Electronic Supplementary Information

Dehydration of primary amides to nitriles in water. Late-stage functionalization

and 1-pot multistep chemoenzymatic processes under micellar catalysis

conditions

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1. General Information

All commercial reagents were used without further purification unless otherwise noted. Organic solvents specified as dry and/or degassed such as THF or toluene were either taken from a solvent purification system (Pure-Solv 400, Innovative Technology, Inc. (now Inert, Inc.)), or degassed using a stream of bubbling argon for a minimum of 1 h and involved less than 25 mL of volume. All other solvents were used as received, such as MeOH, EtOAc, hexanes, and Et₂O, unless otherwise noted, and purchased from Fisher Scientific. Palladium acetate was purchased from Johnson Matthey and kept in its solid state within a glove box. Starting materials, such as carboxylic acids or primary amides, were purchased either from Millipore-Sigma or Combi-Blocks. The surfactant, TPGS-750-M, was prepared via a standard literature procedure,^[1] or can be purchased from Millipore-Sigma (catalog #733857 for a 2 wt % solution of the wax dissolved in water). A standard 2 wt % aqueous solution of TPGS-750-M was typically prepared on a 100 g scale by dissolving 2 g of the wax into 98 g of thoroughly degassed (steady stream of argon, minimum of 1 h bubbling time with stirring) HPLC grade water in a 250 mL round bottomed flask equipped with a stir bar and allowed to dissolve overnight with vigorous stirring under argon pressure (**NOTE**: Do not attempt to degas the aqueous phase with surfactant wax submerged; vigorous foaming to the point of overflowing may occur). The 2 wt % TPGS-750-M/H₂O solution, once prepared, was kept under argon pressure at all times. Thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed using Silica Gel 60 F₂₅₄ plates (Merck, 0.25 mm thick). Flash chromatography is either performed in glass columns or an automated Biotage system using Silica Gel 60 (Silicycle, 40-63 nm). ¹H and ¹³C NMR were recorded at 25 °C on a Varian Unity Inova 400 MHz, a Varian Unity Inova 500 MHz, or on a Varian Unity Inova 600 MHz spectrometer in CDCl₃ with residual CHCl₃ (¹H = 7.26 ppm, 13 C = 77.16 ppm) or in DMSO-d₆ with residual (CH₃)₂SO (¹H = 2.50 ppm, ¹³C = 39.52 ppm) as internal standards. Chemical shifts are reported in parts per million (ppm). NMR Data are reported as follows: chemical shift, multiplicity (s = singlet, d = doublet, dd = doublet of doublets,

ddd = doublet of doublet of doublets, t = triplet, td = triplet of doublets, q = quartet, quin = quintet, m = multiplet), coupling constant (if applicable), and integration. High-resolution mass analyses (HRMS) were recorded on a Waters Micromass LCT TOF ES+ Premier mass spectrometer using ESI ionization.

[1] B. H. Lipshutz, S. Ghorai, A. R. Abela, R. Moser, T. Nishikata, C. Duplais and A. Krasovskiy, J. Org. Chem., 2011, 76, 4379–4391.



TPGS-750-M

2. General Procedures

General procedure A: Amide dehydration in water at 0.5 mmol scale with 0.8 mol % Pd(OAc)₂ A stock catalyst solution of was prepared by dissolving 4.5 mg of Pd(OAc)₂ into 500 μL of THF with gentle

heating until an orange homogeneous solution had formed.

To a 1-dram vial containing a PTFE-coated magnetic stir bar was added oxone (30 mg, 0.1 mmol, 0.2 equiv) and the primary amide (0.5 mmol, 1.0 equiv). 2 wt % TPGS-750-M in H₂O (0.9 mL, 0.56 M) was then added, followed by either methoxyacetonitrile (300 μ L, 8 equiv) or fluoroacetonitrile (250 μ L, 8 equiv). A sample of the catalyst stock solution (100 μ L) in THF was then added and the vial was sealed using a threaded cap and PTFE tape. The reaction was then allowed to stir vigorously (~1500 RPM) at 45 °C internal temperature (aluminum block reactor set to heat to 50 °C) until deemed complete by TLC. The aqueous phase was then extracted using EtOAc (3 x 1 mL) and dried directly onto SiO₂ to be purified via column chromatography.

Note: If DMSO is used as a co-solvent for the reaction, 10-20 v/v% of DMSO (compared to the total volume of water and THF) is added directly to the primary amide followed by heating with a heat gun until a change of the solid is noted, in many cases being liquefication. The TPGS-750-M solution, nitrile, and

catalyst stock solution followed by oxone are then added quickly. The vial is then sealed and allowed to stir as described above.

General procedure B: Amide dehydration in water at 0.5 mmol scale with 1.0 mol % Pd(OAc)₂

A stock catalyst solution of was prepared by dissolving 5.6 mg of $Pd(OAc)_2$ into 500 µL of THF with gentle heating until an orange homogeneous solution had formed. The remainder of the experimental then follows General Procedure A.

