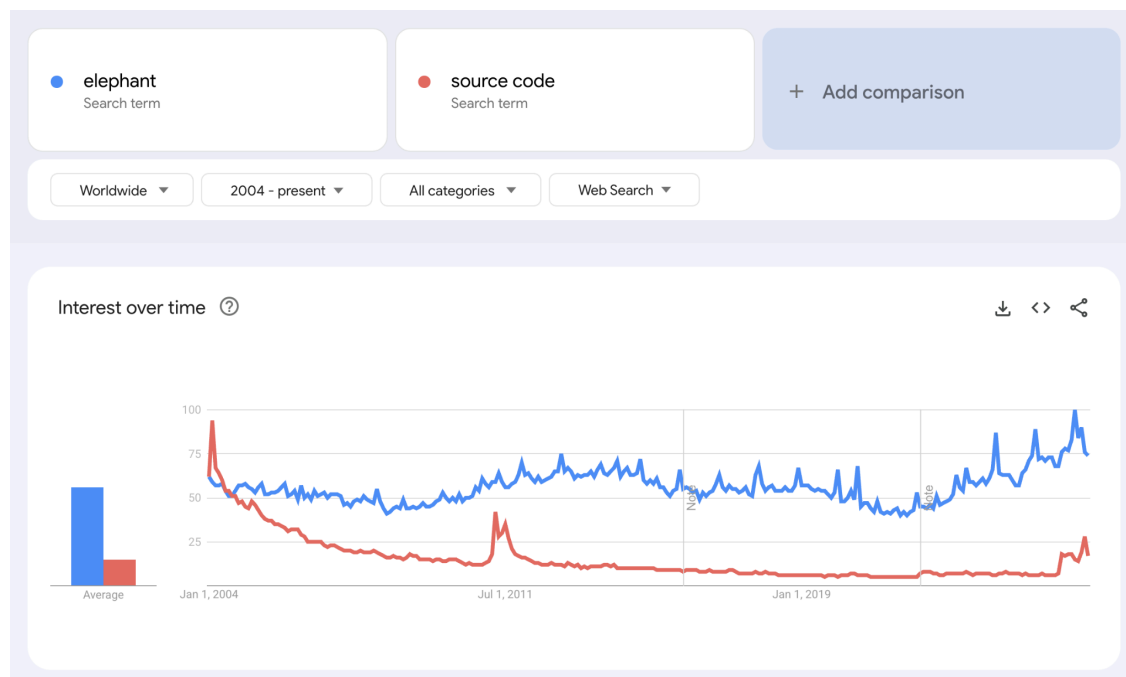
www.youtube.com › watch
What is SOURCE CODE? *simple explanation*
Watch full course here: [#programming #code](https://coursevity.com).
YouTube · Dimi Tech · 18 Sept 2025

www.youtube.com › watch
how does source become code?

