#### **Supporting Information for**

## Iron-catalyzed oxidative coupling of arylboronic acids with benzene derivatives through homolytic aromatic substitution mechanism

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*General Remarks.* All manipulations of oxygen- and moisture-sensitive materials were conducted with a standard Schlenk technique under a nitrogen atmosphere. Nuclear magnetic resonance spectra were taken on a JEOL JNM LA500 spectrometer (<sup>1</sup>H, 500 MHz) or a JEOL JNM LA600 spectrometer (<sup>13</sup>C, 150 MHz) using tetramethylsilane (<sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C) as an internal standard. GC spectra were taken on Shimazu GC-18A. GC-MS spectra were taken on Shimazu GCMS-QP5050A. High-resolution mass spectra were obtained with a Bruker Daltonics microTOF-Q spectrometer (ESI). Di*-tert*-butyl hyponitrite was prepared according to a literature procedure.<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, reagents were commercially available and used without further purification. <sup>1</sup>H NMR analysis using *p*-dimethoxybenzene as an internal standard showed that arylboronic acids used are free from the corresponding boroxines in DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub> and the molar amounts of the assumption that the arylboronic acids are pure.

**Preparation of 4,7-Bis[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1,10-phenanthroline (L3).** The title compound was prepared according to a literature method for the coupling of 4,7-dibromo-1,10-phenanthroline with 4-methoxy-3,5-dimethylphenylzinc chloride with a slight modification.<sup>2</sup> To a solution of 1-bromo-4-(trifluoromethyl)benzene (339 mg, 1.50 mmol) in THF (10 mL) at -78 °C was added *n*-BuLi (0.94 mL, 1.6 M solution in hexane, 1.5 mmol). To this mixture was added at -78 °C a solution of ZnCl<sub>2</sub> (204 mg, 1.50 mmol) in THF (5 mL), cooled by ice bath, via cannula. It was allowed to warm to room temperature and a suspension of 4,7-dichloro-1,10-phenanthroline (125 mg, 0.500 mmol) and Pd(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>4</sub> (28.9 mg, 0.0250 mmol) in THF (10 mL) was added to the organozinc intermediate using a large gauge cannula. The mixture was heated at reflux for 12 h, cooled to room temperature, quenched with sat. NH<sub>4</sub>Cl aq. (15 mL), and neutralized with sat. NaHCO<sub>3</sub> aq. (30 mL). After extraction with EtOAc (30 mL x 3) and washing with brine, the organic layer was dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub> and concentrated. The residue was subjected to SiO<sub>2</sub> column chromatography (EtOAc then CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/MeOH/NH<sub>3</sub> aq. = 93/5/2) to give 4,7-bis[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1,10-phenanthroline (L3: 161 mg, 59% yield).

### 4,7-Bis[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1,10-phenanthroline (L3).



CF<sub>3</sub> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.61 (d, J = 4.4 Hz, 2 H), 7.66 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 4 H), 7.78 (s, 2 H), 7.82 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 4 H), 9.30 (d, J = 4.4 Hz, 2 H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (150 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ 123.6, 124.03, 124.04 (q, J = 274 Hz), 125.8 (q, J = 2.9 Hz), 126.2, 130.1, 130.9 (q, J = 32 Hz), 141.5, 146.9, 147.0, 150.1. HRMS (ESI) Calcd for C<sub>26</sub>H<sub>14</sub>F<sub>6</sub>N<sub>2</sub>: [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>, 491.0959.

Found: m/z 491.0962.

