

Chem 2500

Chapter 10

Synthesis Using Aromatic Materials

(sections 10.1-10.10 excluding 10.7 and 10.8)

π Bonds Acting as Nucleophiles

• We saw in chapter 8 how alkenes are nucleophilic in the presence of electrophiles.

• Although benzene has π electrons, the stability imparted by its aromaticity makes it much less reactive towards electrophiles.



π Bonds Acting as Nucleophiles

- Benzene can be made to react with reactive electrophiles in the presence of a catalyst.
- The overall reaction, however, is different; aromatic rings undergo *substitution*, not addition, with electrophiles.
- This is known as *electrophilic aromatic substitution* (S_EAr) .



- Electrophilic aromatic substitution reactions proceed by a general 2step mechanism: (1) addition of the electrophile, and (2) elimination.
- The combination of addition and elimination steps leads to a net substitution reaction.



- In the first step of the mechanism, a carbocation intermediate, called an arenium ion, is formed.
- The arenium ion is resonance stabilized, however, it is no longer aromatic.
- This first step is identical to the addition of electrophiles to alkenes.



arenium ion is stabilized by conjugation but is not aromatic

- In the second step of the mechanism, a base removes a hydrogen atom to restore the ring aromaticity.
- It is the re-aromatization of the ring which is the main driving force for the formation of the substitution product.



• From the reaction profile diagram, the disruption of the aromaticity of the ring in the first step has the highest activation barrier and is therefore the rate determining step.



Types of Electrophiles used in S_EAr

- Many electrophiles can be used to react with aromatic rings to generate a variety of different functional groups, including halogens, nitro groups, sulfonic acids, alkyl, and acyl groups.
- Mechanistically, all electrophiles react the same way with an aromatic ring. The only difference is the way the strong electrophile is generated.



- Aromatic rings can be halogenated with chlorine, bromine, or iodine using a Lewis acid catalyst.
- Fluorine is reactive enough that a catalyst is not required, though the reaction is not a practical lab procedure.
- In halogenation, a hydrogen atom is substituted by a halogen.





- The halogen molecule is activated by first forming a Lewis acid-base adduct with the catalyst.
- This creates a highly electrophilic halogen atom and a good leaving group.





- The aromatic ring can now react with the activated electrophile, producing the arenium ion intermediate.
- A bromide ion from the Lewis acid-base adduct removes the proton from the arenium ion, re-aromatizing the ring.
- Notice how the catalyst, FeBr₃, is regenerated.
- The bromobenzene product is less reactive than the starting benzene causing the reaction to stop after one substitution.





• The other halogens can be added in a similar fashion, the only difference being the Lewis acid catalyst used.

Halogen Added	Electrophile	Lewis Acid
F	F ₂	None
CI	Cl ₂	FeCl ₃
Br	Br ₂	FeBr ₃
I	I ₂	CuCl ₂

Nitration



• In nitration, a hydrogen atom is substituted by a nitro group (NO_2)



• The electrophile in this reaction is the nitronium ion (NO_2^+) , which is generated by reacting HNO₃ with H₂SO₄.



Nitration



- Nitration then proceeds via the two-step electrophilic aromatic substitution mechanism.
- In this strongly acidic medium, water is basic enough to remove a proton from the arenium ion to re-aromatize the ring and form the nitrobenzene product.



Nitration



- An important functional group conversion is the reduction of nitro groups to an amine using a dissolving metal reaction.
- This is typically done using iron or tin with a strong acid, such as HCl.



• The reduction of a nitro group to an amine is a key method to making aromatic amines, which are important synthetic synthons.

Sulfonation



• In sulfonation, a hydrogen atom is substituted by a sulfonic acid group, SO₃H.



• The active electrophile is SO_3H^+ , produced either by the dehydration of sulfuric acid or the protonation of SO_3 .

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Sulfonation

• The active electrophile is SO_3H^+ , produced either by the dehydration of sulfuric acid or the protonation of SO₃.





Sulfonation

- Once the SO₃H⁺ electrophile is formed, the reaction proceeds as normal; addition of the electrophile, followed by re-aromatization of the ring.



Sulfonation



- Sulfonation is reversible in strong, aqueous acid
- The mechanistic process is the exact reverse of the sulfonation reaction.





- Friedel-Crafts alkylation is a method of adding alkyl groups to aromatic rings via electrophilic aromatic substitution.
- An alkyl halide and Lewis acid catalyst are used to substitute the hydrogen atom.



• The active electrophile is a carbocation, produced by interaction of the Lewis acid catalyst with the alkyl halide.



• Once the electrophile is produced, the mechanism proceeds as usual with addition of the electrophile followed by re-aromatization of the ring.





- There are 3 main limitations to Friedel-Crafts reactions.
- 1. Friedel-Crafts reactions do not work with electron deficient aromatic rings. Therefore, aromatic rings with attached electron withdrawing groups (EWG) are deactivated and will not couple with the electrophilic carbocation.