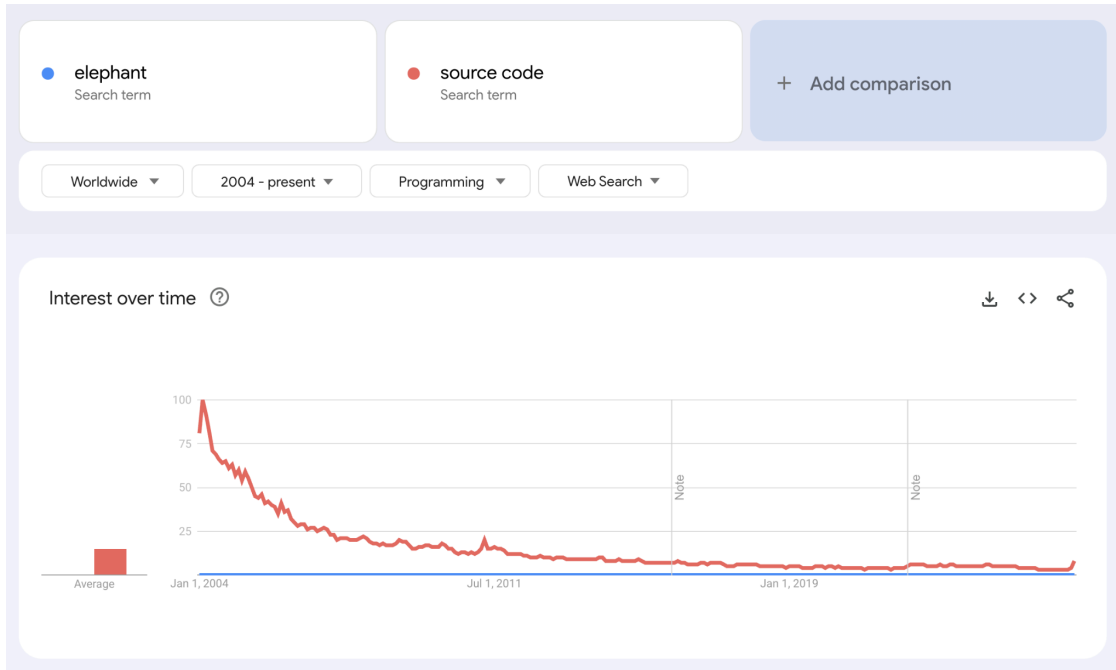
Any duration
Any time
Any quality
All videos
Any source
Advanced Search

About 5,030,000 results (0.23s)

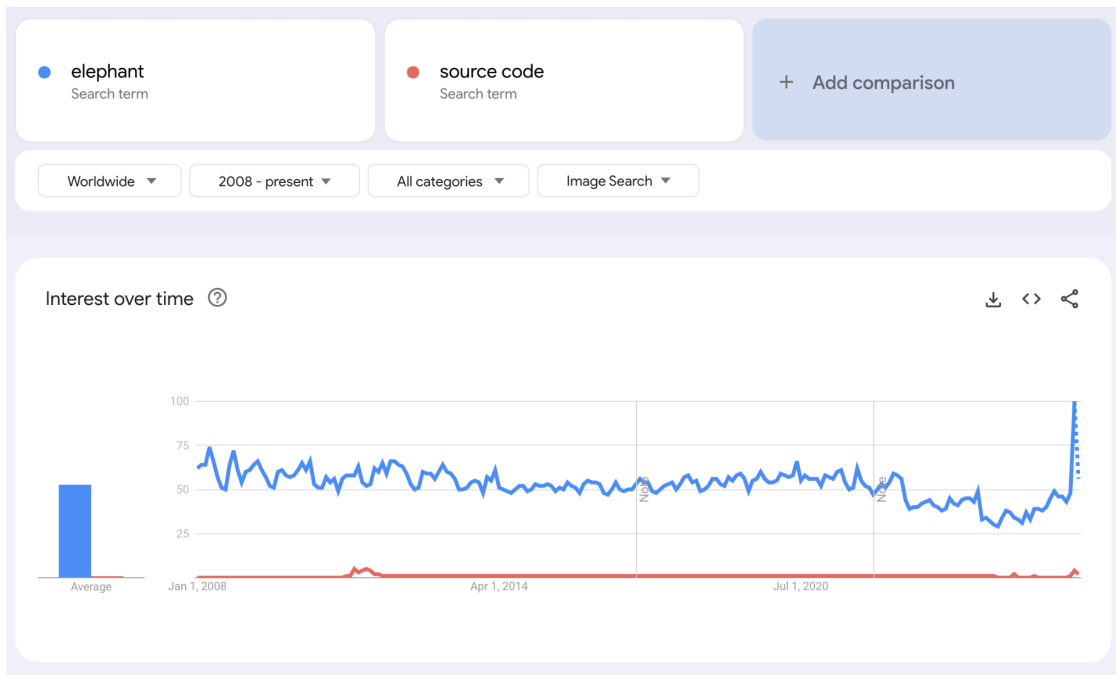
Google Trends: web search without category of "programming"



