# Rhodium(II)-Catalyzed C-H Carboxylation of Ferrocenes with CO2

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## **1. General Information**

Unless otherwise noted, commercial available reagents were purchased from commercial suppliers (such as Strem, Alfa Aesar, J&K Chemical Co, Energy Chemical, Bide Pharmatech Ltd. and Adamas) and used as received. Rh<sub>2</sub>(OAc)<sub>4</sub> was purchased from Sinocompound. Sensitive reagents, such as t-BuOK, were stored and weighed in a glove box. CO<sub>2</sub> was provided by Linde Gas (Xiamen) and its purity was ≥99.995%. <sup>13</sup>CO<sub>2</sub> was provided by Dateng Chemistry (Wuhan) Co., Ltd. and its purity was ≥99.9%. Solvents were generally dried over 4Å molecular sieves. The reaction vessels used for C-H functionalization were 25 mL Schlenk sealed tube (Synthware). Purification of products was performed by flash chromatography (FC) using silica gel or preparative thin layer chromatography. <sup>1</sup>H and <sup>13</sup>C NMR spectra were recorded on a Bruker AVANCE III spectrometer (400 MHz and 101 MHz, respectively) or a JEOL ECZ600S spectrometer (600 MHz and 151 MHz, respectively). Chemical shifts are reported parts per million (ppm) referenced to Chloroform-d (8 7.26 ppm), tetramethylsilane (TMS,  $\delta$  0.00 ppm) for <sup>1</sup>H NMR; Chloroform-*d* ( $\delta$  77.16 ppm) for <sup>13</sup>C NMR. The following abbreviations (or combinations thereof) were used to explain multiplicities: s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet, q = quartet, dd = doublet of doublet, ddd = double doublet of doublets, dt = doublet of triplet, td = triplet of doublet and m = multiplet. To distinguish, some <sup>13</sup>C NMR chemical shifts retain two decimal places. High-resolution mass spectra (HRMS) were obtained on an Thermo Scientific LTQ Orbitrap mass spectrometry equipped with an ESI source from keecloud Biotech. The determination of ee value was performed via chiral HPLC analysis using Shimadzu LC-20AD HPLC workstation. X-ray crystallography analysis was performed on Agilent SuperNova X-ray diffractionmeter.

## 2. Experimental Section

#### **2.1 Preparation and characterization of substrates.**

#### 2.1.1 Preparation of ferrocene iodide.

An oven-dried three-necked flask was charged with ferrocene (9.67 g, 52 mmol), *t*-BuOK (0.67 g, 5.98 mmol) and anhydrous THF (300 mL) under N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. The solution was cooled to -78 °C and *t*-BuLi (100 mL, 1.3 M in pentane, 2.5 equiv) was

added dropwise while stirring (be careful!). After 0.5 h at -78 °C, an orange precipitate was formed. Stirring was continued for another 1.5 h and then solid iodine (33.5 g, 132 mmol) was added to the suspension. After kept at -78 °C for 15 min, the mixture was allowed to slowly warm to room temperature and stirred for 5 h. The reaction was quenched with 200 mL of saturated Na<sub>2</sub>S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> solution, and extracted with EtOAc (100 mL × 3). The combined organic extracts were concentrated using a rotary evaporator. The residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 100/1) to give ferrocene iodide as a red solid (10.39 g, 64%).<sup>[S1]</sup>

#### 2.1.2 Preparation of substrates.<sup>[S2, S3]</sup>



Rout 1 (for 1c, 1e-1n, 1q)

Step a: To an oven-dried Schlenk flask equipped with a magnetic stir bar was added NaH (1.73 g, 26 mmol, 60% in mineral oil) and anhydrous DMF (40 mL). After cooled to 0 °C under an ice-bath, phenols (20 mmol) and bromomethyl methyl ether (2.06 mL, 24 mmol) were added successively. Then the ice bath was removed and the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 2 h. Afterwards, the reaction was carefully quenched with ice-water (100 mL) at 0 °C. The mixture was extracted with EtOAc (30 mL × 3). The combined organic phase was dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and concentrated using a rotary evaporator. The residue was purified by silica gel column chromatography (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 10/1) to give MOM-protected phenols (100% yield).

Step b: To a solution of MOM-protected phenols (20 mmol) in anhydrous THF (70 mL) was added *n*-BuLi (2.5 M in hexane, 9.6 mL, 24 mmol) at 0 °C under N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 2 h. After re-cooled to 0 °C, B(OEt)<sub>3</sub> (4.76 mL, 28 mmol) was added and the solution was stirred at room temperature for another 1 h. Afterwards, the mixture was quenched with 2 N HCl and stirred at room temperature for 24 h. The solution was extracted with EtOAc (30 mL × 3). The combined organic extracts were washed with brine, dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, and concentrated. The residue was purified through flash silica-gel chromatography to obtain corresponding boronic acid (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 2/1 to 1/2).

Step c: To an oven-dried Schlenk tube (120 mL) was added corresponding boronic acid (4.5 mmol), iodoferrocene (936 mg, 3 mmol), K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> (1.24 g, 9 mmol),

 $Pd(PPh_3)_2Cl_2$  (42 mg, 0.06 mmol), DME (25 mL) and  $H_2O$  (5 mL). The solution was degassed and heated at 100 °C overnight under N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. Afterwards, the reaction was cooled to room temperature and diluted with  $H_2O$  (50 mL). The mixture was extracted with EtOAc (40 mL × 3). The combined organic extracts were washed with brine, dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, and concentrated. The residue was purified through flash silica-gel chromatography to obtain MOM-protected substrates (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 100/1 to 50/1).

Step d: The MOM-protected substrate was dissolved in EtOH (7.5 mL) and THF (7.5 mL) in a Schlenk tube. Then conc. HCl (2.0 mL) was added to the solution. The mixture was heated at 60 °C for 2 h. After cooled to room temperature, saturated aqueous NaHCO<sub>3</sub> (10 mL) was added and the system was extracted with EtOAc (30 mL  $\times$  3). The combined organic extracts were washed with brine, dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, and concentrated. The residue was purified through flash silicagel chromatography to obtain the final substrates (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 80/1 to 10/1).