• While it may seem contradictory, anilines do not undergo Friedel-Crafts alkylation either. Amine are electron donating groups (EDG) and should facilitate the alkylation, however, the amine nitrogen atom is Lewis basic and forms a Lewis acid-base adduct with the catalyst which converts it to an EWG.





2. Alkyl groups are mildly electron donating, making the Friedel-Crafts alkylation products more nucleophilic than the starting reactant. For this reason, over-alkylation is common unless special measures are taken.





3. Because the active electrophile is a carbocation, Friedel-Crafts alkylations are prone to carbocation rearrangements and give a mixture of products. For this reason, the alkyl halides used are typically tertiary or secondary.



- The stability of a primary carbocation is so low that it is unlikely that it actually forms:

Carbocation pathway





- The reality is that primary alkyl halides, which do not form 1° carbocations and are prone to rearrangements, do not reliably add to aromatic rings.
- These problems can be solved by a variation of the Friedel-Crafts alkylation reaction, the Friedel-Crafts *acylation* reaction.

- In the Friedel-Crafts acylation reaction, an acyl group, instead of an alkyl group, substitutes the hydrogen atom on an aromatic ring.
- The reagents used are an acyl chloride and a Lewis acid catalyst.



- The active electrophile is an acylium ion, produced by interaction of the Lewis acid catalyst with the alkyl halide.
- Once the electrophile is produced, the mechanism proceeds as usual with addition of the electrophile followed by re-aromatization of the ring.

• Once the electrophile is produced, the mechanism proceeds in the usual fashion.



- Friedel-Crafts acylation is more reliable than alkylation.
- Because the acyl group is electron withdrawing, subsequent acylation is avoided. Also, the acylium ion is not prone to rearrangement as it is resonance stabilized.

- Once added, acyl groups can be reduced with NH2NH2/KOH (Wolff-Kischner) or with Zn(or Sn)/HCl (Clemmenson) to give the alkyl group.
- This produces the overall equivalent of a Friedel-Crafts alkylation without the sidereactions.



• Friedel-Crafts acylations can also be carried out with an acid anhydride instead of an acid chloride.



- One limitation of the Fridel-Crafts acylation is that the unstable formyl chloride cannot be used to form aldehydes.
- Aldehydes can be produced by the Gatterman-Koch reaction, a variation on the Friedel-Crafts reaction.



carbon monoxide Section 10.4

Aromatic Nomenclature



• Many aromatic molecules have 'trivial' names and do not follow IUPAC rules for nomenclature.



Aromatic Nomenclature

• The relative positions of *two* groups on an aromatic ring can be referred to by numbers or by Greek words; ortho, meta, or para.





- Substituents attached to an aromatic ring affects the outcome of electrophilic aromatic substitution reaction.
- Specifically, it can affect the *rate of the reaction* as well as the *regiochemistry*.
- The functional groups can be categorized based on two factors:
 - *1. Activating* or *deactivating* groups
 - 2. Ortho/para or meta directors



- Activating groups *increase* the rate of electrophilic aromatic substitution reactions relative to the rate of reaction of an unsubstituted aromatic ring (benzene).
- Deactivating groups *decrease* the rate of electrophilic aromatic substitution reactions relative to the rate of reaction of an unsubstituted aromatic ring (benzene).





- In general, electron donating groups (EDGs) are activating because they help stabilize the arenium ion intermediate and the transition state of rate determining step.
- Electron withdrawing groups (EWGs) are deactivating because the destabilize the arenium ion intermediate and the transition state leading to them.



- Directing groups refer to substituents that influence the regiochemistry of the electrophilic aromatic substitution reaction.
- Ortho/para directors favour the formation of the ortho and para regioisomers.
- Meta directors favour the formation of the meta regioisomers.



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- The influence of these substituents on the reactivity and regioselectivity is rationalized by conjugation and inductive effects.

Substituent	Features	Reactivity	Direction
$\rm NH_2$, $\rm NHR$, $\rm NR_2$, $\rm OH$, $\rm O^-$	Lone pair on heteroatom	Strongly activating	Ortho/para
NHCOR, OCOR	Electron-delocalized lone pair on heteroatom	Moderately activating	Ortho/para
Alkyl, aryl	Hyperconjugation or weak electron delocalization	Weakly activating	Ortho/para
F, Cl, Br, I	Lone pair on electronegative halogen atom	Deactivating	Ortho/para
COH(R), CO ₂ H(R), CONHR, CN	Polar π bond conjugated to ring	Moderately deactivating	Meta
NO_2 , NR_3^+ , CX_3	Strong inductive electron- withdrawing group	Strongly deactivating	Meta

- EDGs tend to activate electrophilic aromatic substitution and they tend to direct the regioselectivity towards the ortho/para positions.
- *Strong ortho/para directors* all have a heteroatom with at least one lone pair which can delocalize into the ring.