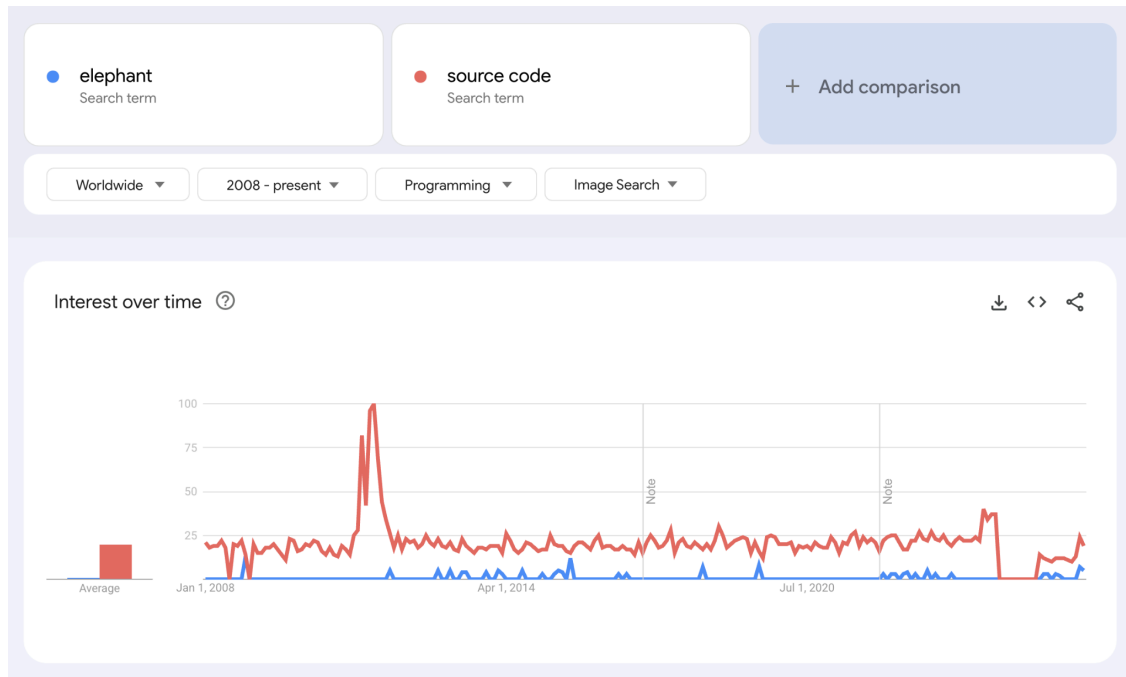
Google Trends: web search with category of "programming"



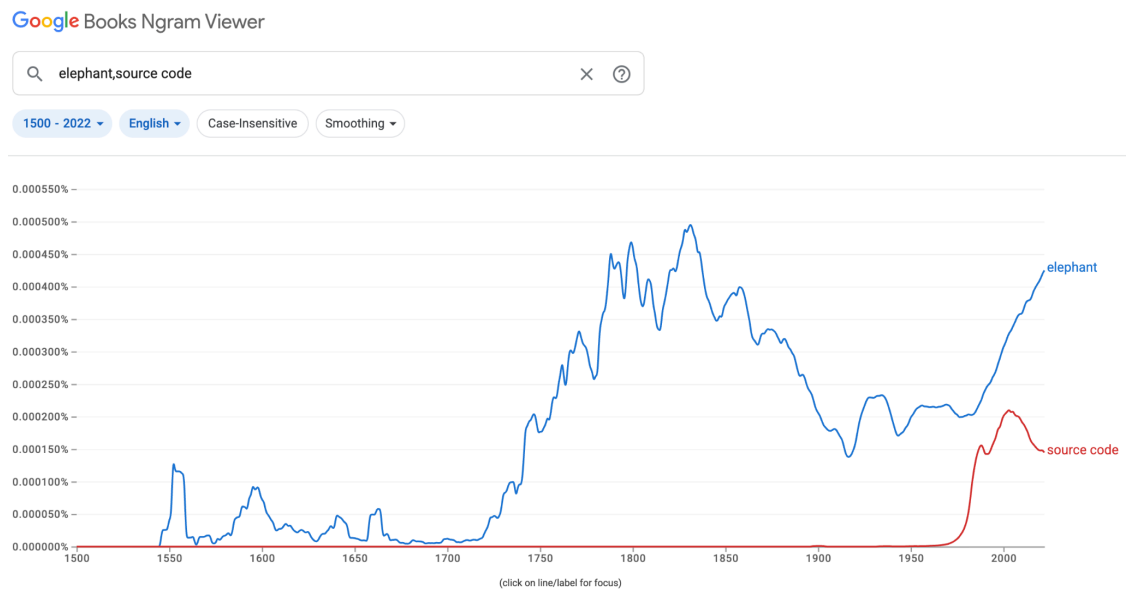
Google Trends images search without category of "programming"



