

Supporting Information

Phosphonic acid mediated practical dehalogenation and benzylation with benzyl halides

Jing Xiao, *^a Yonghao Ma, ^a Xiaofang Wu, ^a Jing Gao, ^a Zilong Tang ^a and Li-Biao Han *^b

E-mail: XiaoJing@hnust.edu.cn; libiao-han@aist.go.jp

^aKey Laboratory of Theoretical Organic Chemistry and Functional Molecule of Ministry of Education, School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, Hunan University of Science and Technology, Xiangtan 411201, China.

^bNational Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-8565, Japan.

Table of Contents

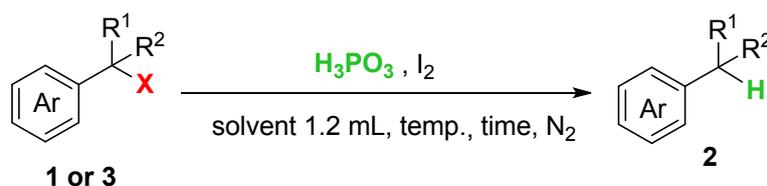
1. General information	S2
2. Typical procedure for reduction of the benzyl halides with H₃PO₃/I₂.	S2
3. Typical procedure for benzylation of arenes with benzyl halides	S2–S3
4. Characterization and analytical data of products	S3–S9
5. References	S10
6. Copies of ¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR spectra	S11–S33

1. General information

Unless otherwise noted, all reagents were purchased from commercial suppliers and used without purification. Unless otherwise noted, all reactions were performed in 10-mL glass vessel tubes carried out under N₂ atmosphere.

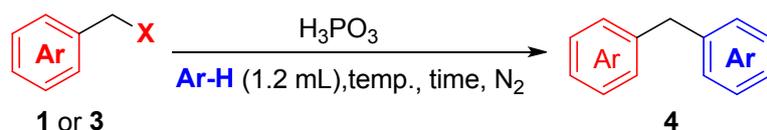
Flash column chromatography was performed using 200-300 mesh silica gel or preparation GPC. Visualization on TLC was achieved by the use of UV light (254 nm). ¹H NMR and ¹³C NMR spectra were measured on a Bruker AV-II 500 MHz NMR spectrometer (¹H 500 MHz, ¹³C 125 MHz), using CDCl₃ as the solvent with tetramethylsilane (TMS) as the internal standard. Chemical shifts are reported in ppm and referenced to residual solvent peaks (CHCl₃ in CDCl₃: 7.26 ppm for ¹H and 77.0 ppm for ¹³C). The coupling constants *J* are given in Hz. Mass spectra were recorded by GCMS-QP 2010 plus spectrometer. FULI GC- 9790 II equipped with FID detector was used to analysis the reaction mixture.

2. Typical procedure for reduction of the benzyl halides with H₃PO₃/I₂.



A 25 mL sealed Schlenk tube equipped with a magnetic stir bar was charged with H₃PO₃. After the tube was evacuated and backfilled with N₂ (repeated 3 times), benzyl halides 0.6 mmol and I₂ were added with solvent (1.2 mL). The reaction mixture was stirred at indicated temperature for indicated time. After the reaction completed, the mixture was concentrated and the residue was further purified by column chromatography on silica gel to give the analytic pure product **2**.

3. Typical procedure for benzylation of arenes with benzyl halides.

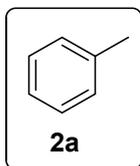


A 25 mL sealed Schlenk tube equipped with a magnetic stir bar was charged with H₃PO₃. After the tube was evacuated and backfilled with N₂ (repeated 3 times), benzyl halides 0.6 mmol and arenes (1.2 mL) were added. The reaction mixture was stirred at indicated temperature for indicated time. After the reaction completed, the mixture was concentrated and the residue was

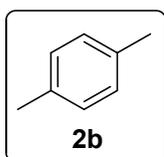
S2

further purified by column chromatography on silica gel to give the analytic pure product 4.

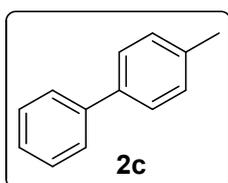
4. Characterization and analytical data of products (average yields based on three parallel reactions)



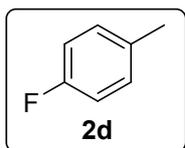
Toluene 2a, 38%, 62.9 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether); $^1\text{H NMR}$ (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.36–7.33 (m, 2H), 7.27–7.23 (m, 3H), 2.44 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 138.03, 129.22, 128.41, 125.49, 21.63. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 92$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹



