

## Supporting Information

### ***N*-Methylation of *ortho*-Substituted Aromatic Amines with Methanol Catalyzed by 2-Arylbenzo[d]oxazole NHC-Ir(III) Complexes**

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and Xiu-Feng Hou <sup>\*,[a,b]</sup>

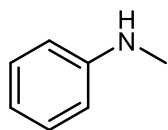
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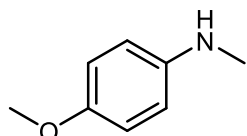
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## 1. Characterization data of substrates



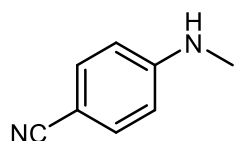
*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (99%) *N*-methylaniline as yellow oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.31 (td,  $J = 7.4, 1.8$  Hz, 2H), 6.84 (t,  $J = 7.3$  Hz, 1H), 6.71 (d,  $J = 7.7$  Hz, 2H), 3.57 (s, 1H), 2.91 (s, 3H) ppm.  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  149.45 (s), 129.28 (s), 117.28 (s), 112.50 (s), 30.76 (s) ppm. GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 107.07 (calc. 107.10).



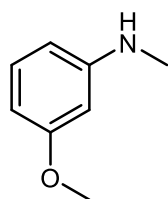
4-Methoxy-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (89%) 4-methoxy-*N*-methylaniline as a oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  6.82 (d,  $J = 8.7$  Hz, 2H), 6.60 (d,  $J = 8.6$  Hz, 2H), 3.77 (s, 3H), 2.81 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  152.13 (s), 143.75 (s), 114.96 (s), 113.67 (s), 55.89 (s), 31.63 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 137.08 (calc. 137.10).



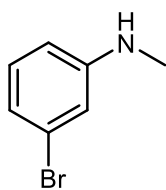
4-(Methylamino)benzonitrile

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 10:1) gave product (98%), 4-(methylamino)benzonitrile as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.32 (s, 2H), 6.46 (s, 2H), 4.34 (s, 1H), 2.78 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  152.30 (s), 133.66 (s), 120.63 (s), 111.84 (s), 98.37 (s), 29.95 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 132.07 (calc. 132.02).



3-Methoxy-*N*-methylaniline

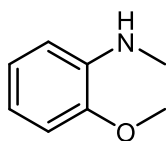
Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (92%) 3-methoxy-*N*-methylaniline as a oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.12 (t,  $J = 8.1$  Hz, 1H), 6.31 (dd,  $J = 8.1, 2.3$  Hz, 1H), 6.26 (dd,  $J = 8.0, 2.1$  Hz, 1H), 6.19 (t,  $J = 2.2$  Hz, 1H), 3.81 (s, 4H), 2.85 (s, 4H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  129.79 (s), 105.58 (s), 102.21 (s), 98.23 (s), 54.96 (s), 30.60 (s), 29.58 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 137.08 (calc. 137.14).



### 3-Bromo-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave 89 mg (96%), 3-bromo-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.

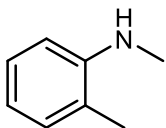
$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.07 (t,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 6.87 (d,  $J = 7.8$  Hz, 1H), 6.77 (t,  $J = 1.9$  Hz, 1H), 6.55 (dd,  $J = 8.2$ , 1.8 Hz, 1H), 3.80 (s, 1H), 2.83 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  150.50 (s), 130.36 (s), 123.20 (s), 119.74 (s), 114.67 (s), 111.16 (s), 30.42 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 184.98(calc. 184.99).



### 2-Methoxy-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (86%) 2-methoxy-*N*-methylaniline as a oil.

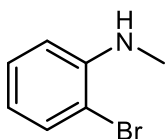
$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  6.95 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.82 (d,  $J = 7.4$  Hz, 1H), 6.72 (t,  $J = 7.7$  Hz, 1H), 6.66 (d,  $J = 7.7$  Hz, 1H), 4.28 (s, 1H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 2.91 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  146.80 (s), 139.29 (s), 121.25 (s), 116.19 (s), 109.18 (d,  $J = 8.7$  Hz), 55.28 (s), 30.26 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 137.08 (calc. 137.11).