Google Trends images search with category of programming



Google Books Ngram Viewer for "source code"



f. Completes an incomplete category






n/a



g. Is needed for compatibility with popular existing systems

n/a


4. Factors for Exclusion

a. Already represented

The closest existing icons are technologist and variations ( technologist,  man technologist and  woman technologist). They do not represent the concept itself but only a person working with a computer. This could be a person writing source code, but this is separate from the source code concept itself. In fact, a person writing source code would be more clearly represented by a technologist combined with the proposed source code emoji  .

As mentioned earlier, the compact disk  or floppy disk  were used for representing software in general, but they are no longer in common use and so have lost much of their original meaning.

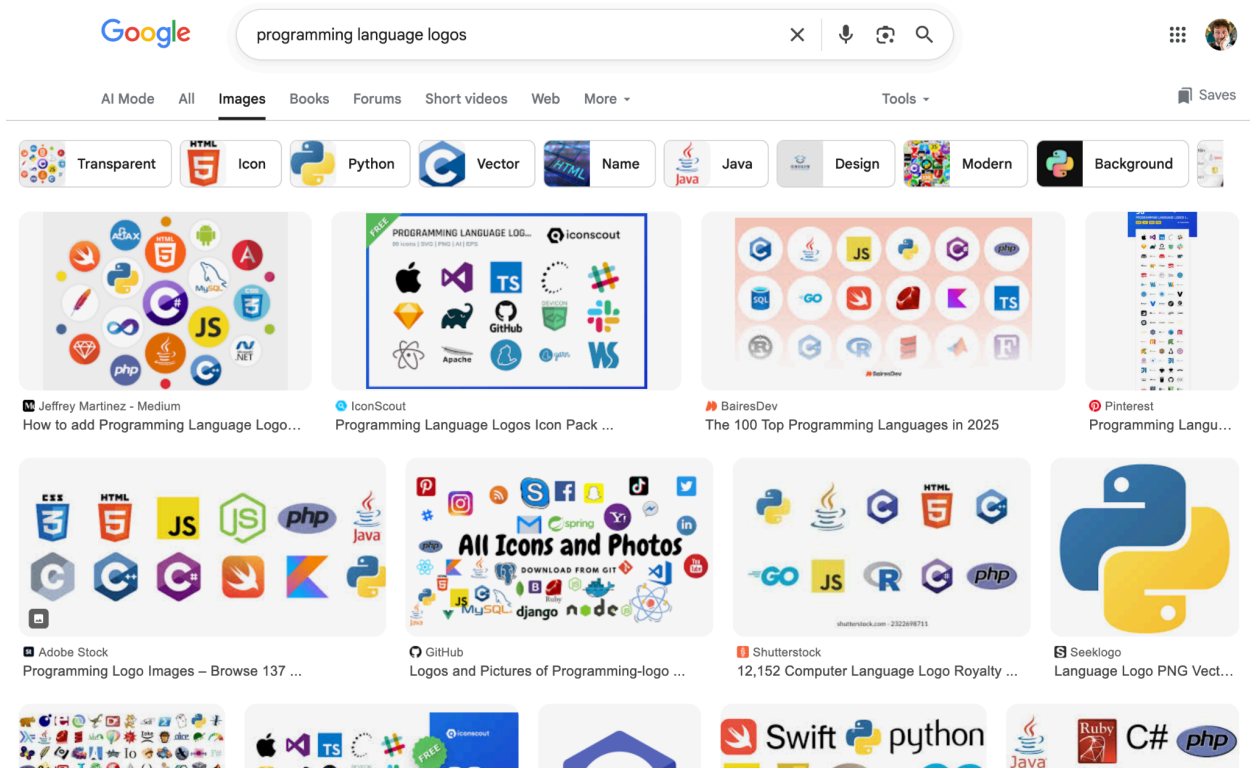
b. Overly specific

There are thousands of languages that source code can be written in ([Kaushik, 2026](#)). While strictly speaking  does resemble HTML, as mentioned earlier it is the general image to represent source code of any language, and it is even not completely accurate to represent HTML because the three characters `</>` don't appear in the language in that order with no characters between them.






c. Open-ended

The image is inspired by HTML syntax, and theoretically there are a limited number of other syntax types that could attempt to be represented. For example C/C++/Java/JavaScript, also popular programming languages, use the characters { and } prominently in their syntax, and so a future emoji could be based on those characters. However the earlier image search for "source code symbol" shows that </> appears to have won as the generic symbol for source code.

Also, HTML has its own logo, as do various other languages: often they are logotypes containing their possibly-abbreviated name. The proposed emoji is both visually distinct from these and semantically more general, and so would not be used to refer to any specific language, even HTML, and so should not result in the need to add an emoji for each.






In fact, it would be possible to combine existing emoji with the proposed source code emoji to represent code in specific programming languages, such as the following which are among the current 8 most popular programming languages ([ltransition, 2026](#)):



1. 🐍 : Python code - a play on the fact that a python is a type of snake
2. ☕ : Java code - the Java logo is a cup of coffee
3. ☕ 📄 : JavaScript code - combining Java's logo with an emoji that resembles a script
4. 🟩 : TypeScript code - a core component of the TypeScript logo is a blue square
5. 🦀 : Rust code - the Rust logo is a crab

d. Transient

Although source code is written in programming languages, and in general specific programming languages rise and fall in popularity, the source code concept itself remains the same. Every personal computer or phone uses millions of lines of source code to function ([Rausch, 2025](#)), and so source code is core to how emoji themselves are processed and displayed: the concept of source code is no more transient than the concept of emoji itself.

