Supporting Information

Palladium-catalyzed S-benzylation of unprotected mercaptobenzoic acid with benzyl alcohols in water

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General procedure: A mixture of mercaptobenzoic acid 1 (1 mmol), palladium(II) acetate (12 mg, 0.05 mmol), sodium diphenylphosphinobenzene-3-sulfonate (TPPMS, 36 mg, 0.1 mmol) and benzyl alcohol 2 (5 mmol) in H₂O (4 mL) was heated for 24-48 h in sealed tube. After cooling, the reaction mixture was poured into water and extracted with EtOAc. The organic layer was washed with brine, dried over MgSO₄ and concentrated in vacuo. The residue was washed with hexanes, then purified by flash column chromatography (silica gel, hexanes/EtOAc) to give desired product 3.

4-Benzylthiobenzoic acid 3a (Table 1, entry 1)¹

Following the general procedure, **3a** was obtained as a white solid. mp 188-190 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 3401, 2925, 1676, 1589, 1419, 1289; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.35 (s, 2H), 7.23 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (dd, *J*=7.2, 7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (d, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.42 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.82 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 35.3, 126.4, 127.2, 127.4, 128.5, 128.8, 129.7, 136.8, 143.0, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 244 (M⁺, 35.0), 91 (100).

3-Benzylthiobenzoic acid 3b (Table 2, entry 1)²

Following the general procedure, **3b** was obtained as a white solid. mp 129-131 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2847, 1689, 1579, 1433, 1288; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.30 (s, 2H), 7.23 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.30 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.35-7.39 (m, 2H), 7.42 (t, *J*=8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.55-7.60 (m, 1H), 7.73 (dt, *J*=8.0, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (t, *J*=1.6 Hz, 1H), 13.1 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 36.4, 126.7, 127.1, 128.4, 128.6, 128.8, 129.2, 131.5, 132.3, 136.9, 137.1, 166.8; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 244 (M⁺, 67.1), 91 (100).

2-Benzylthiobenzoic acid 3c (Table 2, entry 2)²

Following the general procedure, **3c** was obtained as a white solid. mp 187-189 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 3413, 2920, 1674, 1459, 1411, 1262; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.21 (s, 2H), 7.18-7.23 (m, 1H), 7.27 (t, *J*=6.0 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.40-7.60 (m, 2H), 7.48-7.52 (m, 2H), 7.89 (d, *J*=7.6 Hz, 1H), 13.0 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 35.7, 124.0, 125.7, 127.1, 127.6, 128.5, 129.2, 130.9, 132.3, 136.6, 141.2, 167.4; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 244 (M⁺, 25.1), 91 (100).

2-Benzylthio-5-fluorobenzoic acid 3d (Table 2, entry 3)³

Following the general procedure, **3d** was obtained as a white solid. mp 153-155 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 3034, 2912, 1690, 1465, 1424, 1246; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.21 (s, 2H), 7.27 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.38-7.44 (m, 3H), 7.51 (dd, *J*=9.0, 5.2 Hz, 1H), 7.63 (dd, *J*=9.0, 2.8 Hz, 1H), 13.4 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 36.1, 117.0, 117.3, 119.3, 119.5, 127.2, 128.3, 128.4, 128.5, 129.1, 129.9, 130.0, 136.2, 136.5, 157.8, 160.2, 166.4; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 262 (M⁺, 18.7), 91 (100).

2-Benzylthio-5-chlorobenzoic acid 3e (Table 2, entry 4)⁴

Following the general procedure, **3e** was obtained as a white solid. mp 162-164 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2924, 1681, 1462, 1317, 1250; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.23 (s, 2H), 7.27 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.34 (t, *J*=6.0 Hz, 2H), 7.43 (d, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.51 (d, *J*=8.6 Hz, 1H), 7.58 (dd, *J*=8.6, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (d, *J*= 2.4 Hz, 1H), 13.4 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 35.7, 127.3, 127.7, 128.5, 129.1, 130.1, 131.9, 136.3, 140.2, 166.2; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 280 (M⁺+2, 13.3), 278 (M⁺, 35.8), 91 (100).

4-(4-Methylbenzylthio)benzoic acid 3f (Table 3, entry 1)⁵

Following the general procedure, **3f** was obtained as a white solid. mp 210-212 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2916, 1681, 1588, 1418, 1288; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 2.26 (s, 3H), 4.30 (s, 2H), 7.11 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.29 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.82 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 20.6, 35.1, 126.4, 127.3, 128.7, 129.0, 129.7, 133.6, 136.4, 143.1, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 258 (M⁺, 13.9), 105 (100).