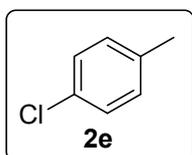
***p*-Xylene 2b**, 41%, 78.2 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether); $^1\text{H NMR}$ (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 6.99 (s, 4H), 2.23 (s, 6H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 134.23, 128.46, 20.51. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 106$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹



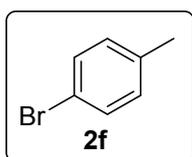
4-Methyl-1,1'-biphenyl 2c, yield 98%, 296.4 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). $^1\text{H NMR}$ (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.51–7.50 (m, 2H), 7.43–7.41 (m, 2H), 7.37–7.33 (m, 2H), 7.26–7.23 (m, 1H), 7.17 (d, $J = 8.5$ Hz, 2H), 2.32 (s, 3H). $^{13}\text{C NMR}$ (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 140.69, 137.89, 136.54, 129.00, 128.23, 126.51, 126.50, 20.62. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 168$ (M^+). This compound is known.²



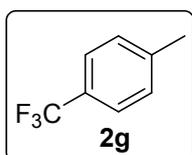
1-Fluoro-4-methylbenzene 2d, yield 32%, 63.4 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (400 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.17–7.14 (m, 2H), 7.00–6.96 (m, 2H), 2.36 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (100 MHz CDCl_3): δ 161.07 (d, $J = 241\text{Hz}$), 133.35 (d, $J = 3.1\text{Hz}$), 130.30 (d, $J = 7.6\text{ Hz}$), 114.92 (d, $J = 241\text{Hz}$), 20.61. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 110$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹



1-Chloro-4-methylbenzene 2e, yield 49%, 111.1 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether); ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.27–7.25 (m, 2H), 7.14–7.13 (m, 2H), 2.36 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 135.78, 130.60, 129.92, 127.81, 20.39. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 126$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹

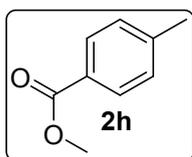


1-Bromo-4-methylbenzene 2f, yield 68%, 209.3 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.41–7.40 (m, 2H), 7.09–7.07 (m, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 136.79, 131.26, 130.84, 119.08, 20.95. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 171$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹

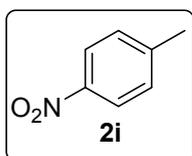


1-Methyl-4-(trifluoromethyl)benzene 2g, yield 26%, 74.9 mg (Eluent: petroleum

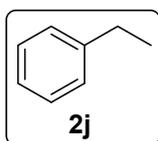
ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.52–7.50 (m, 2H), 7.29–7.27 (m, 2H), 2.42 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 141.57, 128.81, 127.35 (d, $J_{\text{C-F}} = 32.3$ Hz), 124.63 (q, $J_{\text{C-F}} = 3.6$ Hz), 123.95 (q, $J_{\text{C-F}} = 270.0$ Hz), 20.89. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 160$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹



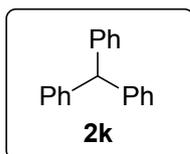
Methyl 4-methylbenzoate 2h, yield 61%, 164.7 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 10/1). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.78 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 7.08 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 3.75 (s, 3H), 2.25 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 167.17, 143.54, 129.60, 129.07, 127.44, 51.91, 21.61. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 150$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹



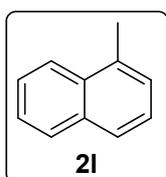
1-Methyl-4-nitrobenzene 2i, yield 52%, 128.2 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 10/1). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 8.11 (d, $J = 9.0$ Hz, 2H), 7.31 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 2.46 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 146.00, 145.44, 129.31, 123.04, 21.12. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 137$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹



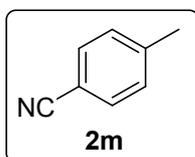
Ethylbenzene 2j, yield 39%, 74.4 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.45–7.42 (m, 2H), 7.36–7.32 (m, 3H), 2.81 (q, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 2H), 1.40 (t, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 144.36, 128.44, 127.99, 125.73, 29.03, 15.76. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 106$ (M^+). This compound is known.³



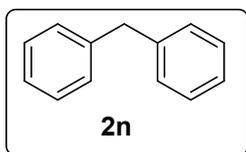
Triphenylmethane 2k, yield 97%, 426.0 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 50/1). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.30–7.27 (m, 6H), 7.23–7.20 (m, 3H), 7.13–7.12 (m, 6H), 5.56 (s, 1H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 143.91, 129.47, 128.31, 126.31, 56.85. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 244$ (M^+). This compound is known.³