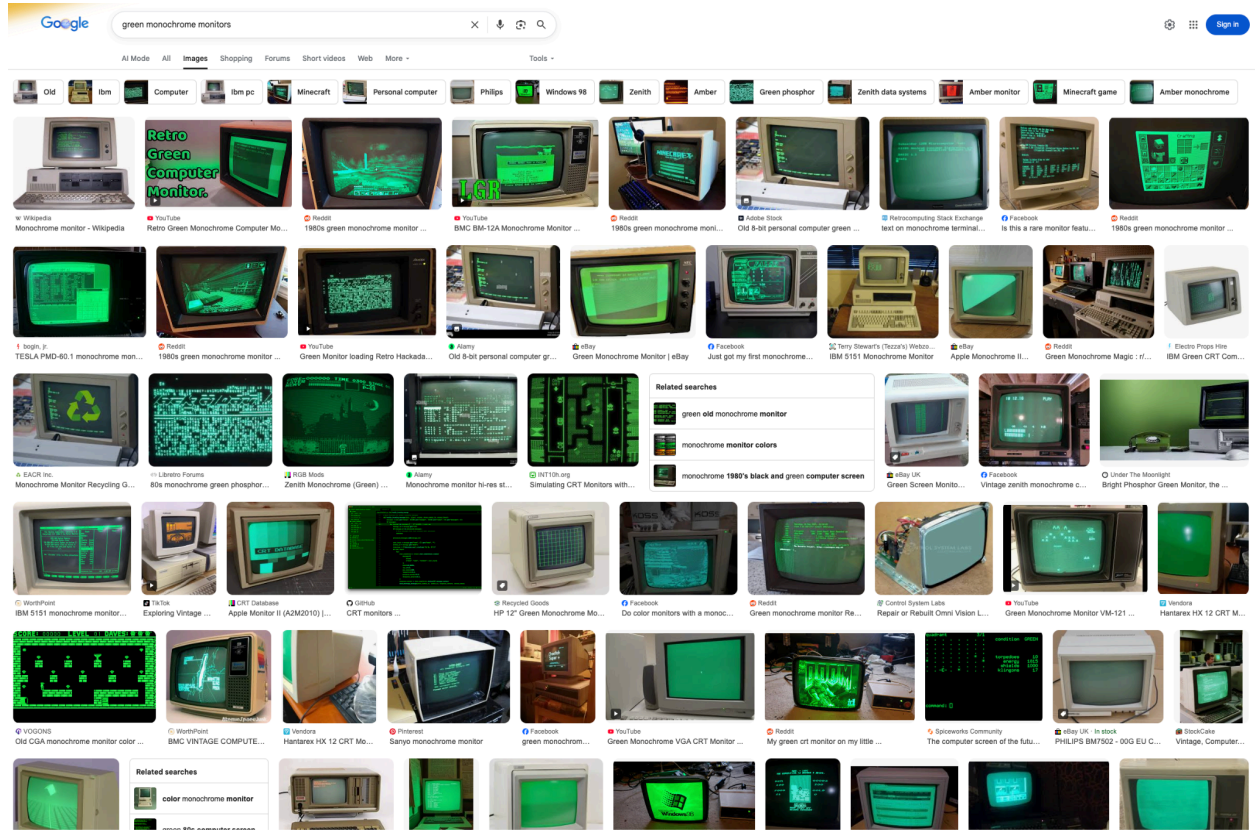
Although some languages fall in popularity, HTML, the language that inspired the  image, is the main language on the internet: every web page uses it ([Wikipedia, n.d.](#)), and there are no signs that this will change ([Statista, 2025](#)). And although it is currently argued that AI is changing how source code is written, the source code concept itself remains, and the source code emoji can aid representation of such code when combined with existing emoji, for example by 🤖  or ✨ .