*Iron-Catalyzed Oxidative Coupling of 4-Bromophenylboronic Acid with Benzene (Table 1): General Procedure.* To a partial suspension of an iron complex (0.0120 mmol) and 4-bromophenylboronic acid (1a: 24.1 mg, 0.120 mmol) in benzene (2o: 1.07 mL, 12.0 mmol) in a 20 mL Schlenk tube was added a ligand (0.012 mmol) and *t*-BuOO*t*-Bu (3: 44.0  $\mu$ L, 0.240 mmol). After stirring at 80 °C for the time specified in Table 1, nonane as an internal standard was added. An aliquot of the solution was subjected to GC analysis. The rest of the solution was poured into brine (20 mL) and extracted with Et<sub>2</sub>O (25 mL x 3). The organic layer was dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was subjected to <sup>1</sup>H NMR analysis using MeNO<sub>2</sub> as an internal standard.

Br A-Bromobiphenyl (4ao).<sup>3</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.37 (t, J = 6.9 Hz, 1 H), 7. 44 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2 H), 7.46 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2 H), 7.55 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 2 H), 7.57 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2 H).

*Iron-Catalyzed Oxidative Coupling of Arylboronic Acids with Arenes (Table 2 and Scheme 1). General Procedure.* To a partial suspension of  $Fe(OTf)_3$  (10.1 mg, 0.0200 mmol), 4,7-bis[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1,10-phenanthroline (L3: 9.4 mg, 0.020 mmol) and an arylboronic acid (1: 0.200 mmol) in an arene (2: 20.0 mmol) in a 20 mL Schlenk tube was added *t*-BuOO*t*-Bu (3: 73.0 µL, 0.400 mmol). After stirring at 80 °C for the time specified in Table 2 or Scheme 1, the resulting solution was poured into brine (20 mL) and extracted with Et<sub>2</sub>O (25 mL x 3). The organic layer was dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>, filtered, and concentrated. The residue was subjected to SiO<sub>2</sub> chromatography (PTLC) to give the corresponding coupling product (4).



**Biphenyl (4bo).**<sup>4</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.35 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 2 H), 7.44 (t, *J* = 7.6 Hz, 4 H), 7.60 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 4 H).

**4-Methylbiphenyl (4co).**<sup>5</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  2.40 (s, 3 H), 7.25 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2 H), 7.32 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.42 (t, J = 7.7 Hz, 2 H), 7.50 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2 H), 7.59 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2 H).

Cl Cl 4-Chlorobiphenyl (4do).<sup>6</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.36 (t, J = 7.7 Hz, 1 H), 7.41 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2 H), 7.44 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 2 H), 7.52 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2 H), 7.55 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2 H).



**3-Bromobiphenyl** (**4eo**).<sup>7</sup> A colorless oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.31 (t, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1 H), 7.38 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.45 (t, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 2 H), 7.46–7.50 (m, 1 H), 7.52 (d, *J* = 7.7 Hz, 1 H), 7.56 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2 H), 7.74 (t, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1 H).



**2-Chlorobiphenyl** (**4fo**).<sup>8</sup> A pale yellow oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.26–7.42 (m, 4 H), 7.42–7.46 (m, 4 H), 7.48 (dd, J = 7.6, 1.5 Hz, 1 H).



**4-(Trifluoromethyl)biphenyl (4go).**<sup>9</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.41 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.48 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2 H), 7.60 (d, J = 7.4 Hz, 2 H), 7.70 (s,

4 H).





**4-Methoxylbiphenyl (4jo).**<sup>4</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  3.86 (s, 3 H), 6.98 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2 H), 7.30 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.42 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 2 H),

**4-Ethoxycarbonylbiphenyl (4io).**<sup>11</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$ 1.42 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3 H), 4.41 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2 H), 7.39 (t, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.47 (t,

J = 7.6 Hz, 2 H), 7.63 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2 H), 7.66 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2 H), 8.12 (d, J =



**3-Methoxybiphenyl** (4ko).<sup>4</sup> A colorless oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  3.87 (s, 3 H), 6.91 (dd, J = 8.2, 2.6 Hz, 1 H), 7.14 (t, J = 2.0 Hz, 1 H), 7.19 (d, J = 7.6 Hz, 1 H), 7.33–7.38 (m, 2 H), 7.44 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 2 H), 7.59 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2 H).