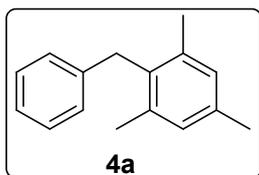
1-Methylnaphthalene 2l, yield 78%, 199.4 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 8.15–8.13 (m, 1H), 8.00–7.99 (m, 1H), 7.87–7.85 (m, 1H), 7.68–7.63 (m, 2H), 7.54–7.46 (m, 2H), 2.84 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 133.91, 133.21, 132.27, 128.19, 126.23, 126.05, 125.38, 125.24, 125.20, 123.78, 19.05. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 142$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁴



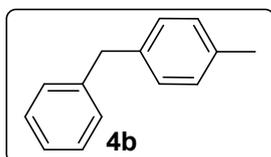
4-Methylbenzonitrile 2m, yield 53%, 111.6 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 40/1). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.42–7.41 (m, 2H), 7.15–7.14 (m, 2H), 2.34 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 143.71, 132.07, 129.85, 119.18, 109.33, 21.85. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 117$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹



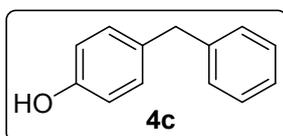
Diphenylmethane 2n, yield 99%, 299.4 mg; 77%, 232.8 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.41–7.39 (m, 4H), 7.32–7.29 (m, 6H), 4.10 (s, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 141.24, 129.07, 128.59, 126.20, 42.05. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 168$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁵



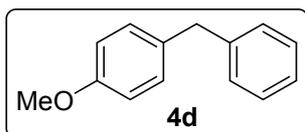
2-Benzyl-1,3,5-trimethylbenzene 4a, for benzyl chloride: yield 95%, 359.1 mg; for benzyl bromide: 96%, 362.9 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.15–7.12 (m, 2H), 7.07–7.04 (m, 1H), 6.93–6.92 (m, 2H), 6.80 (d, $J = 7.5$ Hz, 2H), 3.93 (s, 2H), 2.21 (s, 3H), 2.12 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 140.18, 137.09, 135.73, 133.86, 128.96, 128.41, 127.92, 125.73, 34.78, 20.99, 20.21. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 210$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁵



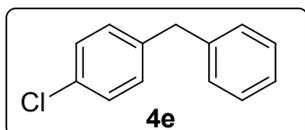
1-Benzyl-4-methylbenzene (isomer) 4b, for benzyl chloride: yield 95%, 311.2 mg; for benzyl bromide: 78%, 255.5 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.35–7.32 (m, 3.15H), 7.29–7.13 (m, 10.74H), 7.07–7.04 (m, 0.39H), 4.05 (s, 1.29H, minor), 4.00 (s, 2H, major), 2.37 (s, 3H, major), 2.30 (s, 1.92H, minor). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 140.96, 139.94, 138.47, 137.62, 136.18, 135.08, 129.83, 129.49, 128.69, 128.42, 128.36, 128.29, 127.97, 127.93, 125.99, 125.52, 125.46, 41.07 (major), 39.00 (minor), 20.55 (major), 19.21 (minor). GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 182$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁵



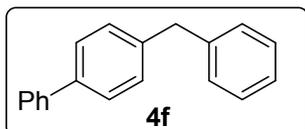
4-benzylphenol 4c, for benzyl chloride: yield 99%, 327.9 mg; for benzyl bromide: 98%, 324.6 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 10/1). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.21–7.18 (m, 2H), 7.13–7.09 (m, 3H), 6.99–6.97 (m, 2H), 6.69–6.66 (m, 2H), 3.84 (s, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 153.81, 141.53, 133.45, 130.09, 128.84, 128.46, 126.03, 115.30, 41.04. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 184$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁶



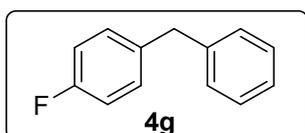
1-Benzyl-4-methoxybenzene (isomer) 4d, for benzyl chloride: yield 94%, 335.0 mg; for benzyl bromide: 92%, 327.9 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 10/1). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.31–7.27 (m, 2.48H), 7.24–7.19 (m, 4.02H), 7.13–7.08 (m, 2.23H), 6.90–6.84 (m, 2.58H), 4.00 (s, 0.69H, minor), 3.95 (s, 1.98H, major), 3.83 (s, 1.12H, minor), 3.80 (s, 3H, major). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 157.99, 141.62, 141.05, 133.28, 130.34, 129.89, 129.69, 128.99, 128.84, 128.46, 128.28, 127.43, 126.01, 125.79, 120.49, 113.90, 110.42, 55.37 (minor), 55.28 (major), 41.06 (major), 35.88 (minor). GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 198$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁷



1-Benzyl-4-chlorobenzene 4e, for benzyl chloride: yield 72%, 261.8 mg; 92%, 334.5 mg; for benzyl bromide: 56%, 203.6 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.37–7.25 (m, 5H), 7.22–7.21 (m, 2H), 7.17–7.15 (m, 2H), 4.00 (s, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 140.59, 139.63, 131.93, 130.30, 128.90, 128.61, 126.33, 41.28. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 202$ (M^+). This compound is known.³