Rout 2 (for 1a, 1p, 1r)



Step e: To a solution of corresponding *o*-bromophenol (15 mmol) in anhydrous THF (45 mL) was added *n*-BuLi (12 mL, 2.5 M in hexane, 30 mmol) at -78 °C under N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at -78 °C for 3 h, followed by addition of B(OEt)<sub>3</sub> (4.08 mL, 24 mmol). Then the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 15 h. After re-cooled to 0 °C, the reaction was quenched with 2 N HCl (50 mL) and then stirred at room temperature for another 2 h. Afterwards, the solution was extracted with EtOAc (30 mL × 3). The combined organic extracts were washed with brine, dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, and concentrated. The residue was purified through flash silica-gel chromatography to obtain corresponding boronic acid (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 2/1 to 1/2).

Step f: Similar procedure as Step c.

Rout 3 (for 1b, 1d, 1o)



Step g: Similar procedure as Step a.

Step h: To a solution of MOM-protected *o*-bromophenols (15 mmol) in anhydrous THF (50 mL) was added *n*-BuLi (7.2 mL, 2.5 M in hexane, 18 mmol) at -78 °C under N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at -78 °C for 2 h, and then B(OEt)<sub>3</sub> (4.08 mL, 24 mmol) was added. The solution was allowed to slowly warm to room temperature and stirring was continued for another 1 h. Then the reaction was re-cooled to 0 °C and quenched with 2 N HCl (30 mL). After stirring at room temperature for 2 h, the solution was extracted with EtOAc (30 mL × 3). The combined organic extracts were washed with brine, dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, and concentrated. The residue was purified through flash silica-gel chromatography (petroleum ether/EtOAc = 2/1) to obtain corresponding boronic acid.



1a: 2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1a** was prepared from route 2 [Note: (2-hydroxyphenyl)boronic acid was purchased from commercial supplier], dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.25 – 7.18 (m, 3H), 6.98 (d, J = 8.58 Hz, 1H), 6.87 (t, J = 7.46 Hz, 1H), 4.54 (t, 2H), 4.43 (t, 2H), 4.26 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 153.5, 129.5, 128.5, 123.0, 120.3, 115.8, 82.2, 69.6, 69.3, 67.5. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>14</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 278.0389, found 278.0389.



**1b**: 3-methyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1b** was prepared from route 3, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  8.33 (s, 1H), 7.13 (t, *J* = 7.81 Hz, 1H), 6.87 (d, *J* = 8.08 Hz, 1H), 6.75 (d, *J* = 7.49 Hz, 1H), 4.48 (t, *J* = 1.86 Hz, 2H), 4.40 (t, *J* = 1.83 Hz, 2H), 4.32 (s, 5H), 2.21 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  154.1, 138.1, 128.0, 122.3, 120.6, 113.1, 80.2, 69.9, 69.4, 69.0, 21.7. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>16</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 292.0545, found 292.0546.



1c: 3-methoxy-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1c** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.98 (s, 1H), 7.14 (t, J = 8.23 Hz, 1H), 6.65 (d, J = 8.31 Hz, 1H), 6.47 (d, J = 8.42 Hz, 1H), 4.67 (s, 2H), 4.52 (s, 2H), 4.34 (s, 5H), 3.76 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 157.9, 155.0, 128.4, 110.8, 108.7, 102.8, 70.2, 69.7, 69.3, 55.8. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>16</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 308.0494, found 308.0491.



1d: 3-fluoro-2-ferrocenylphenol.

1d was prepared from route 3, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.76 (s, 1H), 7.20 – 7.10 (m, 1H), 6.81 (d, J = 8.22 Hz, 1H), 6.66 (t, 1H), 4.59 (t, J = 1.97 Hz, 2H), 4.48 (t, J = 1.89 Hz, 2H), 4.29 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 160.6 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 246.5$  Hz), 155.1 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 5.5$  Hz), 128.3 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 10.7$  Hz), 111.5 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 3.0$  Hz), 111.3 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 16.3$  Hz), 107.4 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 23.1$  Hz), 74.5, 69.6, 69.4, 69.1 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 3.9$  Hz). <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ -114.4. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>13</sub>FFeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 296.0294, found 296.0296.



**1e**: 4-methyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1e** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.01 (d, *J* = 8.09 Hz, 3H), 6.87 (d, *J* = 7.90 Hz, 1H), 4.55 (s, 2H), 4.44 (s, 2H), 4.27 (s, 5H), 2.28 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  151.3, 129.9, 129.4, 129.1, 122.6, 115.6, 82.7, 69.7, 69.4, 67.6, 20.6. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>16</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 292.0545, found 292.0552.



**1f**: 4-ethyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1f** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.11 – 7.01 (m, 3H), 6.90 (dt, *J* = 8.67, 1.20 Hz, 1H), 4.53 (t, *J* = 1.86 Hz, 2H), 4.42 (t, 2H), 4.26 (s, 5H), 2.58 (q, *J* = 7.60 Hz, 2H), 1.22 (t, *J* = 7.60 Hz, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz,

Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  151.5, 135.9, 128.9, 127.9, 122.5, 115.6, 82.6, 69.5, 69.3, 67.5, 28.1, 16.0. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 306.0702, found 306.0700.



**1g**: 4-(2-methoxyethyl)-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1g** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.08 (t, J = 6.16 Hz, 3H), 6.90 (d, J = 8.80 Hz, 1H), 4.52 (t, J = 1.79 Hz, 2H), 4.41 (t, J = 1.78 Hz, 2H), 4.25 (s, 5H), 3.58 (t, J = 7.16 Hz, 2H), 3.36 (s, 3H), 2.81 (t, J = 7.15 Hz, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 152.0, 130.5, 129.9, 128.8, 122.8, 115.7, 82.4, 74.0, 69.6, 69.3, 67.5, 58.8, 35.4. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>21</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 337.0880, found 337.0874.



1h: 4-*tert*-butyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1h** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.26 – 7.18 (m, 2H), 7.06 (s, 1H), 6.90 (d, *J* = 8.31 Hz, 1H), 4.52 (t, *J* = 1.83 Hz, 2H), 4.41 (t, *J* = 1.82 Hz, 2H), 4.26 (s, 5H), 1.30 (s, 9H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  151.2, 142.9, 126.6, 125.5, 122.0, 115.2, 83.1, 69.5, 69.3, 67.6, 34.2, 31.7. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>22</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 334.1015, found 334.1014.