### *N*,2-dimethylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (73 %), *N*,2-dimethylaniline as a colourless oil.

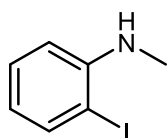
$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.31 – 7.20 (m, 1H), 7.13 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 1H), 6.75 (t,  $J = 7.4$  Hz, 1H), 6.69 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 2.96 (s, 3H), 2.21 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  147.17 (s), 129.82 (s), 127.11 (s), 121.82 (s), 116.77 (s), 109.05 (s), 30.68 (s), 17.29 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 121.08 (calc. 121.15).



### 2-Bromo-*N*-methylaniline

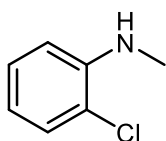
Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (83 %), 2-bromo-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.

$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.46 (dd,  $J = 7.9$ , 1.4 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (s, 1H), 6.67 (dd,  $J = 8.1$ , 1.1 Hz, 1H), 6.64 – 6.57 (m, 1H), 4.39 (s, 1H), 2.93 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  145.97 (s), 132.28 (s), 128.56 (s), 117.60 (s), 110.74 (s), 109.62 (s), 30.61 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 184.98(calc. 185.15).



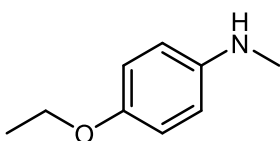
#### 2-Iodo-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (78 %), 2-iodo-*N*-methylaniline as a brown oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.67 (dd,  $J = 7.8, 1.4$  Hz, 1H), 7.31 – 7.18 (m, 1H), 6.57 (dd,  $J = 8.1, 1.2$  Hz, 1H), 6.46 (td,  $J = 7.6, 1.4$  Hz, 1H), 4.21 (s, 1H), 2.90 (d,  $J = 3.8$  Hz, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  148.16 (s), 138.86 (s), 129.47 (s), 118.47 (s), 109.99 (s), 30.97 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 232.97 (calc. 233.06).



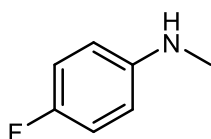
#### 2-Chloro-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (75%), 2-chloro-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.29 (d,  $J = 7.2$  Hz, 1H), 7.24 – 7.16 (m, 1H), 6.67 (t,  $J = 7.4$  Hz, 2H), 4.37 (s, 1H), 2.92 (d,  $J = 4.8$  Hz, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  145.01 (s), 128.95 (s), 127.84 (s), 119.04 (s), 117.00 (s), 110.61 (s), 30.35 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 141.03 (calc. 141.23).



#### 4-Ethoxy-*N*-methylaniline

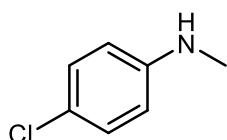
Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 10:1) gave product (88%) 4-ethoxy-*N*-methylaniline as a brown oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  6.84 (dd,  $J = 11.0, 6.6$  Hz, 2H), 6.60 (d,  $J = 7.8$  Hz, 2H), 3.99 (dt,  $J = 11.2, 4.7$  Hz, 2H), 3.29 (s, 1H), 2.81 (d,  $J = 3.9$  Hz, 3H), 1.41 (td,  $J = 6.9, 4.7$  Hz, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  151.36 (s), 143.82 (s), 115.88 (s), 113.66 (s), 64.22 (s), 31.59 (s), 15.09 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 151.09 (calc. 151.11).



#### 4-Fluoro-*N*-methylaniline

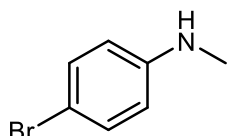
Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (95%), 4-fluoro-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.01 – 6.87 (m, 2H), 6.56 (ddd,  $J = 6.8, 5.1, 3.0$  Hz, 2H), 3.40 (dd,  $J = 57.2, 12.0$  Hz, 1H), 2.81 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  156.93 (s), 154.60 (s), 145.73 (s), 115.66 (s), 115.44 (s), 113.11 (d,  $J = 7.4$  Hz), 31.25 (s).  $^{19}\text{F}$  NMR (376 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  -128.56 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 125.06 (calc. 125.36).