3. Trials and Reaction Optimization

3.1 Initial trials using acetonitrile (or isobutyronitrile)/water



cat Pd oxdidant (20 mol %) 2 wt % aq. TPGS-750-M / CH₃CN 45 °C, 0.5 M, air THF (co-solvent; 10 v/v %)



		Pd loading	aq. : org volume			
entry	Pd source	(mol %)	ratio ^a	nitrile (eq.)	[oxidant]	2 (%) ^b
1	Pd(OAc) ₂	10%	1:1 (no THF)	ACN (19)	Selectfluor	40
2	Pd(OAc) ₂	1%	1:1 (no THF)	ACN (19)	Selectfluor	53
3	Pd(OAc) ₂	10%	9:1 (no THF)	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	39
4	5% Pd/C	10%	1:1 (no THF)	ACN (19)	Selectfluor	47
5	Pd(OAc) ₂	1%	9:1 (no THF)	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	49
6	5% Pd/C	0.2%	9:1	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	trace
7	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:1	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	77
8	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9 (3 M NaCl):1	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	trace
9	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	4:1 (1.0 M)	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	77
10	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.1%	9:1	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	75
11	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:1	ACN (4)	Air (none)	36
12	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:1	ACN (4)	Benzoquinone	trace
13	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.4%	9:1	ACN (4)	Selectfluor	72
14	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:1	ACN (4)	O ₂ (1 atm)	trace
15	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:1	ACN (4)	oxone	82
16	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:2	ACN (8)	Selectfluor	90
17	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:2	ACN (8)	oxone	85
18	Pd[dtbpf]Cl ₂	0.2%	9:2	ACN (8)	oxone	85
19	[Xantphos]PdCl ₂	0.2%	9:2	ACN (8)	oxone	93
20	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:1.75	Isobutyronitrile (4)	oxone	68
21	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:3.5	Isobutyronitrile (8)	oxone	85
22	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.1%	9:3.5	Isobutyronitrile (8)	oxone	78
23°	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.1%	9:3.5	Isobutyronitrile (8)	oxone	43
24 ^d	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	9:3.5	Isobutyronitrile (8)	oxone	82
25 ^d	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.1%	9:3.5	Isobutyronitrile (8)	oxone	76
26	Pd(OAc) ₂	0.2%	1:1	ACN (19)	oxone	97

^a Run using 10 v/v% THF unless otherwise indicated. ^b Isolated yields. ^c Room temperature. ^d 70 °C.

The authors would like to note that, for this section, it was difficult to reproduce yields at 0.2 mol % and below for this specific model reaction. The reason, including the purity of the palladium source, was ultimately not resolved; thus more reproduceable and higher yielding trials were run using 0.8-1.0 mol % $Pd(OAc)_2$ in most of these studies reported (*vide infra*).

3.2 Nitrile additive screening



Conditions: 0.5 mmol 4-methoxybenzamide, 4.0 mmol (8 equiv.) nitrile additive, 0.8 mol % Pd(OAc)₂, 20 mol % Oxone, 2 wt % TPGS-750-M/H₂O (0.5 M), THF (10 v/v %), 45 °C, 16 h, under air atmosphere. ^a Isolated yields

3.3 Effect of equivalences of nitrile additive



Conditions: 0.5 mmol 4-methoxybenzamide, 0.8 mol % Pd(OAc)₂, 20 mol % oxone, 2 wt % TPGS-750-M/H₂O (0.5 M), 10 v/v% THF, 45 °C, 16 h, under air atmosphere. ^a Isolated yields.

3.4 Effect of Pd catalyst loading



Conditions: 0.5 mmol 4-methoxybenzamide, 4.0 (8 equiv.) nitrile additive, 20 mol % Oxone, 2 wt % TPGS-750-M/H₂O (0.5 M), THF (10 v/v %), 45 °C, 16 h, under air atmosphere. ^a Isolated yields.

3.5 Effect of Oxone loading



Conditions: 0.5 mmol 4-methoxybenzamide, 4.0 mmol (8 equiv) methoxyacetonitrile, 0.8 mol % Pd(OAc)₂, 2 wt % TPGS-750-M/H₂O (0.5 M), THF (10 v/v %), 45 °C, 16 h, under air atmosphere. ^a Isolated yields

3.6 Effect of surfactant



Conditions: 0.5 mmol 4-methoxybenzamide, 4.0 mmol (8 equiv) methoxyacetonitrile, 0.8 mol % Pd(OAc)₂, 20 mol % oxone, surfactant/H₂O (0.5 M), THF (10 v/v %), 45 °C, 16 h, under air. ^a Isolated yields

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Synthesis of unreported starting materials



Synthesis of 4-((2,5-dichloropyrimidin-4-yl)oxy)benzonitrile (22)



To an oven-dried 100 mL round-bottom flask equipped with a PTFE-coated magnetic stir bar was added NaH (60% in mineral oil, 200 mg, 5.0 mmol, 1 equiv) in an argon-filled glovebox. The flask was sealed with a rubber septum, removed from the glove box, and adapted to a stir plate. In a separate 50 mL oven-dried pear-shaped flask, 4-hydroxybenzamide (685.7 mg, 5.0 mmol, 1 equiv) was dissolved in a 50:50 mixture of anhydrous THF and DMF (20 mL), then this solution was transferred via syringe to the flask containing NaH, with stirring, under a positive flow of argon. The solution was allowed to stir until bubbling ceased, then 2,4,5-trichloropyrimidine (0.573 mL, 5.0 mmol, 1 equiv) was added via syringe and the reaction was allowed to stir at rt overnight. Upon completion, the resulting solids were filtered off and 150 mL of DI water was added to the filtrate to precipitate the product **22**, which was collected via filtration, washed twice with 50 mL of water, then dried on vacuum overnight resulting in a white solid (599 mg, 45% yield). R_f = 0.38 (7:3 EtOAc/hexanes).