1i: 4-phenyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1i** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.54 (d, *J* = 7.23 Hz, 2H), 7.47 – 7.37 (m, 4H), 7.32 – 7.21 (m, 2H), 7.03 (d, *J* = 9.02 Hz, 1H), 4.57 (t, *J* = 1.78 Hz, 2H), 4.44 (t, *J* = 1.79 Hz, 2H), 4.27 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  153.1, 140.9, 133.5, 128.8, 128.2, 127.2, 126.84, 126.77, 123.3, 116.2, 82.3, 69.8, 69.4, 67.6. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 354.0702, found 354.0702.



**1j**: 4-methoxy-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1j** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 6.90 (d, J = 8.38 Hz, 1H), 6.82 – 6.74 (m, 3H), 4.56 (t, 2H), 4.42 (t, J = 1.82 Hz, 2H), 4.25 (s, 5H), 3.77 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 153.2, 147.6, 123.7, 116.4, 114.7, 113.7, 82.4, 69.6, 69.3, 67.6, 55.9. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>16</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 308.0494, found 308.0491.

1k: 4-fluoro-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1k** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.06 – 6.73 (m, 4H), 4.55 (s, 2H), 4.45 (s, 2H), 4.26 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 156.8 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 237.4$  Hz), 149.5 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 2.0$  Hz), 124.4 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 8.0$  Hz), 116.6 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 8.3$  Hz), 115.5 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 23.6$  Hz), 114.6 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 23.1$  Hz), 81.6, 70.0, 69.5, 67.6. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ -124.7. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>13</sub>FFeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 296.0294, found 296.0299.



**11**: 5-methyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**11** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.15 (s, 1H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 7.76 Hz, 1H), 6.82 (s, 1H), 6.70 (d, *J* = 7.80 Hz, 1H), 4.51 (t, *J* = 1.87 Hz, 2H), 4.41 (t, *J* = 1.83 Hz, 2H), 4.25 (s, 5H), 2.34 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  153.3, 138.7, 129.3, 121.2, 119.8, 116.4, 82.4, 69.4, 69.2, 67.4, 21.4. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>16</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 292.0545, found 292.0552.

1m: 5-trifluoromethyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1m** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.39 (s, 1H), 7.31 (d, *J* = 7.95 Hz, 1H), 7.21 (s, 1H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 7.83 Hz, 1H), 4.56 (t, 2H), 4.48 (t, 2H), 4.27 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  153.6, 130.4 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 32.61 Hz), 129.7, 127.3, 124.2 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 271.92 Hz), 117.0 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 3.93 Hz), 112.9 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 3.93 Hz), 80.6, 70.2, 69.5, 67.6. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  -62.6. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>13</sub>F<sub>3</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 346.0262, found 346.0262.



**1n**: 5-phenyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1n** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.59 (d, *J* = 7.19 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (t, *J* = 7.52 Hz, 2H), 7.31 (t, *J* = 7.35 Hz, 1H), 7.22 (t, *J* = 8.46 Hz, 2H), 7.08 (d, *J* = 7.62 Hz, 1H), 4.53 (t, 2H), 4.40 (t, 2H), 4.24 (s, 5H).<sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  153.8, 141.6, 140.7, 129.8, 128.9, 127.5, 127.0, 122.2, 119.1, 114.4, 81.9, 69.7, 69.3, 67.5. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>22</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 354.0702, found 354.0704.

**10**: 5-methoxy-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**10** was prepared from route 3, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.29 (s, 1H), 7.11 (d, *J* = 8.45 Hz, 1H), 6.57 (d, *J* = 2.54 Hz, 1H), 6.45 (dd, *J* = 8.46, 2.56 Hz, 1H), 4.47 (t, 2H), 4.39 (t, 2H), 4.25 (s, 5H), 3.81 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  160.3, 154.5, 130.0, 115.2, 106.5, 101.4, 82.5, 69.3, 69.2, 67.2, 55.5. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>16</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 308.0494, found 308.0490.



1p: 5-fluoro-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1p** was prepared from route 2, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.44 (s, 1H), 7.14 (dd, J = 8.50, 6.51 Hz, 1H), 6.71 (dd, J = 10.14, 2.59 Hz, 1H), 6.63 – 6.51 (m, 1H), 4.49 (t, J = 1.82 Hz, 2H), 4.43 (t, J = 1.83 Hz, 2H), 4.26 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 163.1 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 244.8$  Hz), 154.6 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 12.3$  Hz), 130.2 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 9.8$  Hz), 118.9 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 3.2$  Hz), 107.3 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 21.6$  Hz), 103.3 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 24.8$  Hz), 81.7, 69.7, 69.3, 67.4. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ - 113.7. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>13</sub>FFeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 296.0294, found 296.0299.

1q: 4,5-dimethyl-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1q** was prepared from route 1, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 6.97 (s, 2H), 6.79 (s, 1H), 4.51 (t, J = 1.80 Hz, 2H), 4.40 (t, J = 1.85 Hz, 2H), 4.25 (s, 5H), 2.24 (s, 3H), 2.19 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 151.4, 137.1, 130.4, 128.2, 119.8, 117.0, 82.6, 69.4, 69.2, 67.4, 19.8, 18.9. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>18</sub>FeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 306.0702, found 306.0701.



#### 1r: 6-fluoro-2-ferrocenylphenol.

**1r** was prepared from route 2, dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 7.10 – 6.97 (m, 2H), 6.82 – 6.75 (m, 1H), 6.74 (d, J = 2.43 Hz, 1H), 4.63 (t, J = 1.88 Hz, 2H), 4.41 (t, J = 1.90 Hz, 2H), 4.22 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ 151.6 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 240.3$  Hz), 141.5 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 12.9$  Hz), 126.3 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 2.4$  Hz), 124.4 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 3.1$  Hz), 119.8 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 7.7$  Hz), 114.2 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 18.4$  Hz), 81.1 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 3.2$  Hz), 69.6, 69.4, 67.9. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*) δ -138.8. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>13</sub>FFeO<sup>+</sup> (M<sup>+</sup>) 296.0294, found 296.0285.

