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pre·dic·a·ment  (prĭ-dĭk ə-mənt)

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n.

1. A situation, especially an unpleasant, troublesome, or trying one, from which extrication is difficult.
2. *Logic* One of the basic states or classifications described by Aristotle into which all things can be placed; a category.

[Middle English, class, category, from Old French, from Late Latin *praedicāmentum* (translation of Greek *katēgoriā*, from *katēgoreuein*, to speak against, signify, predicate), from Latin *praedicāre*, to proclaim publicly, predicate; see [PREACH](#).]

pre·dic·a·men tal (-mĕn təl) *adj.*

pre·dic·a·men tal·ly *adv.*

Synonyms: [predicament](#), [plight](#)¹, [quandary](#), [jam](#)¹, [fix](#), [pickle](#)

These nouns refer to a difficult situation that has no readily discernible resolution or way out. A *predicament* is a problematic situation about which one does not know what to do: "*The wrenching predicament for conservation biologists is that endangered species reach the point of no return before their numbers fall to zero*" (Cynthia Mills).

A *plight* is a bad or unfortunate situation: "*All he desires is to escape from his plight*" (J.R.R. Tolkien).

A *quandary* is a state of perplexity, especially about what course of action to take: "*Having captured our men, we were in a quandary how to keep them*" (Theodore Roosevelt).

The words *jam* and *fix* are more informal and refer to a predicament from which escape is difficult: "*The only way to be certain he will not get into some sort of a jam is to put a chain around his neck and lead him around like a performing bear*" (Jack Dempsey). "*Here was one murder defendant ... who did not like to joke about the fix he was in*" (Robert Traver).

Another informal term, a *pickle* is a disagreeable, embarrassing, or troublesome predicament: "*I could see no way out of the pickle I was in*" (Robert Louis Stevenson).

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