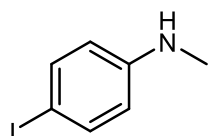
#### 4-Chloro-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (99%), 4-chloro-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  6.11 (s, 2H), 5.50 (s, 2H), 2.70 (s, 1H), 1.79 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  147.91 (s), 129.01 (s), 121.81 (s), 113.44 (s), 30.79 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 141.03 (calc. 141.23).



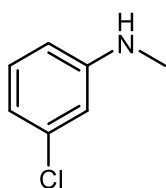
#### 4-Bromo-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (96%), 4-bromo-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.13 (d,  $J = 7.9$  Hz, 2H), 6.34 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 2H), 3.59 (s, 1H), 2.65 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  148.34 (s), 131.88 (s), 113.98 (s), 108.76 (s), 30.72 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 184.98 (calc. 185.02).



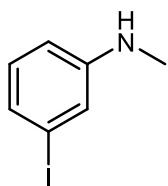
#### 4-Iodo-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (91%), 4-iodo-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.44 (d,  $J = 8.8$  Hz, 2H), 6.39 (d,  $J = 8.8$  Hz, 2H), 3.52 (s, 1H), 2.80 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  148.92 (s), 137.76 (s), 129.30 (s), 114.74 (s), 30.67 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 232.97 (calc. 232.99).



#### 3-Chloro-*N*-methylaniline

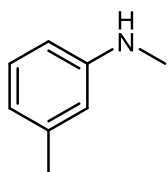
Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (95%), 3-chloro-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.12 (t,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 6.70 (dt,  $J = 19.9, 10.0$  Hz, 1H), 6.65 – 6.55 (m, 1H), 6.50 (dd,  $J = 8.1, 2.0$  Hz, 1H), 3.82 (s, 1H), 2.84 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  150.33 (s), 134.90 (s), 130.02 (s), 116.86 (s), 111.76 (s), 110.73 (s), 30.41 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 141.03 (calc. 141.53).



### 3-Iodo-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (95%), 3-iodo-*N*-methylaniline as a brown oil.

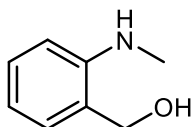
$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.07 (d,  $J = 6.9$  Hz, 1H), 7.01 – 6.88 (m, 2H), 6.63 – 6.55 (m, 1H), 3.75 (s, 1H), 2.82 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  150.41 (s), 130.58 (s), 125.88 (s), 120.69 (s), 111.77 (s), 95.31 (s), 30.44 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 232.97 (calc. 233.03).



### *N*,3-Dimethylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (98%), *N*,3-dimethylaniline as a colourless oil.

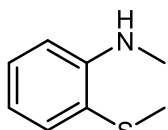
$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.16 (s, 1H), 6.62 (d,  $J = 7.4$  Hz, 1H), 6.50 (d,  $J = 6.5$  Hz, 2H), 3.68 (s, 1H), 2.88 (s, 3H), 2.37 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  149.34 (s), 138.88 (s), 129.00 (s), 118.12 (s), 113.10 (s), 109.56 (s), 30.69 (s), 21.56 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 121.08 (calc. 121. 12).



### (2-(Methylamino)phenyl)methanol

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 10:1) gave product (90 %), (2-(methylamino)phenyl)methanol as a colourless oil.

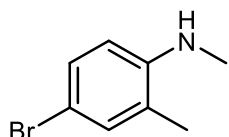
$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.28 (t,  $J = 7.7$  Hz, 1H), 7.08 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.70 (t,  $J = 7.0$  Hz, 2H), 4.65 (s, 2H), 2.89 (d,  $J = 0.7$  Hz, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  148.46 (s), 129.59 (s), 128.84 (s), 124.23 (s), 116.26 (s), 109.99 (s), 64.59 (s), 30.20 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 137.08 (calc. 137.10).