Synthesis of 4-((5-nitropyridin-2-yl)oxy)benzamide (23)



To a 25 mL round bottom flask equipped with a football-shaped stir bar was added 4hydroxybenzamide (755 mg, 5.5 mmol, 1.1 equiv), 2-fluoro-5-nitropyridine (710 mg, 5.0 mmol, 1.0 equiv), and K_3PO_4 · H_2O (1400 mg, 6.0 mmol, 1.2 equiv). 2 wt % TPGS-750-M / H_2O (10 mL, 0.5 M) was

then added, and the flask was sealed using a rubber septum. The reaction mixture was then allowed to stir vigorously for 12 h in a 50 °C oil bath (45 °C internal temperature). The reaction mixture was then diluted in water (50 mL) and extracted with EtOAc (3 x 50 mL). The crude product mixture was then purified by column chromatography (eluent: 75% EtOAc/25% hexanes) and was ultimately recrystallized in hot EtOH to result in product as white crystals (480 mg, 37% yield). R_f = 0.35 (3:1 EtOAc/hexanes).

Synthesis of 4-carbamoylphenyl ((benzyloxy)carbonyl)-L-leucinate (24)



To a 1-dram vial equipped with a PTFE-coated magnetic stir bar was added Z-leu-OH (132.7 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1 equiv) and 4-hydroxybenzamide (68.6 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1 equiv) which were then dissolved in DMF (3 mL). Once dissolved, diisopropylcarbodiimide (94 μ L, 0.6 mmol, 1.2 equiv) and DMAP (12.2 mg, 0.1 mmol, 0.2 equiv) were added and the reaction was allowed to stir at rt overnight. Upon completion, as determined by TLC, the reaction mixture was filtered through cotton and the product was precipitated with water (15 mL) and extracted with diethyl ether (3 x 5 mL). The combined organic extracts were washed with water (2 x 3 mL), brine (2 mL), and the solvent was removed *in vacuo*. The crude material was purified by column chromatography (eluent: 0-100% EtOAc/hexanes gradient) resulting in a white solid (146.1 mg, 76% yield). R_f = 0.34 (7:3 EtOAc/hexanes, CAM stain).





To a 25 mL round bottomed flask equipped with a football-shaped stir bar was added 4-hydroxybenzamide (1000 mg, 7.3 mmol, 2.0 equiv), 2,3-dichloroquinoxaline (730 mg, 3.67 mmol, 1.0 equiv), and K_3PO_4 ·H₂O (1850 mg, 7.94 mmol, 2.2 equiv). 2 wt % TPGS-750-M / H₂O (7.5 mL, 0.5 M) was then added and the flask was sealed using a rubber septum. The reaction mixture was then allowed to stir vigorously for 48 h in a 90 °C oil bath (80 °C internal temperature). The crude product was then slurried with 2 M NaOH (50 mL), filtered, and washed with 1 M HCl. The filtrate was then slurried in EtOH, heated to reflux, and filtered hot to result in product as a white solid (314.5 mg, 29% yield). R_f = 0.31 (3:1 EtOAc/hexanes).

4.2 E Factor evaluation



To a 1-dram vial was added 5.6 mg of Pd(OAc)₂ and THF (500 μ L). The mixture was then gently heated using a heat gun until a homogeneous mixture had formed resulting in the catalyst stock solution.

To a separate 1-dram vial equipped with a Teflon coated stir bar was added the amide (89.0 mg, 0.25 mmol, 1 equiv) followed by DMSO (100 μ L, 20 v/v %). The resulting slurry was then heated with a heat gun until a homogeneous liquid formed. Very quickly after liquefication, methoxyacetonitrile (143.4 mg, 150 μ L, 2.0 mmol, 8 equiv), 50 μ L of the catalyst stock solution (1 mol % Pd), and 2 wt % TPGS-750-M / H₂O (450 μ L) was added followed by oxone (16 mg, 0.05 mmol, 20 mol %). This mixture was then stirred with a metal spatula until a mixture that could be stirred was achieved, and the vial was sealed using a screw cap followed by Teflon tape under air. The resulting slurry was then allowed to stir vigorously (~1500 RPM) in an aluminum block reactor at 45 °C internal temperature (aluminum block set to heat to 50 °C).