#### 2.1.3 Preparation of Rh<sub>2</sub>(OAc)<sub>4</sub>(IPr).



Complex Rh<sub>2</sub>(OAc)<sub>4</sub>(IPr) was prepared according to literature procedure.<sup>[S4]</sup> To a solution of Rh<sub>2</sub>(OAc)<sub>4</sub> (300 mg, 0.68 mmol) and IPr·HCl (540 mg, 1.38 mmol) in anhydrous THF (10 mL) was added *t*-BuOK (157 mg, 1.4 mmol) under N<sub>2</sub> atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 5 h. Color change from blue to red was observed during the course. Upon the removal of THF, the residual was purified *via* column chromatography using petroleum ether/EtOAc = 2/1 to afford analytical pure purple crystals (350 mg) in 60% yield.

#### 2.2 More condition screenings for optimization.



**General procedure**: In a glove box, to an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk sealed tube (with a Teflon cap) equipped with a magnetic stir bar was added Rh precursor (5 mol%), ligand (10 mol%) and *t*-BuOK (4.5 eq, note: base should be dry). After taken out of the glove box, **1a** (27.8 mg, 0.1 mmol) dissolved in anhydrous mesitylene (1 mL) was added, then the tube was evacuated under vacuum and charged with  $CO_2$  (1

atm,  $\times$  3). Afterwards, the tube was capped and then placed into a preheated hotplate (100-150 °C). The reaction was stirred vigorously (Note: good stirring is important!) for 1-24 h and cooled to room temperature. Mesitylene was removed by vacuum pump evaporation under reduced pressure, then the reaction was diluted with EtOAc (20 mL) and filtered through a short pad of Celite. The tube and Celite pad were washed with an additional 10 mL of EtOAc. The filtrate was concentrated in *vacuo*, and crude <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum was made by using CH<sub>2</sub>Br<sub>2</sub> as internal standard.

Enders	Dh Cat	Lineral Colours		Temp	Time	2a
Entry	Kn Cat.	Ligand	Solvent	(°C)	(h)	(%)
1	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IMes·HC1	DMF	150	24	0
2	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IMes·HC1	diglyme	150	24	0
3	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IMes·HC1	DMA	150	24	0
4	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IPr·HC1	diglyme	150	24	0
5	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	SPhos	diglyme	150	24	0
6	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	PCy <sub>3</sub>	diglyme	150	24	0
7	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IPr·HC1	DMF	150	24	0
8	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	SPhos	DMF	100	24	0
9	[RhCl(cod)] <sub>2</sub>	PPh <sub>3</sub>	DMF	150	24	0
10	[RhCl(cod)] <sub>2</sub>	PPh <sub>3</sub>	diglyme	150	24	0
11	[RhCl(cod)] <sub>2</sub>	PPh <sub>3</sub>	DMA	150	24	0
12	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IPr·HC1	mesitylene	150	2	64
13	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IPr·HC1	mesitylene	130	1	30
14	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IPr·HC1	mesitylene	120	1	0
15	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IPr·HC1	mesitylene	100	1	0
16 <sup>b</sup>	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub>	IPr·HC1	mesitylene	150	1	18
17	-	IPr·HC1	mesitylene	150	1	0
18	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	mesitylene	120	1	13
19	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	<i>tert-</i> butylbenzene	150	1	59
20	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	<i>p</i> -xylene	150	1	49
21	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	toluene	150	1	13
22	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	chlorobenzene	150	1	13
23	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	diglyme	150	1	26
24	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	MeCN	150	1	3
25 <sup>c</sup>	Rh <sub>2</sub> (OAc) <sub>4</sub> (IPr)	-	mesitylene	150	1	65

**Table S1**: Screening of reaction conditions<sup>*a*</sup>

<sup>*a*</sup>Reaction conditions: **1a** (0.1 mmol), CO<sub>2</sub> (1 atm, closed), Rh<sub>2</sub>(OAc)<sub>4</sub> (5 mol%), ligand (10 mol%), *t*-BuOK (4.5 equiv), solvent (1 mL), 100-150 °C. Yield was determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR with CH<sub>2</sub>Br<sub>2</sub> as internal standard. <sup>*b*</sup>*t*-BuOK (2.0 equiv). <sup>*c*</sup>1 mol% Rh<sub>2</sub>(OAc)<sub>4</sub>(IPr) was used.

#### 2.3 General procedure and characterization of products.



**General procedure**: In a glove box, to an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk sealed tube (with a Teflon cap) equipped with a magnetic stir bar was added  $Rh_2(OAc)_4(IPr)$  (8.3 mg, 0.01 mol) and *t*-BuOK (101 mg, 0.9 mmol) (Note: *t*-BuOK should be dry). After taken out of the glove box, substrate 1 (0.2 mmol) dissolved in anhydrous mesitylene (2 mL) was added and the tube was evacuated under vacuum and charged with CO<sub>2</sub> (1 atm, × 3). Afterwards, the tube was capped and then placed into a preheated hotplate (150 °C). The reaction was stirred vigorously (Note: good stirring is important!) for 1 h and cooled to room temperature. Mesitylene was removed by vacuum pump evaporation under reduced pressure, then the reaction was diluted with EtOAc (20 mL) and filtered through a short pad of Celite. The tube and Celite pad were washed with an additional 10 mL of EtOAc. The filtrate was concentrated in vacuo, and purified by preparative thin layer chromatography using petroleum ether/EtOAc (10/1 to 5/1) as the eluent to afford the desired products.



**2a**: 6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 47.4 mg; yield: 78%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.61 (dd, *J* = 7.66, 1.60 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (td, *J* = 8.24, 7.23, 1.60 Hz, 1H), 7.28 – 7.25 (m, 1H), 7.20 (td, *J* = 7.65, 7.24, 1.29 Hz, 1H), 5.19 (dd, *J* = 2.60, 1.17 Hz, 1H), 5.16 (dd, *J* = 2.57, 1.17 Hz, 1H), 4.65 (t, *J* = 2.58 Hz, 1H), 4.07 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.6, 151.4, 128.1, 124.5, 123.2, 121.6, 117.4, 83.5, 73.1, 71.4, 68.4, 65.3, 64.6. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>13</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 305.0260, found 305.0254.