**3-Chloro-4-methoxybiphenyl (4lo).**<sup>12</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  3.95 (s, 3 H), 7.00 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 1 H), 7.33 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.42 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 2 H), 7.45 (dd, J = 8.6, 2.3 Hz, 1 H), 7.53 (d, J = 7.1 Hz, 2 H), 7.62 (d, J = 2.3

Hz, 1 H).



**3-Phenylthiophene** (4mo).<sup>13</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.30 (t, J = 7.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.38–7.43 (m, 4 H), 7.46 (dd, J = 2.6, 1.8 Hz, 1 H), 7.61 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2 H).

A mixture of three isomers of (4-fluorophenyl)chlorobenzene (o/m/p = 64/20/16) (4np). A colorless oil. The ratio of o/m/p was determined as follows. <sup>1</sup>H NMR showed that the peaks of the ortho isomer are the largest and those of the para isomer are the smallest, determined mainly from the integral the triplets (2 H, ortho to F) that appear at 7.1209 ppm (the ortho isomer), 7.135 (meta) and 7.1265 (para). However, the determination of the exact isomer ratio was difficult because of overlap of the peaks. The ratio of o/m/p was estimated by the integral on GC to be 64/20/16.

7.53 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 2 H), 7.55 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2 H).



**2-Chloro-4'-fluorobiphenyl.**<sup>14</sup> <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.12 (t, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2 H), 7.25–7.33 (m, 3 H), 7.38–7.43 (m, 2 H), 7.44–7.48 (m, 1 H).



**3-Chloro-4'-fluorobiphenyl.**<sup>8</sup> <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.13 (t, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2 H), 7.31 (m, 1 H), 7.36 (t, *J* = 7.8 Hz, 1 H), 7.39–7.43 (m, 1 H), 7.45–7.54 (m, 3 H).



**4-Chloro-4'-fluorobiphenyl.**<sup>8</sup> <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.13 (t, J = 8.8 Hz, 2 H), 7.39–7.43 (m, 2 H), 7.45–7.48 (m, 2 H), 7.49–7.54 (m, 2 H).



**4'-(Ethoxycarbonyl)-2,5-difluorobiphenyl** (**4iq**).<sup>15</sup> A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.42 (t, J = 7.2 Hz, 3 H), 4.41 (q, J = 7.2 Hz, 2 H), 7.02–7.07 (m, 1 H), 7.11–7.19 (m, 2 H), 7.61 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2 H), 8.13 (d, J = 8.7 Hz, 2 H).



**4'-(Ethoxycarbonyl)-2,4,6-trifluorobiphenyl (4ir).** A white solid. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  1.41 (t, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3 H), 4.41 (q, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 2 H), 6.78 (t, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2 H), 7.50 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2 H), 8.13 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2 H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (150 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  14.4, 61.2, 100.8 (td, *J* = 24, 7.2 Hz), 114.2 (t, *J* = 22 Hz),

129.6, 130.36, 130.43, 133.0, 160.3 (ddd, J = 250, 15, 10 Hz), 162.3 (dt, J = 250, 16 Hz), 166.3. Anal. Calcd for C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>11</sub>F<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C, 64.29; H, 3.96. Found: C, 64.33; H, 3.79.

A mixture of two isomers of (4-bromophenyl)thiophene (2-/3- = 84/16) (4as). A pale yellow solid. The isomer ratio was determined by GC and confirmed by <sup>1</sup>H NMR.



**2-(4-Bromophenyl)thiophene.**<sup>16</sup> <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.08 (t, *J* = 4.3 Hz, 1 H), 7.30 (d, *J* = 4.3 Hz, 2 H), 7.47 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2 H), 7.50 (d, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2 H).



**3-(4-Bromophenyl)thiophene.**<sup>17</sup> <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.35 (dd, J = 5.0, 1.3 Hz, 1 H), 7.40 (dd, J = 5.0, 2.9 Hz, 1 H), 7.44 (dd, J = 2.9, 1.3 Hz, 1 H), 7.45–7.53 (m, 4 H).