TLC of reaction for E Factor evaluation



E Factor reaction prior to dilution and filtration

The resulting grey reaction mixture was then cooled to rt and water (4 mL) was then added and the product mixture stirred for 5 min. The suspension was then filtered, washed with water (10 mL), and allowed to dry under suction overnight resulting in product as a grey solid (70.1 mg, 83% yield).

E Factor = (mass waste organics) / (mass product)

- = (mass_{MeOACN} + mass_{2-MeOAcetamide} + mass_{DMSO} + mass_{THF}) / (mass_{product})
- = (138.4+22.3+90.9+44.4) / 70.1 = 4.22

4.3 Aqueous recycling study



To a 1-dram vial was added 4.5 mg of Pd(OAc)₂ and THF (500 μ L). The mixture was then gently heated using a heat gun until a homogeneous solution had formed resulting in the catalyst stock solution.

Initial reaction: To a 1-dram vial equipped with a Teflon coated stir bar was added benzamide **1** (75 mg, 0.5 mmol) and oxone (30 mg, 0.1 mmol, 20 mol %). 2 wt % TPGS-750-M (900 μ L), methoxyacetonitrile (300 μ L, 4 mmol, 8 equiv), and 100 μ L of the catalyst stock solution (0.8 mol % Pd) was then added and the vial was sealed under air using a threaded cap followed by Teflon tape. The resulting slurry was then allowed to stir vigorously (~1500 RPM) in an aluminum block reactor at 45 °C internal temperature (aluminum block set to heat to 50 °C) overnight. The contents of the vial were then extracted using methyl *t*-butyl ether (MTBE; 3 x 1.0 mL). The combined organics were then dried onto SiO₂ and purified via column chromatography (20% EtOAc/hexanes) and the product was dried under high vacuum to result in a white solid (64.3 mg, 97% yield).

First recycle: To the 1-dram vial containing the 2 wt % TPGS-750-M aqueous phase used for the previous reaction (and extracted with MTBE) was added fresh benzamide **1** (75 mg, 0.5 mmol) and oxone (30 mg, 0.1 mmol, 20 mol %). Fresh methoxyacetonitrile (300 μL, 4 mmol, 8 equiv) and 100 μL of the catalyst stock solution (0.8 mol % Pd) was then added and the vial was sealed under air using a threaded cap followed by Teflon tape. The resulting slurry was then allowed to stir vigorously (~1500 RPM) in an aluminum block reactor at 45 °C internal temperature (aluminum block set to heat to 50 °C) overnight. The contents of the vial were then extracted using methyl *t*-butyl ether (MTBE; 1.0 mL x 3). The combined organics were then dried onto SiO₂ and purified via column chromatography (20% EtOAc/hexanes) and the product was dried under high vacuum to result in a white solid (63.4 mg, 96% yield).

Second recycle: To the 1-dram vial containing the 2 wt % TPGS-750-M aqueous phase used for the previous two reactions (and extracted with MTBE twice) was added fresh benzamide **1** (75 mg, 0.5 mmol) and oxone (30 mg, 0.1 mmol, 20 mol %). Fresh methoxyacetonitrile (300 μ L, 4 mmol, 8 equiv), and 100 μ L of the catalyst stock solution (0.8 mol % Pd) was then added and the vial was sealed under air using a threaded cap followed by Teflon tape. The resulting slurry was then allowed to stir vigorously (~1500 RPM) in an aluminum block reactor at 45 °C internal temperature (aluminum block set to heat to 50 °C) overnight. The contents of the vial were then extracted using methyl *t*-butyl ether (MTBE; 1.0 mL x 3). The combined organics were then dried onto SiO₂ and purified via column chromatography (20% EtOAc/hexanes) and the product was dried under high vacuum to result in a white solid (63.5 mg, 96% yield).

At this point, the aqueous phase had become too saturated with salts (see picture) and much of the water had been lost due to small scale extraction.

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Aqueous phase after two recycling steps

4.4 Multi-step, 1-pot chemoenzymatic sequence

4.4 A: Procedure for multi-step, 1-pot chemoenzymatic sequence in water: synthesis of 21



To a 1-dram vial was added 4.5 mg of $Pd(OAc)_2$ and THF (500 µL). The mixture was then gently heated using a heat gun until a homogeneous solution had formed resulting in the catalyst stock solution.

To a 1-dram vial equipped with a Teflon coated stir bar was added 4-bromobenzamide (107 mg, 0.535 mmol, 1 equiv) and oxone (33 mg, 0.11 mmol, 20 mol %). 2 wt % TPGS-750-M / H_2O (900 µL), methoxyacetonitrile (300 µL, 4.5 mmol, 8 equiv), and 100 µL of the catalyst stock solution was then added and the vial was sealed under air using a threaded cap followed by Teflon tape. The resulting slurry was allowed to react for 3 h at 45 °C internal temperature where the reaction was deemed complete by TLC and the mixture had become homogeneous. This mixture was then carried through to the next step without isolation or workup.