**2b**: 3-methyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 34 mg; yield: 54%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.19 (t, J = 7.36 Hz, 1H), 7.14 (d, 1H), 7.03 (d, J = 7.28 Hz, 1H), 5.24 (ddd, J = 17.60, 2.72, 1.18 Hz, 2H), 4.65 (t, J = 2.71 Hz, 1H), 4.07 (s, 5H), 2.66 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.8, 151.8, 134.8, 127.3, 126.7, 120.6, 115.6, 82.9, 73.4,

71.1, 69.6, 68.5, 64.9, 22.5. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for  $C_{18}H_{15}FeO_2^+$  (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 319.0416, found 319.0412.



**2c**: 3-methoxy-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 46 mg; yield: 70%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.25 (t, J = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 6.91 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 1H), 6.75 (d, J = 8.4 Hz, 1H), 5.51 (dd, J = 2.6, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 5.14 (dd, J = 2.7, 1.3 Hz, 1H), 4.61 (t, J = 2.6 Hz, 1H), 4.05 (s, 5H), 4.01 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  168.0, 156.5, 152.2, 127.7, 111.2, 110.0, 106.1, 81.4, 73.2, 71.0, 70.5, 67.7, 63.7, 56.1. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>15</sub>FeO<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 335.0365, found 335.0366.



**2d**: 3-fluoro-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 37 mg; yield: 58%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.32 – 7.22 (m, 1H), 7.09 (d, *J* = 8.39 Hz, 1H), 6.97 (t, *J* = 9.03 Hz, 1H), 5.37 (dd, *J* = 5.92, 1.25 Hz, 1H), 5.20 (dd, *J* = 2.65, 1.26 Hz, 1H), 4.69 (t, *J* = 2.64 Hz, 1H), 4.11 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.1, 158.8 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 249.1 Hz), 152.1 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 7.3 Hz), 127.7 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 9.7 Hz), 113.1 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 3.3 Hz), 111.5 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 20.2 Hz), 111.0 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 20.5 Hz), 78.7, 73.7 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 1.8 Hz), 71.3, 69.4 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 8.0 Hz), 68.4, 63.9. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  -116.8. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>12</sub>FFeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 323.0165, found 323.0166.



**2e**: 4-methyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 41 mg; yield: 64%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.37 (s, 1H), 7.14 (d, *J* = 8.35 Hz, 1H), 7.09 (dd, *J* = 8.33, 2.07 Hz, 1H), 5.16 (dd, *J* = 2.64, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 5.11 (dd, *J* = 2.57, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 4.62 (t, *J* = 2.58 Hz, 1H), 4.05 (s, 5H), 2.40 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.7, 149.4, 134.0, 128.8, 123.2, 121.1, 117.0, 83.6, 73.0, 71.3, 68.3, 65.1, 64.5, 21.0. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>15</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 319.0416, found 319.0417.



**2f**: 4-ethyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 46.2 mg; yield: 70%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.39 (s, 1H), 7.21 – 7.08 (m, 2H), 5.15 (d, J = 17.26 Hz, 2H), 4.63 (t, 1H), 4.05 (s, 5H), 2.70 (q, J = 7.89 Hz, 2H), 1.28 (t, J = 7.54 Hz, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.8, 149.5, 140.5, 127.7, 122.1, 121.2, 117.1, 83.7, 73.0, 71.3, 68.3, 65.2, 64.5, 28.4, 15.9. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>17</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 333.0573, found 333.0577.



**2g**: 4-(2-methoxyethyl)-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 55 mg; yield: 75%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.42 (s, 1H), 7.17 (t, *J* = 1.46 Hz, 2H), 5.16 (dd, *J* = 2.63, 1.17 Hz, 1H), 5.13 (dd, *J* = 2.63, 1.17 Hz, 1H), 4.63 (t, *J* = 2.61 Hz, 1H), 4.05 (s, 5H), 3.63 (t, *J* = 6.85 Hz, 2H), 3.36 (s, 3H), 2.92 (t, *J* = 6.88 Hz, 2H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.6, 149.9, 135.3, 128.5, 123.3, 121.3, 117.2, 83.5, 73.6, 73.0, 71.3, 68.3, 65.2, 64.5, 58.9, 35.8. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>20</sub>H<sub>19</sub>FeO<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 363.0678, found 363.0664.



**2h**: 4-*tert*-butyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 42 mg; yield: 58%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.55 (s, 1H), 7.34 (d, *J* = 8.70 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (d, *J* = 8.57 Hz, 1H), 5.16 (s, 2H), 4.64 (t, *J* = 2.78 Hz, 1H), 4.06 (s, 5H), 1.38 (s, 9H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.9, 149.3, 147.5, 125.4, 120.7, 119.5, 116.8, 84.0, 72.9, 71.3, 68.3, 65.1, 64.5, 34.6, 31.6. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>21</sub>H<sub>21</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 361.0886, found 361.0886.



**2i**: 4-phenyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 63 mg; yield: 84%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.78 (d, J = 2.15 Hz, 1H), 7.64 (dd, J = 8.09, 1.03 Hz, 2H), 7.54 (dd, J = 8.47, 2.23 Hz, 1H), 7.49 (t, J = 7.74 Hz, 2H), 7.41 – 7.38 (m, 1H), 7.33 (d, J = 8.46 Hz, 1H), 5.20 (t, J = 2.52 Hz, 2H), 4.68 (t, J = 2.56 Hz, 1H), 4.09 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz,

Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.5, 150.8, 140.2, 137.6, 129.0, 127.6, 127.2, 126.9, 121.9, 121.5, 117.7, 83.3, 73.2, 71.4, 68.5, 65.3, 64.5. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>17</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 381.0573, found 381.0572.

**2j**: 4-methoxy-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 48 mg; yield: 72%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.18 (d, *J* = 8.95 Hz, 1H), 7.05 (d, *J* = 2.98 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (dd, *J* = 8.95, 2.95 Hz, 1H), 5.16 (dd, *J* = 2.64, 1.14 Hz, 1H), 5.10 (dd, *J* = 2.62, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 4.63 (t, *J* = 2.61 Hz, 1H), 4.05 (s, 5H), 3.86 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.6, 156.2, 145.5, 122.4, 118.1, 113.7, 107.4, 83.3, 73.0, 71.4, 68.5, 65.3, 64.7, 55.9. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>15</sub>FeO<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 335.0365, found 335.0364.