• Resonance delocalization of the arenium ion intermediate helps explain the observed regioselectivity.

• Consider the arenium ion intermediates when substituting in the ortho or para position:



- Consider the arenium ion intermediates when substituting in the ortho or para position:



• Compare this with the arenium ion intermediate when substituting in the meta position:



the electron-donating group cannot participate in stabilizing the arenium ion via conjugation

• *Moderate ortho/para directors* also contain a heteroatom with at least one lone pair, however, the lone pair is already delocalized into the functional group itself.

weak *ortho/para* directors have resonancestabilized lone pairs on the heteroatom





- *Weak ortho/para directors* are split into two categories; alkyl groups and aromatic rings.
- Alkyl groups are weakly electron donating via hyperconjugation.
- Aromatic groups are weakly electron donating via conjugation.





- The halogens (F, Cl, Br, I) fall into the category of *deactivating ortho/para directors*. They are ortho/para directing because they carry lone pairs that can be delocalized with an aromatic ring.
- At the same time, the halogens are also highly electronegative and withdraw electron density from the aromatic ring via inductive effects. This makes the aromatic rings less nucleophilic and slows the overall rate of reaction – i.e. deactivating.



Meta Directing Groups

- EWGs tend to deactivate electrophilic aromatic substitution and they tend to direct the regioselectivity towards the meta positions.
- Resonance delocalization of the arenium ion intermediate helps explain the observed regioselectivity.



Meta Directing Groups

- For both ortho and para additions, one resonance structure places the carbocation adjacent to the EWG, *destabilizing* the charge.
- Meta addition keeps the carbocation further from the EWG.







arenium ions leading to meta isomers

Meta Directing Groups

- *Moderate deactivating meta directors* have *polar* π *bonds* that can conjugated to the aromatic ring and can withdraw electron density via electron delocalization.
- Withdrawing electron density makes the ring a weaker nucleophile.



Meta Directing Groups



- *Strongly deactivating meta directors* are groups that withdraw electron density form the ring via strong inductive effects.
- Withdrawing electron density makes the ring a weaker nucleophile.



Modifying Reactivity in S_EAr

- For the strong ortho/para directors, it can be difficult to stop the reaction from undergoing multiple substitutions.
- The reactivity can be controlled to monosubstitution by modifying the strong ortho/para director into a moderate ortho/para director.



Activation on Polysubstituted Benzenes



- When multiple substituents are attached to a ring, the directing effects of each substituent must be considered.
- In general, the most activating group will direct the electrophile in the major product.
- When the directing properties of the substituents reinforce each other, only one product is obtained.



Activation on Polysubstituted Benzenes

• When the directing properties of the substituents conflict each other, the most activating group will typically exert the most influence.





- *Synthesis* is the process of making complex molecules from simpler ones.
- Synthesis occurs in a stepwise fashion by modifying a given reactant in a sequence of reactions.
- One of the most challenging aspects of organic chemistry is designing a workable synthesis.
- Some syntheses are lengthy or complex, or both. The order of each reaction is important and often will determine if the overall sequence is successful or not.



- One approach to designing a synthesis is *retrosynthetic analysis* (retrosynthesis). In retrosynthesis, you start with the desired end-product and work backwards to devise suitable transformations.
- Retrosynthetic analysis uses a series of *disconnections*, imaginary processes of breaking bonds, to break a complex problem into simpler ones.



• Each synthetic step must be analyzed to ensure that the forward reaction is workable.





- Synthons are fragments resulting from disconnections that show the general reactivity (Nu⁻/E⁺) of the fragment.
- Because many different reactants can be used in synthesis, *synthons* are used to represent the type of reaction being considered.



- Electrophilic aromatic substitution reactions all follow the same general pattern:
 - 1. Addition of an electrophile to form an arenium ion intermediate.
 - 2. Elimination of a hydrogen atom to restore aromaticity.
- Reactivity and regioselectivity are controlled by the stability of the arenium ions.



• Because of the inherent stability of the starting aromatic ring, most electrophiles require activation.



• Because of the inherent stability of the starting aromatic ring, most electrophiles require activation.





- The reactivity and regioselectivity of substituted aromatic rings is controlled by the nature of the substituents.
- In general, EDGs activate the ring and direct to the ortho/para positions. EWGs deactivate the ring and direct to the meta positions.



- Directed ortho metalation (DOM) is an alternative to electrophilic aromatic substitution. The steps for DOM are reversed from those of S_EAr .
- DOM requires a directed metalation group with substitution occurring only at the ortho position.

add the electrophile remove the hydrogen E⊕ base Directed ortho metallation remove the hydrogen add the electrophile DMG DMG DMG Η E E^+ R–Li

Electrophilic aromatic substitution

- Sulfanilamide was the first antibiotic* to be a commercial success.
- It is easily made from benzene using mostly S_EAr reactions.

*Sulfanilamide is not a true antibiotic. It is more accurately described as an antimetabolite.