A mixture of two isomers of (3-methoxyphenyl)-3-bromothiophene (2-/5- = 75/25) (4kt). A colorless oil. The isomer ratio was determined by GC and confirmed by <sup>1</sup>H NMR.



**3-Bromo-2-(3-methoxyphenyl)thiophene.**<sup>18</sup> <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  3.86 (s, 3 H), 6.93 (dd, J = 8.3, 2.6 Hz, 1 H), 7.05 (d, J = 5.3 Hz, 1 H), 7.21–7.24 (m, 2 H), 7.28 (d, J = 5.3 Hz, 1 H), 7.34 (t, J = 8.2 Hz, 1 H).



**4-Bromo-2-(3-methoxyphenyl)thiophene.**<sup>18</sup> <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  3.85 (s, 3 H), 6.87 (dd, J = 8.3, 2.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.08 (t, J = 2.1 Hz, 1 H), 7.15 (d, J = 7.7 Hz, 1 H), 7.17 (d, J = 1.4 Hz, 1 H), 7.20 (d, J = 1.4 Hz, 1 H) 7.30 (t, J = 8.0 Hz, 1 H).

*ICP-MS* (*Inductively Coupled Plasma-Mass Spectrometry*) of  $Fe(OTf)_3$  (Footnote 15). A sample was prepared by diluting Fe(OTf)<sub>3</sub> with 1-methyl-2-pyrrolidone in 10,000-fold. Analysis was conducted on Agilent 7500cs using XSTC-7, 13B (SPEX) as a standard solution for calibration curve. The contents are shown in Table S1.

Table S1	ICP-MS analysis on the	contents (ppm) of eler	ments in Fe(OTf) <sub>3</sub>
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		<i>j ===</i>		(PP) **						
Co	Ni	Cu	Ru	Rh	Pd	Ag	Ir	Pt	Au	
<5	26	29	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	

*Reaction of 4-Bromophenylboronic Acid with Di-tert-butyl Hyponitrite and CDCl*<sub>3</sub> (*Scheme 2*). A solution of 4-bromophenylboronic acid (**1a**: 24.1 mg, 0.120 mmol) and di-*tert*-butyl hyponitrite (25.1 mg, 0.144 mmol) in CDCl<sub>3</sub> (1.0 mL) was stirred at 60 °C for 12 h. After adding MeNO<sub>2</sub> as an internal standard, the resulting solution was subjected to <sup>1</sup>H NMR analysis to determine the yield of 1-bromo-4-deuteriobenzene (**6**) and its deuteration ratio.

Reaction of Iron Complexes with Di-tert-butyl Peroxide in the Presence of 4-Bromophenylboronic Acid and CDCl<sub>3</sub> (Scheme 3): General Procedure. To a partial suspension of Fe(OTf)<sub>3</sub> (30.2 mg, 0.0600 mmol), a ligand (0.060 mmol), and 4-bromophenylboronic acid (**1a**: 12.0 mg, 0.0600 mmol) in 0.60 mL of CDCl<sub>3</sub> in a 20 mL Schlenk tube was added *t*-BuOOt-Bu (**3**: 11  $\mu$ L, 0.059 mmol). After stirring at 60 °C for the time specified in Scheme 3, nonane as an internal standard was added to the resulting solution. An aliquot of the solution was subjected to GC analysis to determine the yield of 1-bromo-4-deuteriobenzene (**6**) and the conversion of **3**. After concentration, the residue was subjected to SiO<sub>2</sub> chromatography (PTLC) to obtain **6** for determination of its deuteration ratio by <sup>1</sup>H NMR.

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<sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR Spectra of a Ligand and the Coupling Products







Br 4ao



4bo



4co



S12

CI



S13









F<sub>3</sub>C 4go



NC 4ho







MeO



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- -



C 4np













Br