**2k**: 4-fluoro-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 44 mg; yield: 69%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.27 (dd, J = 8.38, 2.90 Hz, 1H), 7.23 (dd, J = 8.98, 4.61 Hz, 1H), 7.06 – 6.98 (m, 1H), 5.21 (dd, J = 2.66, 1.17 Hz, 1H), 5.12 (dd, J = 2.62, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 4.69 (t, J = 2.60 Hz, 1H), 4.09 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.1, 159.2 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 243.0$  Hz), 147.3 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 1.7$  Hz), 123.2 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 8.9$  Hz), 118.7 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 8.8$  Hz), 114.8 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 23.9$  Hz), 109.2 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 24.6$  Hz), 82.4, 73.4, 71.5, 68.8, 65.6, 64.4. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  -118.0. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>12</sub>FFeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 323.0165, found 323.0164.



**2l**: 5-methyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 43 mg; yield: 68%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.47 (d, *J* = 7.75 Hz, 1H), 7.06 (s, 1H), 7.00 (d, *J* = 6.89 Hz, 1H), 5.15 (dd, *J* = 2.61, 1.15 Hz, 1H), 5.11 (dd, *J* = 2.57, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 4.61 (t, *J* = 2.59 Hz, 1H), 4.04 (s, 5H), 2.38 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.8, 151.3, 138.5, 125.4, 122.9, 118.4, 117.7, 83.9, 72.8, 71.3, 68.1, 65.0, 64.2, 21.5. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>15</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 319.0416, found 319.0414.



**2m**: 5-trifluoromethyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 62 mg; yield: 84%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (600 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.68 (d, *J* = 7.98 Hz, 1H), 7.48 (s, 1H), 7.43 (d, *J* = 7.07 Hz, 1H), 5.23 (dd, *J* = 2.67, 1.15 Hz, 1H), 5.19 (dd, *J* = 2.65, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 4.73 (t, *J* = 2.63 Hz, 1H), 4.09 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (151 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  166.5, 150.9, 129.8 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 33.2 Hz), 125.8, 123.7 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 272.7 Hz), 123.6, 121.1 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 3.8 Hz), 114.6 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 4.0 Hz), 81.4, 73.8, 71.6, 69.2, 66.1, 64.7. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (565 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  -62.3. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>12</sub>F<sub>3</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 373.0133, found 373.0132.

**2n**: 5-phenyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 61 mg; yield: 80%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.68 – 7.57 (m, 3H), 7.51 – 7.41 (m, 4H), 7.39 (t, *J* = 7.29 Hz, 1H), 5.20 (dd, *J* = 2.63, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 5.16 (dd, *J* = 2.55, 1.19 Hz, 1H), 4.66 (t, *J* = 2.60 Hz, 1H), 4.09 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.6, 151.7, 141.1, 139.8, 129.1, 127.9, 127.0, 123.5, 123.1, 120.5, 115.6, 83.2, 73.2, 71.4, 68.5, 65.3, 64.4. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>23</sub>H<sub>17</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 381.0573, found 381.0561.



**20**: 5-methoxy-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 47 mg; yield: 70%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.48 (d, *J* = 8.45 Hz, 1H), 6.83 – 6.75 (m, 2H), 5.12 (dd, *J* = 2.66, 1.11 Hz, 1H), 5.07 (dd, *J* = 2.54, 1.15 Hz, 1H), 4.59 (t, *J* = 2.62 Hz, 1H), 4.04 (s, 5H), 3.84 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.8, 159.8, 152.4, 123.8, 113.7, 111.5, 102.4, 84.5, 72.6, 71.2, 67.8, 64.6, 63.4, 55.7. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>15</sub>FeO<sub>3</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 335.0365, found 335.0364.



**2p**: 5-fluoro-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 42 mg; yield: 65%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.55 (dd, J = 8.57, 6.02 Hz, 1H), 7.03 – 6.86 (m, 2H), 5.14 (ddd, J = 19.72, 2.62, 1.19 Hz,

2H), 4.65 (t, J = 2.63 Hz, 1H), 4.06 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.1, 162.0 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 247.5$  Hz), 152.0 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 12.1$  Hz), 124.1 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 9.5$  Hz), 117.7 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 3.2$  Hz), 111.9 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 22.3$  Hz), 105.2 (d,  $J_{C-F} = 25.6$  Hz), 83.1, 73.1, 71.4, 68.3, 65.2, 63.6. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  -111.8. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>12</sub>FFeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 323.0165, found 323.0165.



**2q**: 4,5-dimethyl-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 47 mg; yield: 70%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.32 (s, 1H), 7.03 (s, 1H), 5.14 (dd, J = 2.61, 1.16 Hz, 1H), 5.09 (dd, J = 2.56, 1.13 Hz, 1H), 4.60 (t, J = 2.58 Hz, 1H), 4.05 (s, 5H), 2.30 (s, 3H), 2.28 (s, 3H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  168.0, 149.6, 137.1, 132.8, 123.7, 118.4, 118.1, 84.1, 72.7, 71.3, 68.1, 64.8, 64.4, 20.1, 19.5. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>17</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 333.0573, found 333.0573.



**2r**: 6-fluoro-6*H*-benzo[*b*]ferroceno[*d*]pyran-6-one.

Quality: 29 mg; yield: 44%; dark red oil. <sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.35 (d, *J* = 6.75 Hz, 1H), 7.19 – 7.00 (m, 2H), 5.18 (d, *J* = 21.53 Hz, 2H), 4.69 (t, *J* = 2.70 Hz, 1H), 4.09 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  166.1, 150.3 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 250.4 Hz), 139.4 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 11.1 Hz), 124.4 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 7.3 Hz), 123.9 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 41.2 Hz), 118.2 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 3.8 Hz), 114.9 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> = 18.0 Hz), 82.6, 73.4, 71.5, 68.9, 65.9, 64.2. <sup>19</sup>F NMR (376 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  -131.6. HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>12</sub>FFeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H<sup>+</sup>) 323.0165, found 323.0166.