4-(4-Ethylbenzylthio)benzoic acid 3g (Table 3, entry 2)⁶

Following the general procedure, **3g** was obtained as a white solid. mp 203-205 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2963, 1680, 1587, 1417, 1288; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 1.15 (t, *J*=8.0 Hz, 3H), 2.56 (q, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 4.31 (s, 2H), 7.15 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.32 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.83 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 15.5, 27.8, 35.0, 126.3, 127.3, 127.9, 128.8, 129.7, 133.9, 142.8, 143.2, 167.0; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 272 (M⁺, 12.4), 119 (100).

4-(4-Methoxybenzylthio)benzoic acid 3h (Table 3, entry 3)⁷

Following the general procedure, **3h** was obtained as a white solid. mp 200-202 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2955, 1683, 1589, 1505, 1419, 1294; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 3.72 (s, 3H), 4.29 (s, 2H), 6.87 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.33 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.40 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.83 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 34.8, 55.0, 113.9, 126.4, 127.3, 128.4, 129.7, 130.0, 143.3, 158.4, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 274 (M⁺, 9.4), 121 (100).

4-(2-Methylbenzylthio)benzoic acid 3i (Table 3, entry 4)⁸

Following the general procedure, **3i** was obtained as a white solid. mp 173-175 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2866, 1678, 1587, 1415, 1286; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 2.38 (s, 3H), 4.33 (s, 2H), 7.10-7.25 (m, 3H), 7.32 (d, *J*=7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.44 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.86 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 18.7, 34.1, 126.0, 126.6, 127.5, 127.6, 129.7, 130.4, 134.1, 136.7, 143.3, 167.0; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 258 (M⁺, 16.7), 105 (100).

4-(4-Fluorobenzylthio)benzoic acid 3j (Table 3, entry 5) ⁹

Following the general procedure, 3j was obtained as an off-white solid. mp 197-199 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹)

2821, 1675, 1589, 1503, 1415, 1286; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.35 (s, 2H), 7.14 (d, *J*=8.8 Hz, 2H), 7.42 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.45 (dd, *J*=8.8, 5.6 Hz, 2H), 7.83 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 34.5, 115.1, 115.4, 126.5, 127.5, 129.7, 130.8, 133.0, 133.1, 142.7, 160.1, 162.5, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 262 (M⁺, 48.7), 109 (100).

4-(4-Bromobenzylthio)benzoic acid 3k (Table 3, entry 6)¹

Following the general procedure, **3k** was obtained as a white solid. mp 222-224 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2879, 1684, 1589, 1419, 1291; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.34 (s, 2H), 7.38 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.41 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.50 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.83 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 34.5, 120.3, 126.6, 127.6, 129.7, 131.0, 131.3, 136.5, 142.5, 166.9; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 324 (M⁺+2, 17.8), 322 (M⁺, 17.2), 169 (100).

4-(3-Bromobenzylthio)benzoic acid 3l (Table 3, entry 7)¹⁰

Following the general procedure, **31** was obtained as a white solid. mp 162-164 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2830, 1678, 1588, 1419, 1291; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.36 (s, 2H), 7.28 (t, *J*=7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.40-7.46 (m, 4H), 7.63 (s, 1H), 7.83 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 34.5, 121.6, 126.7, 127.6, 127.9, 129.7, 130.1, 130.6, 131.5, 139.9, 142.3, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 324 (M⁺+2, 36.0), 322 (M⁺, 35.1), 169 (100).

4-(4-Chlorobenzylthio)benzoic acid 3m (Table 3, entry 8)¹¹

Following the general procedure, **3m** was obtained as a white solid. mp 210-212 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2842, 1685, 1589, 1419, 1295; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.36 (s, 2H), 7.34-7.46 (m, 6H), 7.83 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 34.5, 126.6, 127.6, 128.4, 129.7, 130.7, 131.8, 136.1, 142.5, 166.9; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 280 (M⁺+2, 6.6), 278 (M⁺, 17.2), 125 (100).

4-(1-Phenylethylthio)benzoic acid 3n (Table 4, entry 1)

Following the general procedure, **3n** was obtained as a white solid. mp 172-174 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 3430, 2974, 2920, 1683, 1591, 1426, 1301; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 1.59 (d, *J*=6.8 Hz, 3H), 4.81 (q, *J*=6.8 Hz, 1H), 7.23 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.32 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.40 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.45 (d, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.80 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 22.3, 44.6, 127.2, 127.3, 127.9, 128.2, 128.5, 129.6, 142.0, 142.5, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 258 (M⁺, 57.5), 105 (100); Anal. Calcd for C₁₅H₁₄O₂S: C, 69.74; H, 5.46. Found: C, 69.61; H, 5.44.