To the vial containing the dehydration product mixture was added 4-acetylphenylboronic acid (123 mg, 0.75 mmol, 1.4 equiv) and K_3PO_4 ·H₂O (233 mg, 1.0 mmol, 1.87 equiv). The vial was sealed using a rubber septum and the headspace of the vial was then purged with argon for 10 min with constant stirring. In a separate vial was added 1.6 mg of Pd[dtbpf]Cl₂ which was taken up in 200 µL of dry, degassed toluene. To the argon purged reaction vial was then added 100 µL of this catalyst stock solution (0.8 mg Pd[dtbpf]Cl₂, 1.25 x 10⁻³ mmol, 2300 ppm Pd). The contents of the vial were allowed to stir vigorously (~1500 RPM) overnight at 45 °C internal temperature until deemed complete by TLC. This mixture was then carried through to the next step without isolation or workup.

To a 20 mL scintillation vial equipped with a Teflon coated stir bar was added NAD⁺ (6.5 mg), NADP⁺ (6.0 mg), MgSO₄ (2 mg), and ADH-101 (50 mg). The solids were then taken up in 2 wt % TPGS-750-M in 0.23 M phosphate buffer in H₂O (5.0 mL)^[2] and allowed to stir for 5 min. The contents of the previous reaction vial containing the Suzuki-Miyaura product were then transferred to the 20 mL scintillation vial and the previous vial washed with 4.0 mL of the 2 wt % TPGS-750-M phosphate buffer solution in H₂O. The vial was then heated in a 20 mL scintillation vial aluminum block heater set to 37.5 °C, and the contents were stirred at ~750 RPM. This reaction was allowed to run overnight until deemed complete by TLC analysis. The contents of the vial were then extracted using EtOAc (3 x 5 mL), dried onto SiO₂, and purified via

column chromatography (45% EtOAc/55% hexanes) resulting in product as a white solid (114.5 mg, 96% yield, >99% ee).

[2] N. Akporji, V. Singhania, J. Dussart-Gautheret, F. Gallou and B. H. Lipshutz, Chem. Commun., 2021, 57, 11847–11850.

4.4 B: Procedure: racemic 21



To a 1-dram vial equipped with a Teflon coated stir bar was added Pd[dtbpf]Cl₂ (3.2 mg, 0.005 mmol, 1 mol %), 4-bromobenzonitrile (91 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1.0 equiv), 4-acetylphenylboronic acid (123 mg, 0.75 mmol, 1.5 equiv), and K₃PO₄·H₂O (233 mg, 1.0 mmol, 2.0 equiv). The headspace of the vial was then evacuated and backfilled with argon three times. 2 wt % TPGS-750-M / H₂O (900 μ L) and degassed toluene (100 μ L) were then added. The contents of the vial were then allowed to stir vigorously (~1500 RPM) in an aluminum block reactor at 45 °C internal temperature (aluminum block set to heat to 50 °C) overnight under argon pressure.

The aqueous phase was then extracted with EtOAc (3 x 1 mL). The combined organics were placed in a 10 mL round bottomed flask and evaporated. EtOH (2.5 mL) was then added followed by NaBH₄ (19 mg, 0.5 mmol, 1.0 equiv). This mixture was allowed to react at rt for 2 h until deemed complete by TLC analysis. The solvent was removed under vacuum and the crude organics were dried onto SiO₂ and purified via column chromatography (45% EtOAc/55% hexanes) to result in the racemic product as a white solid (99.7 mg, 90% yield).

4.4 C: HPLC chromatographs for ee(%) determination of (*R*)-4'-(1-hydroxyethyl)-[1,1'-biphenyl]-4carbonitrile (21)



HPLC: Chiracel AD-H, detected at 254 nm, eluent n-hexane/2-propanol = 90/10, flow rate = 1.0 mL/min,

[3] X. Shu, R. Jin, Z. Zhao, T. Cheng and G. Liu, Chem. Commun. 2018, 54, 13244–13247.

4.5: ICP-MS data for residual palladium

		Palladium		Source	
		[µg/g]			
Sample #	Sample weight in analysis [mg]	Average*	stdev		
ABW.04.259	18.10	0.177	0.004	Second recycle product	
ABW.04.263	14.50	3.592	0.030	Multi-step, final product	

*Each sample was done in triplicated measurements with background correction. n/a represents below detection limit.

5. Analytical Data

Synthesis of 4-methoxybenzonitrile (2)



Compound **2** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (64.5 mg, 97% yield). $R_f = 0.31$ (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.57 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 2H), 6.94 (d, J = 8.9 Hz, 2H), 3.85 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 162.8, 134.0, 119.2, 114.7, 103.9, 55.5.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[4]

Synthesis of 3,5-dichlorobenzonitrile (3)



Compound **3** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 10% EtOAc/90% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (80.1 mg, 93% yield).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.58 (t, J = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.53 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 2H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 136.3, 133.5, 130.4, 116.3, 115.1.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[5]

Synthesis of 2-(naphthalen-1-yl)acetonitrile (4)



Compound **4** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a yellow oil (76.0 mg, 94% yield). $R_f = 0.29$ (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.95 – 7.90 (m, 1H), 7.86 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.65 – 7.53 (m, 3H), 7.51 – 7.44 (m, 1H), 4.11 (s, 2H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 133.8, 130.8, 129.2, 129.1, 127.2, 126.5, 126.5, 125.8, 125.6, 122.5, 117.8, 21.8.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[6]