#### **2.4.** Asymmetric C-H carboxylation with CO<sub>2</sub>.

#### 2.4.1 General procedure and details of HPLC analysis for opt-2a.



**General procedure**: In a glove box, to an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk sealed tube (with a Teflon cap) equipped with a magnetic stir bar was added Rh precursor (0.005 mol), chiral NHC ligand (0.01 mol) and *t*-BuOK (4.5 equiv) (Note: base should be dry). After taken out of the glove box, **1a** (27.8 mg, 0.1 mmol) dissolved in anhydrous

mesitylene (1 mL) was added, then the tube was evacuated under vacuum and charged with CO<sub>2</sub> (1 atm,  $\times$  3). Afterwards, the tube was capped and then placed into a preheated hotplate (150 °C). The reaction was stirred vigorously (Note: good stirring is important!) for 1 h and cooled to room temperature. Remove mesitylene by vacuum pump evaporation under reduced pressure and then the reaction was diluted with EtOAc (20 mL) and filtered through a short pad of Celite. The tube and Celite pad were washed with an additional 10 mL of EtOAc. The combined organic filtrate was concentrated in vacuo. For the residue, yield was determined through crude <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum by using CH<sub>2</sub>Br<sub>2</sub> as internal standard; the ee value was determined through HPLC analysis after purification.

Analytical method for HPLC: Chiralcel AD-H column, (hexane/isopropanol = 90/10, flow = 1.0 mL/min, 254 nm) with tr<sub>1</sub> = 5.43 min, tr<sub>2</sub> = 7.97 min. Chromatogram for the optimal reaction condition was listed below.



#### 2.4.2 More condition screenings.

2	Г,е H ОН + 1а	CO <sub>2</sub> (1 atm, closed)	Rh precu ch <i>t</i> -BuOK mesitylen	ursor (5 mol%) i <mark>ral NHC</mark> (4.5 equiv) e, 150 °C, 1 h	Fie o opt-2a	
	Tab	le S2: Screenir	ng of rea	action conditi	ons <sup>a</sup>	
Entry	Rh Cat.	Ligand		Temp (°C)	yield (%)	Ee (%)
1	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (10 1	nol%)	140	10	38
2	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (10 1	nol%)	130	5	44
3	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (10 1	nol%)	120	-	-
$4^b$	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (10 1	nol%)	150	-	-
5 <sup>c</sup>	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (10 1	nol%)	150	-	-
$6^d$	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (10 1	nol%)	150	58	48
$7^e$	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (10 1	nol%)	150	49	46
8	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (15 1	nol%)	150	29	39
9	Rh <sub>2</sub> (TFA) <sub>4</sub>	( <i>S</i> , <i>S</i> )- <b>L3</b> (20 1	nol%)	150	31	40

<sup>*a*</sup>Reaction conditions: **1a** (0.1 mmol), CO<sub>2</sub> (1 atm, closed), Rh precursor (5 mol%), chiral ligand, *t*-BuOK (4.5 equiv), mesitylene (1 mL), 150 °C, 1 h. Yield was determined by <sup>1</sup>H NMR with CH<sub>2</sub>Br<sub>2</sub> as internal standard; enantiomeric ratios of **2a** were determined by HPLC analysis on a chiral stationary phase. <sup>*b*</sup>Pre-complexing at 100 °C for 0.5 h without CO<sub>2</sub> inflation. <sup>*c*</sup>Pre-complexing at 120 °C for 0.5 h without CO<sub>2</sub> inflation. <sup>*c*</sup>Pre-complexing at 100 °C for 0.5 h with CO<sub>2</sub> inflation. <sup>*e*</sup>Pre-complexing at 120 °C for 0.5 h with CO<sub>2</sub> inflation. <sup>*e*</sup>Pre-complexing at 120 °C for 0.5 h with CO<sub>2</sub> inflation.

#### 2.4.3 Substrates expansion with 1c and 1e.



### 2.5<sup>13</sup>C-Labeling experiments.



**General procedure**: In a glove box, to an oven-dried 25 mL Schlenk sealed tube (with a Teflon cap) equipped with a magnetic stir bar was added  $[Rh_2(OAc)_4](IPr)$  (8.3 mg, 0.01 mol) and *t*-BuOK (101 mg, 0.9 mmol) (Note: should be dry) was added successively. After taken out of the glove box, **1a** (56 mg, 0.2 mmol) dissolved in mesitylene (2 mL) was added, then the tube was evacuated under vacuum and charged with <sup>13</sup>CO<sub>2</sub>. Afterwards, the tube was capped and then placed into a preheated hotplate (150 °C). The reaction was stirred vigorously (Note: good stirring is important!) for 1 h and cooled to room temperature. Remove mesitylene by vacuum pump evaporation under reduced pressure and then the reaction was diluted with EtOAc (20 mL) and filtered through a short pad of Celite. The tube and Celite pad were washed with an additional 10 mL of EtOAc. The filtrate was concentrated in vacuo, and purified by preparative thin layer chromatography using petroleum ether/EtOAc (5/1) as the eluent to afford the <sup>13</sup>C-**2a** (43 mg, 70% yield; >95% <sup>13</sup>C abundance, calculated from GC-MS).



<sup>1</sup>H NMR (400 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  7.61 (d, *J* = 7.61 Hz, 1H), 7.33 (t, *J* = 7.16 Hz, 1H), 7.27 (d, *J* = 7.19 Hz, 1H), 7.21 (t, *J* = 7.37 Hz, 1H), 5.19 (dd, *J* = 2.68, 1.22 Hz, 1H), 5.16 (dd, *J* = 2.58, 1.33 Hz, 1H), 4.66 (t, *J* = 2.43 Hz, 1H), 4.07 (s, 5H). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (101 MHz, Chloroform-*d*)  $\delta$  167.6 (<sup>13</sup>C carbanyl group), 151.3 (d, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 128.1, 124.5, 123.1, 121.6 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 117.4 (d, *J* = 3.3 Hz), 83.5 (d, *J* = 3.4 Hz), 73.1 (d, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 71.4, 68.4 (d, *J* = 4.2 Hz), 65.3 (d, *J* = 3.4 Hz), 64.5 (d, *J* = 81.5 Hz). HRMS (m/z, ESI): calcd for <sup>13</sup>CC<sub>16</sub>H<sub>13</sub>FeO<sub>2</sub><sup>+</sup> (M+H)<sup>+</sup> 306.0293, found 306.0288.