### *N*-Methyl-2-(methylthio)aniline

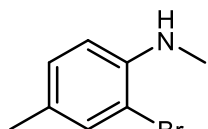
Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 10:1) gave product (85 %), *N*-Methyl-2-(methylthio)aniline as a colourless oil.

$^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.44 – 7.40 (m, 1H), 7.25 (ddd,  $J = 8.1, 7.4, 1.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.69 (td,  $J = 7.5, 1.3$  Hz, 1H), 6.64 (dd,  $J = 8.1, 1.0$  Hz, 1H), 2.93 (s, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  149.13 (s), 133.64 (s), 129.32 (s), 119.55 (s), 116.72 (s), 109.39 (s), 30.48 (s), 17.88 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 153.06 (calc. 153.08).



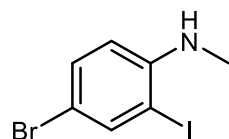
#### 4-Bromo-*N*,2-dimethylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (77 %), 4-bromo-*N*,2-dimethylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.29 – 7.23 (m, 1H), 7.18 (d,  $J$  = 2.3 Hz, 1H), 6.49 (d,  $J$  = 8.6 Hz, 1H), 2.89 (s, 3H), 2.12 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  146.14 (s), 132.15 (s), 129.56 (s), 123.87 (s), 110.46 (s), 108.31 (s), 30.64 (s), 17.04 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 198.99 (calc. 199.01).



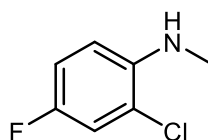
#### 2-Bromo-*N*,4-dimethylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (78 %), 2-bromo-*N*,4-dimethylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.30 (t,  $J$  = 4.1 Hz, 1H), 7.08 – 7.03 (m, 1H), 6.61 – 6.56 (m, 1H), 2.91 (s, 3H), 2.27 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  143.67 (s), 132.53 (s), 128.93 (s), 127.02 (s), 110.65 (s), 109.41 (s), 30.73 (s), 19.89 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 198.99 (calc. 199.04).



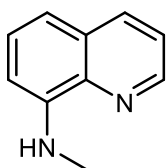
#### 4-Bromo-2-iodo-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (76 %), 4-bromo-2-iodo-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.76 (d,  $J$  = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.39 – 7.31 (m, 1H), 6.40 (t,  $J$  = 19.1 Hz, 1H), 4.24 (s, 1H), 2.88 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  147.23 (s), 140.12 (s), 132.00 (s), 110.71 (s), 108.34 (s), 84.80 (s), 30.93 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 310.88 (calc. 310.95).



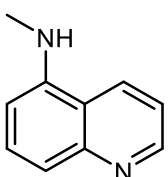
#### 2-Chloro-4-fluoro-*N*-methylaniline

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (83 %), 2-chloro-4-fluoro-*N*-methylaniline as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.21 – 7.12 (m, 1H), 6.39 – 6.28 (m, 2H), 4.45 (s, 1H), 2.89 (d,  $J$  = 5.1 Hz, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  129.49 (s), 129.49 (s), 103.26 (s), 103.03 (s), 98.04 (s), 97.76 (s), 30.22 (s).  $^{19}\text{F}$  NMR (376 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  -113.52 – -113.79 (m). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 159.02 (calc. 159.11).



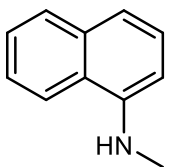
#### *N*-Methylquinolin-8-amine

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (92 %), *N*-methylquinolin-8-amine as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.73 (dd,  $J = 4.1, 1.6$  Hz, 1H), 8.08 (dd,  $J = 8.3, 1.6$  Hz, 1H), 7.44 (d,  $J = 8.0$  Hz, 1H), 7.42 – 7.37 (m, 2H), 7.07 (d,  $J = 8.2$  Hz, 1H), 6.68 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 6.16 (s, 1H), 3.07 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  146.81 (s), 135.99 (s), 127.86 (s), 121.38 (s), 113.69 (s), 104.13 (s), 30.07 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 158.08 (calc. 158.15).