4-(1-Phenylpropylthio)benzoic acid 30 (Table 4, entry 2)

Following the general procedure, **30** was obtained as a white solid. mp 150-152 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2973, 1684, 1592, 1424, 1296; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 0.80-0.90 (m, 3H), 1.80-2.00 (m, 2H),

4.50-4.60 (m, 1H), 7.20-7.26 (m, 1H), 7.31 (t, *J*=6.8 Hz, 2H), 7.36-7.44 (m, 4H), 7.78 (dd, *J*=8.8, 2.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 11.9, 29.2, 51.4, 127.2, 127.7, 127.8, 128.1, 128.4, 129.6, 141.2, 142.1, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 272 (M⁺, 24.1), 91 (100); Anal. Calcd for C₁₆H₁₆O₂S: C, 70.56; H, 5.92. Found: C, 70.32; H, 5.92.

4-(1,2,3,4-Tetrahydronaphthalen-1-ylthio)benzoic acid 3p (Table 4, entry 3)

Following the general procedure, **3p** was obtained as an off-white solid. mp 169-171 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2936, 1684, 1590, 1418, 1286; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 1.70-1.80 (m, 1H), 1.90-2.10 (m, 3H), 2.65-2.85 (m, 2H), 4.98 (s, 1H), 7.10-7.20 (m, 3H), 7.38 (d, *J*=7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.53 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 7.90 (dd, *J*=8.4, 1.2 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 18.2, 27.9, 28.3, 44.6, 125.7, 127.2, 128.0, 129.1, 129.9, 130.4, 134.3, 137.5, 142.6, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 284 (M⁺, 6.0), 131 (100); Anal. Calcd for C₁₇H₁₆O₂S: C, 71.80; H, 5.67. Found: C, 71.75; H, 5.70.

4-(2,3-Dihydro-1H-inden-1-ylthio)benzoic acid 3q (Table 4, entry 4)

Following the general procedure, **3q** was obtained as an off-white solid. mp 183-185 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2949, 1681, 1588, 1415, 1286; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 2.00-2.15 (m, 1H), 2.55-2.70 (m, 1H), 2.85-2.95 (m, 1H), 2.95-3.05 (m, 1H), 5.10-5.15 (m, 1H), 7.16-7.34 (m, 4H), 7.49 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.89 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 30.3, 33.2, 49.1, 124.7, 124.8, 126.6, 127.4, 127.7, 128.0, 129.8, 141.7, 143.1, 143.6, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 270 (M⁺, 8.7), 117 (100); Anal. Calcd for C₁₆H₁₄O₂S: C, 71.08; H, 5.22. Found: C, 70.94; H, 5.27.

4-(Benzhydrylthio)benzoic acid 3r (Table 4, entry 5)

Following the general procedure, **3r** was obtained as an off-white solid. mp 179-181 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 3021, 1685, 1591, 1488, 1417, 1282; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 6.13 (s, 1H), 7.23 (t, *J*=7.2 Hz, 2H), 7.30-7.40 (m, 6H), 7.52 (d, *J*=7.6 Hz, 4H), 7.75 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 53.3, 127.4, 127.8, 128.0, 128.7, 129.6, 140.5, 142.2, 166.8; MS(EI): *m/z* (%) 320 (M⁺, 2.1), 167 (100); Anal. Calcd for C₂₀H₁₆O₂S: C, 74.97; H, 5.03. Found: C, 74.87; H, 5.14.

4-(Thiophen-2-ylmethylthio)benzoic acid 3s (Table 4, entry 6)¹²

Following the general procedure, **3s** was obtained as an off-white solid. mp 136-138 °C; IR (KBr) (cm⁻¹) 2838, 1678, 1589, 1417, 1290; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 4.60 (s, 2H), 6.93 (dd, *J*=5.2, 3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.07 (d, *J*=3.6 Hz, 1H), 7.40 (dd, *J*=5.2, 1.2 Hz, 1H), 7.45 (d, *J*=8.4 Hz, 2H), 7.84 (d, *J*=8.0 Hz, 2H), 12.9 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ 30.1, 125.6, 126.8, 126.9, 127.7, 129.7, 140.1, 142.2, 166.9; MS (EI): *m/z* (%) 250 (M⁺, 30.7), 97 (100).

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Me





HH3-63-4



Ρh

HH3-63-4C



S10

Et

S

HH3-63-2



HH3-63-2C







HH3-63-3C



HH3-63-1







Ph