Synthesis of cinnamonitrile (5)



Compound **5** was obtained using the General Procedure A using fluoroacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale, in this case only requiring 0.2 mol % (2000 ppm) $Pd(OAc)_2$. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a yellow oil (62.7 mg, 98% yield). R_f = 0.86 (2:3 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.48 – 7.34 (m, 6H), 5.88 (d, *J* = 16.6 Hz, 1H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 150.6, 133.5, 131.2, 129.1, 127.4, 118.2, 96.3.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[7]

Synthesis of 4-bromobenzonitrile (6)



Compound **6** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (85.1 mg, 94% yield). $R_f = 0.59$ (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.63 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.52 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 133.5, 132.7, 128.1, 118.1, 111.4.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[4]

Synthesis of 2-fluoro-4-methoxybenzonitrile (7)



Compound **7** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 50% EtOAc/50% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a yellow solid (72.7 mg, 96% yield). $R_f = 0.52$ (1:1 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.51 (dd, *J* = 8.7, 7.4 Hz, 1H), 6.76 (dd, *J* = 8.8, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 6.70 (dd, *J* = 11.0, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 3.86 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 165.9, 164.8, 164.7, 163.3, 134.2 (d, J = 2.3 Hz), 114.4, 111.3 (d, J = 2.7 Hz), 102.3 (d, J = 22.9 Hz), 93.0 (d, J = 15.6 Hz), 56.0.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[8]

Synthesis of 4-fluorobenzonitrile (8)



Compound **8** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 2.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 15% $Et_2O/85\%$ hexanes) to provide the desired compound as white crystals (198 mg, 66% yield) which sublimate on high vacuum. R_f = 0.34 (1:9 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.71 − 7.62 (m, 2H), 7.21 − 7.12 (m, 2H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 165.1 (d, J = 256.7 Hz), 134.7 (d, J = 9.5 Hz), 118.1, 116.9 (d, J = 22.5 Hz), 108.6 (d, J = 3.4 Hz).

¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃): δ -102.5.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[9]

Synthesis of 2-(trifluoromethyl)benzonitrile (9)



Compound **9** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 2.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 25 $Et_2O/75$ hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a yellow oil (301.2 mg, 71% yield). R_f = 0.34 (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.84 (d, *J* = 7.4 Hz, 1H), 7.82 – 7.73 (m, 2H), 7.70 (td, *J* = 7.4, 1.9 Hz, 1H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 134.7, 133.0, 132.6 (q, J = 32.8 Hz), 132.4, 126.7 (q, J = 4.8 Hz), 126.5 – 118.1 (m), 115.5, 110.0 (q, J = 2.3 Hz).

¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃): δ -62.1.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[10]

Synthesis of 2-chloronicotinonitrile (10)



Compound **10** was obtained using the General Procedure B using fluoroacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 50% $Et_2O/50\%$ pentanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (53.5 mg, 77% yield). R_f = 0.52 (1:1 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.60 (dd, *J* = 4.9, 1.9 Hz, 1H), 8.01 (dd, *J* = 7.7, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.40 (dd, *J* = 7.7, 4.9 Hz, 1H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 152.9, 152.8, 142.6, 122.2, 114.6, 110.9.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[11]

Synthesis of 4-((2,5-dichloropyrimidin-4-yl)oxy)benzonitrile (11)



Compound **11** was obtained using the General Procedure B using fluoroacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale with 10 v/v% DMSO. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (70.3 mg, 53% yield). $R_f = 0.35$ (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.52 (s, 1H), 7.76 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 164.3, 158.9, 157.4, 154.6, 134.1, 122.6, 118.0, 117.1, 110.5.

HRMS (CI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₁₁H₅Cl₂N₃O⁺: 264.9810 [*M*]⁺; found 264.9801.

Synthesis of 4-cyanophenyl 4-methylbenzenesulfonate (12)



Compound **12** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (132.9 mg, 97% yield). $R_f = 0.27$ (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.72 – 7.67 (m, 2H), 7.64 – 7.55 (m, 2H), 7.32 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.14 – 7.08 (m, 2H), 2.44 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 152.6, 146.2, 133.9, 131.8, 130.1, 128.4, 123.4, 117.8, 111.2, 21.8.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[12]

Synthesis of 2-(4-isobutylphenyl)propanenitrile (13)



Compound **13** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 5% EtOAc/95% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a light-yellow oil (72.2 mg, 77% yield). $R_f = 0.36$ (5:95 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.26 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.16 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 3.87 (q, J = 7.3 Hz, 1H), 2.47 (d, J = 7.2 Hz, 2H), 1.86 (m, 1H), 1.63 (d, J = 7.3 Hz, 3H), 0.90 (d, J = 6.6 Hz, 6H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 141.8, 134.5, 130.0, 126.6, 122.0, 45.2, 31.1, 30.4, 22.5, 21.6.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[13]