## 2.6 Scaled-up synthesis.



**General procedure**: In a glove box, to an oven-dried 100 mL Schlenk sealed tube (with a Teflon cap) equipped with a magnetic stir bar was added  $[Rh_2(OAc)_4](IPr)$  (42 mg, 0.05 mol) and *t*-BuOK (505 mg, 4.5 mmol) (Note: base should be dry) was added successively. After taken out of the glove box, **1a** (278 mg, 1 mmol) dissolved in anhydrous mesitylene (10 mL) was added, then the tube was evacuated under vacuum and charged with CO<sub>2</sub> (1 atm, × 3). Afterwards, the tube was capped and then placed into a preheated hotplate (150 °C). The reaction was stirred vigorously (Note: good stirring is important!) for 1 h and cooled to room temperature. Remove mesitylene by vacuum pump evaporation under reduced pressure and then the reaction was diluted with EtOAc (40 mL) and filtered through a short pad of Celite. The tube and Celite pad were washed with an additional 15 mL of EtOAc. Finally, the resulting residue was purified by flash silica gel chromatography using petroleum ether/EtOAc (5/1) as the eluent to afford **2a** (225 mg, 74% yield).

# 3. X-Ray Crystallographic Spectrum of 2c and 2i.



Figure S1. The crystal structure of **2c** (CCDC 2211993).

Table S3. Crystal data and structure refinement for 2c			
Identification code	LV-0922_auto		
Empirical formula	$C_{18}H_{14}FeO_3$		
Formula weight	43.03		
Temperature/K	100.15		
Crystal system	triclinic		
Space group	P-1		
a/Å	10.4854(4)		
b/Å	11.7036(4)		
c/Å	12.3518(4)		
α/°	72.325(3)		
β/°	79.087(3)		
$\gamma/^{\circ}$	75.017(3)		
Volume/Å <sup>3</sup>	1384.97(9)		
Z	2		
$ ho_{calc}g/cm^3$	2.682		
$\mu/mm^{-1}$	36.987		
F(000)	1096.0		
Crystal size/mm <sup>3</sup>	0.1  imes 0.2  imes 0.2		
Radiation	Ga-K $\alpha$ ( $\lambda = 1.3405$ )		
$2\Theta$ range for data collection/°	6.578 to 120.544		
In day non and	$-13 \le h \le 13, -15 \le k \le 14, -14 \le l \le$		
Index ranges	15		
Reflections collected	16150		
Independent reflections	$6127 [R_{int} = 0.0409, R_{sigma} = 0.0384]$		
Data/restraints/parameters	6127/0/399		
Goodness-of-fit on F <sup>2</sup>	0.699		
Final R indexes [I>= $2\sigma$ (I)]	$R_1 = 0.0372, wR_2 = 0.0983$		
Final R indexes [all data]	$R_1 = 0.0403, wR_2 = 0.1013$		
Largest diff. peak/hole / e Å <sup>-3</sup> 0.85/-0.58			

Table S3. Crystal data and structure refinement for 20



Figure S2. The crystal structure of **2i** (CCDC 2211992).

Identification code	LH-0918_auto
Empirical formula	$C_{23}H_{16}FeO_2$
Formula weight	200.12
Temperature/K	200.15
Crystal system	triclinic
Space group	P-1
a/Å	6.7731(6)
b/Å	10.9956(11)
c/Å	12.2301(6)
a/o	72.319(7)
β/°	75.206(6)
γ/°	77.254(8)
Volume/Å <sup>3</sup>	828.85(13)
Z	2
$ ho_{calc}g/cm^3$	1.604
$\mu/mm^{-1}$	5.146
F(000)	416.0
Crystal size/mm <sup>3</sup>	0.1  imes 0.2  imes 0.3
Radiation	Ga-Ka ( $\lambda = 1.3405$ )
$2\Theta$ range for data collection/°	6.734 to 111.04
Index ranges	$-8 \le h \le 8, -13 \le k \le 12, -14 \le l \le 14$
Reflections collected	8809
Independent reflections	$3091 [R_{int} = 0.0560, R_{sigma} = 0.0550]$
Data/restraints/parameters	3091/0/235
Goodness-of-fit on F <sup>2</sup>	0.899
Final R indexes $[I \ge 2\sigma(I)]$	$R_1 = 0.0569, wR_2 = 0.1523$
Final R indexes [all data]	$R_1 = 0.0716, wR_2 = 0.1803$
Largest diff. peak/hole / e Å <sup>-3</sup>	1.20/-0.69

Table S4. Crystal data and structure refinement for 2i

## 4. References

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[S2] Z. Cai, S. Li, Y. Gao and G. Li, Adv. Synth. Catal., 2018, 360, 4005–4011.

[S3] X. Zhang, X. Huang, W. Gao, Y. Zhou, M. Liu and H. Wu, *Adv. Synth. Catal.*, 2020, **362**, 5639–5644.

[S4] J. Na, B. Y. Lee, N.-N. Bui, S. Mho and H.-Y. Jang, *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry*, 2007, **692**, 5523–5527

# 5. NMR Spectra of Compounds









1d



0 0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 -1 f1 (ppm)





1f



1g

 $\underbrace{ \begin{array}{c} 7.088 \\ 7.073 \\ 7.058 \\ 6.885 \end{array} } \\ 6.885 \end{array}$ 



1h









0 0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 -1 f1 (ppm)



S38



1m







10

S42





0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 f1 (ppm)



90 180 170 160 150 140 130 120 110 100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 -1 f1 (ppm)





0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 -1 f1 (ppm)





2b





**2**c





0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 -1 f1 (ppm)









 $\begin{array}{c} & 7.786 \\ & 7.782 \\ & 7.648 \\ & 7.648 \\ & 7.648 \\ & 7.648 \\ & 7.633 \\ & 7.633 \\ & 7.648 \\ & 7.648 \\ & 7.648 \\ & 7.633 \\ & 7.633 \\ & 7.633 \\ & 7.633 \\ & 7.531 \\ & 7.533 \\ & 7.533 \\ & 7.533 \\ & 7.531 \\ & 7.532 \\ & 7.531 \\ & 7.531 \\ & 7.532 \\ & 7.532 \\ & 7.531 \\ & 7.531 \\ & 7.532 \\$ 







2k



0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 -1 f1 (ppm)













2p



10 0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 F1 (ppm)



S68



2r



10 0 -10 -20 -30 -40 -50 -60 -70 -80 -90 -100 -110 -120 -130 -140 -150 -160 -170 -180 -190 -200 -210 f1 (ppm)