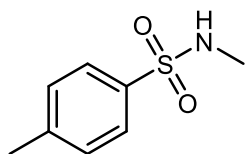
#### *N*-Methylquinolin-5-amine

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (89 %), *N*-methylquinolin-5-amine as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  8.79 (s, 1H), 8.07 (d,  $J = 7.9$  Hz, 1H), 7.52 (t,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 7.42 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 1H), 7.21 (d,  $J = 18.1$  Hz, 1H), 6.55 (d,  $J = 6.9$  Hz, 1H), 4.43 (s, 1H), 2.94 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  149.91 (s), 144.71 (s), 130.46 (s), 128.64 (s), 119.27 (s), 118.38 (s), 104.13 (s), 30.98 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 158.08 (calc. 158.14).



#### *N*-methylnaphthalen-1-amine

Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 50:1) gave product (82 %), *N*-methylnaphthalen-1-amine as a colourless oil.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.71 (s, 2H), 7.45 – 7.22 (m, 3H), 7.17 (s, 1H), 6.53 (s, 1H), 4.43 (d,  $J = 67.7$  Hz, 1H), 2.93 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  144.57 (s), 134.28 (s), 128.67 (s), 126.69 (s), 125.70 (s), 124.68 (s), 123.51 (s), 119.80 (s), 117.33 (s), 103.81 (s), 31.02 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 157.08 (calc. 157.12).



#### *N*,4-dimethylbenzenesulfonamide

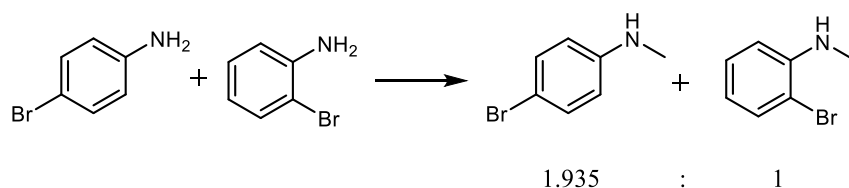
Followed the general procedure, purification by column chromatography (PE/EtOAc 10:1) gave product (94 %), *N*,4-dimethylbenzenesulfonamide as white solid.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.69 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 7.24 (d,  $J = 7.6$  Hz, 2H), 5.17 (s, 1H), 2.53 (d,  $J = 4.2$  Hz, 3H), 2.35 (s, 3H).  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (101 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  143.46 (s), 135.75 (s), 129.72 (s), 127.25 (s), 29.22 (s), 21.47 (s). GC-MS ( $m/z$ ): 185.05 (calc. 185.08).

## 2. Control experiments and kinetic experiments

### 2.1 Control experiments

#### Reaction under optimized conditions

A mixture of 2-bromoaniline (42.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), 4-bromoaniline (42.5 mg, 0.25 mmol), **7** (0.5 mol%) KO<sup>t</sup>Bu (56 mg, 1.0 equiv.), methanol (1 mL), in a 15 mL pressure tube with magnetic bar was stirred at 130 °C for 12 h. After cooling to the room temperature, the solvents were removed under vacuum, and the yields were determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR with 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as the internal standard.