Compound **14** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (104.3 mg, 99% yield) with >99% ee. $R_f = 0.66$ (1:1 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.81 – 7.67 (m, 3H), 7.39 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 2.1 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (dd, *J* = 8.9, 2.5 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (d, *J* = 2.6 Hz, 1H), 4.02 (q, *J* = 7.2 Hz, 1H), 3.92 (s, 3H), 1.71 (d, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 158.1, 134.0, 132.0, 129.3, 128.8, 127.9, 125.4, 124.9, 121.8, 119.6, 105.6, 55.3, 31.2, 21.4.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[14]

Enantiopure (>99% ee) starting material was used, and the enantiomeric excess of the product was obtained with respect to a racemic standard (Chiralcel OJ-H column, 4.6 x 250 mm, 5-micron, hexane/isopropanol 95:5, 1.0 mL/min flow rate, 230 nm detection).





Signal:	DAD1D,Sig=230,4	Ref=off		
	RT [min]	Area	Area%	
	3.174	57.6642		0.0
	3.982	22.1529		0.0
	7.624	245.2120		0.1
	52.020	89651.9304		49.9
	64.777	89785.6813		49.9
	Sum	179762.6408		

DAD1D,Sig=230,4 Ref=off

Signal:



Time [min]

DAD1D,Sig=2	230,4 Ref=off		
RT [min]	Area	Area%	
3.172	82.8626		0.0
3.983	17.9895		0.0
7.638	233.5197		0.1
51.642	200958.9668		99.3
67.139	1076.1807		0.5
Sum	202369.5194		

Synthesis of 4-chloro-7-methoxyquinoline-6-carbonitrile (15)



Compound **15** was obtained using the General Procedure B using fluoroacetonitrile on a 0.25 mmol scale with 20 v/v % DMSO. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 70% EtOAc/30% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a light-yellow solid (47.6 mg, 87% yield). $R_f = 0.47$ (7:3 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.80 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 8.53 (s, 1H), 7.51 (s, 1H), 7.44 (d, *J* = 4.8 Hz, 1H), 4.07 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 160.1, 153.3, 151.9, 143.3, 132.5, 121.1, 120.8, 115.6, 108.9, 105.7, 56.8.

HRMS (CI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₁₁H₇ClN₂O+H⁺: 219.0320 [*M*+H]⁺: found 219.0325.

Synthesis of 2-((2,6-dinitro-4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl)amino)acetonitrile (16)



Compound **16** was obtained using the General Procedure B using fluoroacetonitrile on a 0.25 mmol scale with 20 v/v % DMSO. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 15% EtOAc/85% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a yellow solid (30.6 mg, 42% yield). $R_f = 0.28$ (15:85 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.86 (t, J = 5.9 Hz, 1H), 8.58 (s, 2H), 4.23 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 2H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 139.8, 138.7, 129.8 (q, *J* = 3.4 Hz), 122.2 (q, *J* = 272.7 Hz), 120.4 (q, *J* = 36.4 Hz), 113.8, 34.2.

¹⁹F NMR (376 MHz, CDCl₃): δ -62.4.

HRMS (EI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₉H₅F₃N₄O₄⁺: 290.0263 [*M*]⁺; found 290.0251.

Synthesis of 4-((5-nitropyridin-2-yl)oxy)benzonitrile (17)



Compound **17** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.5 mmol scale with 10 v/v % DMSO. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20-70% EtOAc/hexanes gradient) to provide the desired compound as an off-white solid (120.0 mg, quant.). $R_f = 0.29$ (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 9.02 (d, *J* = 2.9 Hz, 1H), 8.54 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 7.79 − 7.72 (m, 2H), 7.34 − 7.27 (m, 2H), 7.15 (dd, *J* = 9.0, 0.6 Hz, 1H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 165.6, 156.0, 144.7, 141.0, 135.4, 134.0, 122.6, 118.2, 112.1, 109.7.

HRMS (CI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₁₂H₇N₃O₃⁺: 241.0487 [*M*]⁺: found 241.0497.

Synthesis of 2-(1-(4-chlorobenzoyl)-5-methoxy-2-methyl-1H-indol-3-yl)acetonitrile (18)



Compound **18** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.25 mmol scale with 20 v/v % DMSO. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 40% EtOAc/60% hexanes with 0.5 % AcOH) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (72.8 mg, 86% yield). $R_f = 0.59$ (1:1 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.66 (d, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.48 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 6.98 (s, 1H), 6.83 (d, *J* = 9.1 Hz, 1H), 6.71 (d, *J* = 9.6 Hz, 1H), 3.85 (s, 3H), 3.73 (s, 2H), 2.42 (s, 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 168.2, 156.3, 139.8, 136.0, 133.4, 131.4, 130.7, 129.3, 129.1, 117.1, 115.2, 112.5, 108.1, 100.5, 55.8, 13.2, 13.1.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[14]





Compound **19** was obtained using the General Procedure A using methoxyacetonitrile on a 0.25 mmol scale. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 25% EtOAc/75%

hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (91.4 mg, 99% yield). $R_f = 0.21$ (15:85 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.69 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.44 – 7.29 (m, 5H), 7.23 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 5.15 (m, 3H), 4.60 (td, *J* = 8.9, 4.3 Hz, 1H), 1.81 (m, 2H), 1.70 (m, 1H), 1.01 (d, *J* = 6.2 Hz, 6H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.3, 156.2, 153.9, 136.2, 133.9, 128.8, 128.5, 128.4, 122.8, 118.3, 110.3,
67.5, 53.0, 41.4, 25.1, 23.1, 22.0.