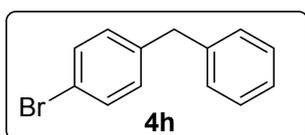


4-Benzyl-1,1'-biphenyl 4f, for benzyl bromide: 59%, 259.1 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.50–7.48 (m, 2H), 7.45–7.43 (m, 2H), 7.36–7.33 (m, 2H), 7.26–7.12 (m, 8H), 3.95 (s, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 141.04, 141.03, 140.28, 139.07, 129.35, 129.00, 128.75, 128.56, 127.25, 127.11, 127.04, 126.18, 41.62. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 244$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁸

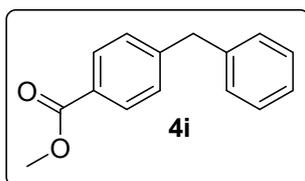


1-Benzyl-4-fluorobenzene 4g, for benzyl chloride: yield 99%, 331.5 mg; for benzyl

bromide: 74%, 247.8 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.36–7.33 (m, 2H), 7.28–7.17 (m, 5H), 7.04–7.00 (m, 2H), 4.00 (s, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 161.45 (d, $J_{\text{C-F}} = 242.4$ Hz), 140.98, 136.80 (d, $J_{\text{C-F}} = 3.1$ Hz), 130.32 (d, $J_{\text{C-F}} = 7.8$ Hz), 128.87, 128.57, 126.24, 115.24 (d, $J_{\text{C-F}} = 21.0$ Hz), 41.11. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 186$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁵



1-Benzyl-4-bromobenzene 4h, for benzyl chloride: yield 81%, 360.1 mg; for benzyl bromide: 53%, 235.6 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.32 (d, $J = 8.5$ Hz, 2H), 7.23–7.20 (m, 2H), 7.15–7.07 (m, 3H), 6.98 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 3.85 (s, 2H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 140.46, 140.12, 131.53, 130.69, 128.88, 128.59, 126.32, 119.95, 41.32. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 247$ (M^+). This compound is known.⁹



Methyl 4-benzylbenzoate 4i, for benzyl bromide: 35%, 142.4 mg (Eluent: petroleum ether/ethyl acetate = 10/1). ^1H NMR (500 MHz CDCl_3): δ 7.87 (d, $J = 8.0$ Hz, 2H), 7.23–7.12 (m, 5H), 7.10–7.08 (m, 2H), 3.94 (s, 2H), 3.81 (s, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (125 MHz CDCl_3): δ 167.10, 146.55, 140.15, 129.85, 128.98, 128.64, 128.11, 126.40, 52.04, 41.94. GC-MS (EI, 70 eV) $m/z = 226$ (M^+). This compound is known.¹⁰

5. References

- (1) S. Wang, P. Zhou, L. Jiang, Z. Zhang, K. Deng, Y. Zhang, Y. Zhao, J. Lia, S. Bottle and H. Zhu, *J. Catal.*, 2018, **368**, 207-216.
- (2) R. Bandari, T. Höche, A. Prager, K. Dirnberger and M. R. Buchmeiser, *Chem. Eur. J.*, 2010, **16**, 4650–4658.
- (3) S. W. Seo, H. S. Song, J. H. Song, G.-H. Kim, I. In and C. P. Park, *Tetrahedron Lett.*, 2015, **56**, 2795-2798.
- (4) B.-T. Guan, S.-K. Xiang, T. Wu, Z.-P. Sun, B.-Q. Wang, K.-Q. Zhao and Z.-J. Shi, *Chem. Commun.*, 2008, 1437-1439.
- (5) R.-J. Tang, T. Milcent and B. Crousse, *J. Org. Chem.*, 2018, **83**, 14001–14009.
- (6) S. Yoon, M. C. Hong and H. Rhee, *J. Org. Chem.*, 2014, **79**, 4206-4211.
- (7) H. Jiang, S.-C. Sha, S. A Jeong, B. C. Manor and P. J. Walsh, *Org. Lett.*, 2019, **21**, 1735–1739.
- (8) C.-B. Kim, H. Jo, B.-K. Ahn, C. K. Kim and K. Park, *J. Org. Chem.*, 2009, **74**, 9566-9569.
- (9) R. B. Bedford, M. A. Hall, G. R. Hodges, M. Huwe and M. C. Wilkinson, *Chem. Commun.*, 2009, 6430-6432.
- (10) R. Kuwano and M. Yokogi, *Org. Lett.*, 2005, **7**, 945-947.

6. Copies of ^1H NMR and ^{13}C NMR spectra