e. Justified by an existing emoji

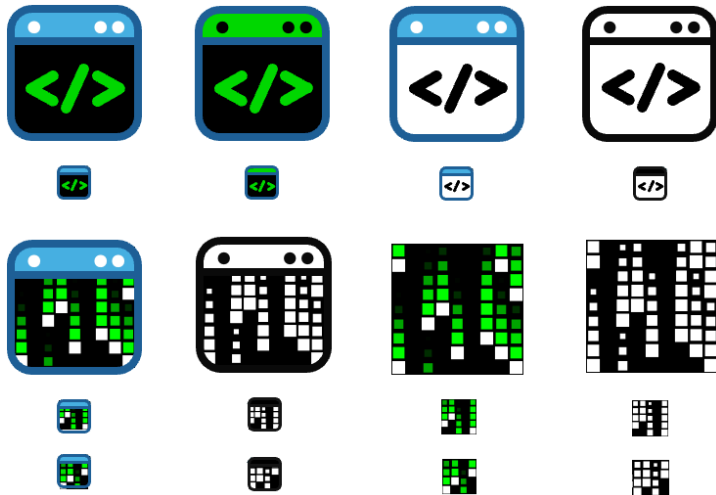
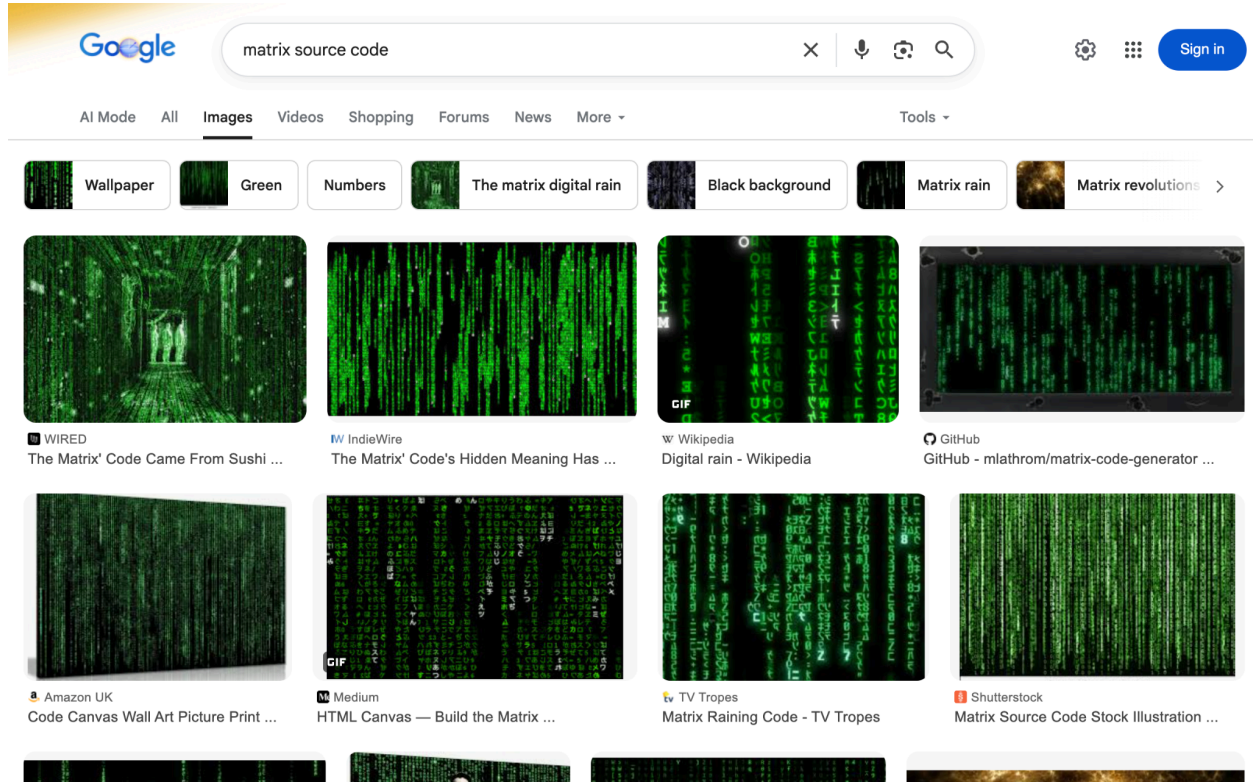
The proposal is not justified by the existence existing emoji, other than how it is a less transient replacement for some uses of the compact disk  and floppy disk  emoji, which are outdated.

Other information

The proposed design uses the `</>` symbol to represent source code. One of the possible colour palette choices was inspired by the historical green of monochrome monitors, but it is not required as shown by the earlier image search for "source code symbol".



This could however be substituted with a more abstract representation of code inspired by The Matrix franchise of films (1999 - 2021), which itself was partially inspired by the monochrome green.



However, we suspect such a choice may be overly transient, reliant on knowledge of the films, and the arguments above around the symbol `</>` would not be applicable.

References

Rausch, R. (2025). *How many lines of code are in Android 16?*

Retrieved April 15 2026 from <https://derdilla.com/blog/size-aosp16/>

Statista. (2025). *Most used languages among software developers globally 2025.*

Retrieved April 15 2026 from

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/793628/worldwide-developer-survey-most-used-languages/>

Wikipedia (n.d.). *HTML.*

Retrieved April 15 2026 from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HTML>

Kaushik, A. (2026). *How Many Programming Languages Are There?*

Retrieved April 15 2026 from

<https://www.wecreateproblems.com/blog/how-many-programming-languages-are-there>

Ittransition. (2026, March 12). *Most In-demand Programming Languages for 2026.*

Retrieved April 15 2026 from

<https://www.itransition.com/developers/in-demand-programming-languages>