HRMS (ESI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₂₁H₂₂N₂O₄+Na⁺: 389.1472 [*M*+Na]⁺; found 389.1477.

Synthesis of 4-((3-chloroquinoxalin-2-yl)oxy)benzonitrile (20)



Compound **20** was obtained using General Procedure B using fluoroacetonitrile on a 0.25 mmol scale with 20 v/v % DMSO. The crude product was purified by silica gel column chromatography (eluent: 20% EtOAc/80% hexanes) to provide the desired compound as a white solid (20.7 mg, 29% yield). $R_f = 0.45$ (1:4 EtOAc/hexanes).

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.04 – 7.98 (m, 1H), 7.82 – 7.77 (m, 2H), 7.77 – 7.73 (m, 1H), 7.73 – 7.66 (m, 2H), 7.48 – 7.42 (m, 2H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 155.9, 151.8, 139.6, 138.9, 138.7, 133.9, 130.9, 129.0, 128.1, 127.3, 122.6, 118.3, 109.6.

HRMS (CI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₁₅H₈ClN₃O⁺: 281.0356 [*M*]⁺; found 281.0356.

Synthesis of (R)-4'-(1-hydroxyethyl)-[1,1'-biphenyl]-4-carbonitrile (21)



Compound **21** was prepared as outlined in the multi-step, 1-pot procedure outlined in **Section 4.4A.**

¹H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.71 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.67 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 7.58 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.49 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 4.97 (q, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 1H), 2.00 (s, 1H), 1.54 (d, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 3H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 146.4, 145.3, 138.3, 132.6, 127.6, 127.4, 126.2, 118.9, 110.9, 70.0, 25.3.

Spectral data matched those previously reported.^[15]

4-((2,5-dichloropyrimidin-4-yl)oxy)benzamide (22)



Compound 22 was prepared as in Section 4.1.

¹H NMR (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*6): δ 8.83 (d, *J* = 3.3 Hz, 1H), 8.06 (s, 1H), 7.98 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 7.44 (s, 1H), 7.39 (d, *J* = 8.5 Hz, 2H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, DMSO-*d*6): δ 167.0, 164.7, 159.3, 156.2, 153.6, 132.5, 129.4, 121.4, 116.8.

HRMS (ESI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₁₁H₇Cl₂N₃O₂+H⁺: 283.9988 [*M*+H]⁺: found 283.9994.

Synthesis of 4-((5-nitropyridin-2-yl)oxy)benzamide (23)



Compound 23 was prepared as in Section 4.1.

¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 9.02 (d, *J* = 2.9 Hz, 1H), 8.63 (dd, *J* = 9.1, 3.0 Hz, 1H), 8.00 (s, 1H), 7.95 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.39 (s, 1H), 7.33 – 7.26 (m, 3H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 167.6, 166.4, 155.4, 145.1, 141.2, 136.4, 132.2, 129.9, 121.8, 112.5.

HRMS (ESI): m/z calcd for $C_{12}H_9N_3O_4+H^+$: 260.0671 $[M+H]^+$: found 260.0676.

Synthesis of 4-carbamoylphenyl ((benzyloxy)carbonyl)-L-leucinate (24)



Compound 24 was prepared as in Section 4.1.

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.84 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 2H), 7.43 – 7.29 (m, 5H), 7.18 (d, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.02 (s, 1H), 5.88 (s, 1H), 5.22 (d, *J* = 8.7 Hz, 1H), 5.14 (s, 2H), 4.62 (td, *J* = 8.8, 4.6 Hz, 1H), 1.92 – 1.76 (m, 2H), 1.69 (m, 1H), 1.02 (m, 6H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 171.8, 169.0, 156.3, 153.4, 136.3, 131.4, 129.2, 128.8, 128.5, 128.3, 121.8,
67.4, 53.0, 41.5, 25.1, 23.1, 22.0.

HRMS (ESI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₂₁H₂₄N₂O₅+Na⁺: 407.1577 [*M*+Na]⁺; found 407.1583.

Synthesis of 4-((3-chloroquinoxalin-2-yl)oxy)benzamide (25)



Compound **25** was prepared as in **Section 4.1**.

¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 8.09 – 7.97 (m, 4H), 7.83 – 7.67 (m, 3H), 7.49 – 7.39 (m, 3H).

¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆): δ 167.6, 155.2, 152.9, 139.3, 139.2, 139.0, 132.4, 131.5, 129.84, 129.2, 128.1, 127.4, 121.8.

HRMS (ESI): *m*/*z* calcd for C₁₅H₁₀ClN₃O₂+H⁺: 300.0534 [*M*+H]⁺; found 300.0540.

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7. NMR Spectral Data























































