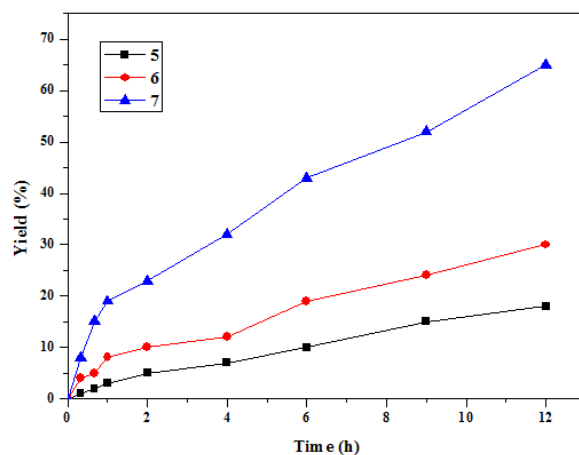
### 2.2 Kinetic experiments

#### Reaction under optimized conditions

A mixture of 2-bromoaniline (85mg, 0.5 mmol), **5**, and **6**, or **7** (0.5 mol%) as catalyst, respectively, KO<sup>t</sup>Bu (56 mg, 1.0 equiv.), methanol (1 mL), in a 15 mL pressure tube with magnetic bar was stirred at 130 °C. After specific time, the reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature. The solvents were removed under vacuum, and the yields were determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR with 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as the internal standard.

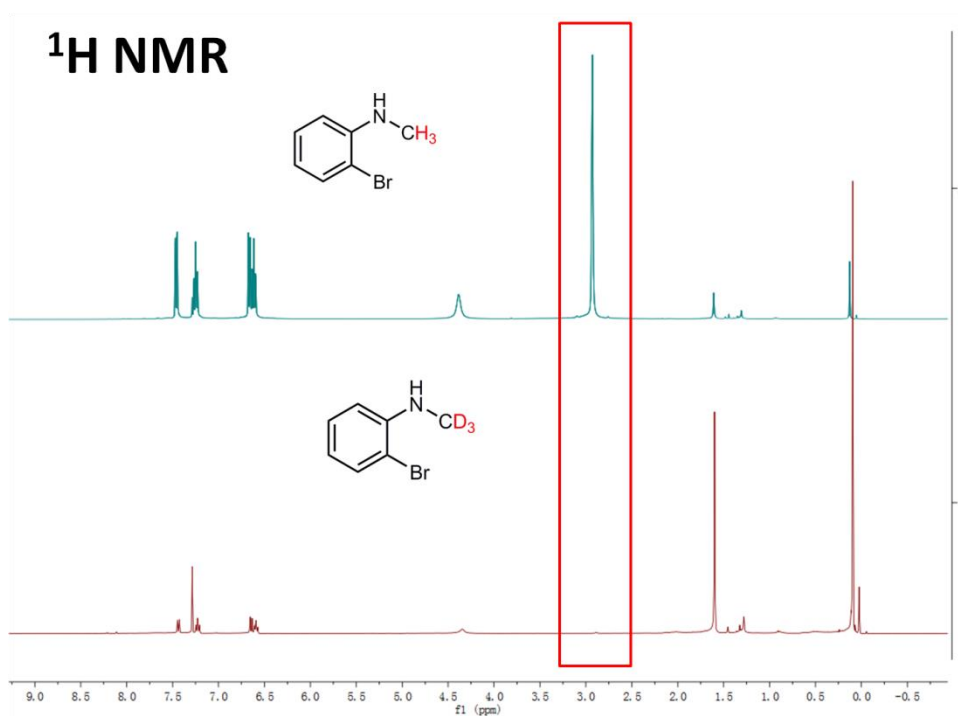
The results are as following table.

Entry	Time(h)	Yield <sub>5</sub> (%)	Yield <sub>6</sub> (%)	Yield <sub>7</sub> (%)
1	0	0	0	0
2	0.33	1	4	8
3	0.67	2	5	15
4	1	3	8	19
5	2	5	10	23
6	4	7	12	32
7	6	10	19	43
8	9	15	24	52
9	12	18	30	65



### 3. Deuteration experiments.

A mixture of 2-bromoaniline (85mg, 0.5 mmol), **7** (4.2 mg, 0.5 mol%) KO<sup>t</sup>Bu (56 mg, 1.0 equiv.), CD<sub>3</sub>OD (1 mL), in a 15 mL pressure tube with magnetic bar was stirred at 130 °C for 12 h. the reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature. The solvents were removed under vacuum, and the yields were determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR with 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as the internal standard.



### 4. NMR spectra of compounds and substrates

