Carboxylation of Organoboronic Esters with Potassium Methyl Carbonate under Copper Catalysis

Hung A. Duong,* Tuan Minh Nguyen,* Nurul Zubaidah Binte Rosman, Lionel Jia Liang Tan

Organic Chemistry, Institute of Chemical and Engineering Sciences (ICES), Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR), 8 Biomedical Grove, Neuros #07-01, Singapore 138665, Singapore
Fax +65(646)42102; E-mail: duong_hung@ices.a-star.edu.sg; E-mail: nguyen_minh@ices.a-star.edu.sg

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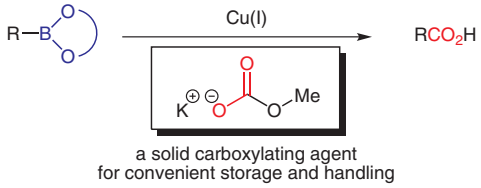
Abstract: In the presence of a copper catalyst, potassium methyl carbonate serves as a versatile carboxylating agent of allyl- and arylboronic esters for the preparation of carboxylic acids.

Key words: copper, organoboron, carbon dioxide, carbonate, carboxylic acid

Metal alkyl carbonates such as the commercially available methylmagnesium carbonate (MMC) are efficient carboxylating agents of active methylene groups (i.e., nitroalkanes and ketones), and phenols.[1] We report herein that the conversion of organoboronic esters into carboxylic acids can be conveniently achieved by reactions with potassium methyl carbonate (KO_2COMe, PMC) in the presence of a copper catalyst (Scheme 1).

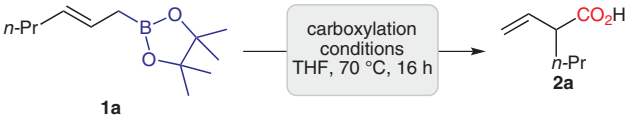


Scheme 1 Carboxylation of organoboronic esters with PMC

Hou and co-workers previously showed that arylboronic esters could be carboxylated by carbon dioxide (1 atm) in the presence of a copper–N-heterocyclic carbene (NHC) catalyst and potassium *tert*-butoxide.[2] We later established that allylboronic esters can react with carbon dioxide (1 atm) under similar conditions to afford β,γ-unsaturated carboxylic acids with very good regioselectivity.[3]

For example, **1a** could be converted into the requisite acid **2a** in 77% yield, as determined by ^{1}H NMR analysis (Table 1, conditions A). A similar yield was obtained when potassium methoxide was used as the base additive (Table 1, conditions B). In addition, we realized that PMC, an adduct of potassium methoxide and carbon dioxide, can also carboxylate **1a** with comparable efficiency (Table 1, conditions C). PMC can be prepared by bubbling carbon dioxide (1 atm) through a solution of potassium methoxide in methanol, as described by Behrendt et al.[4] The solid carboxylating agent can then be conveniently stored for subsequent use.

Table 1 Carboxylation of Allylboronic Ester **1a** with CO_2 and PMC



1a **2a**

Conditions	Cu(IPr)Cl	Base	Carboxylating agent	**2a** (%)[a]
A (ref.[3])	5 mol%	*t*-BuOK[b]	CO_2[c]	77
B (ref.[3])	5 mol%	MeOK[b]	CO_2[c]	75
C	5 mol%	none	KO_2COMe[b]	75

[a] Determined by ^{1}H NMR analysis of the crude mixture after work-up using an internal standard.
[b] 1.1 equiv was used.
[c] 1 atm of CO_2 was used.

Further investigations revealed that the copper-catalyzed carboxylation with PMC is applicable to the synthesis of other β,γ-unsaturated carboxylic acids (Scheme 2). Both the linear (**1b**) and branched (**1c**) substrates were selectively converted into the corresponding branched carboxylic acids in 72 and 62% yield, respectively. Compound **2d**, possessing an all-carbon quaternary center, could be obtained in 68% yield, albeit with a higher catalyst loading. Notably, the efficiency of the reactions with PMC was comparable to those run under a carbon dioxide atmosphere (conditions A).[3]

Arylboronic neopentylglycol esters could undergo carboxylation with PMC under copper catalysis to give benzoic acid derivatives in very good yields (Scheme 3). For electron-rich substrate **3a**, only 1 mol% catalyst was needed to achieve an excellent isolated yield of the desired product **4a**. Again, the yields obtained were similar to those run under carbon dioxide (conditions A) as reported by Hou and co-workers.[2]

Notably, Iwasawa and co-workers reported that rhodium-catalyzed carboxylation of arylboronic neopentylglycol ester with carbon dioxide was efficient, whereas almost no product could be obtained with arylboronic esters of ethylene glycol, propane-1,3-diol, or pinacol.[5] Under copper catalysis, reaction of the 4-methoxyphenylboronic pinacol ester (**5a**) with carbon dioxide (Table 2, entry 1) or

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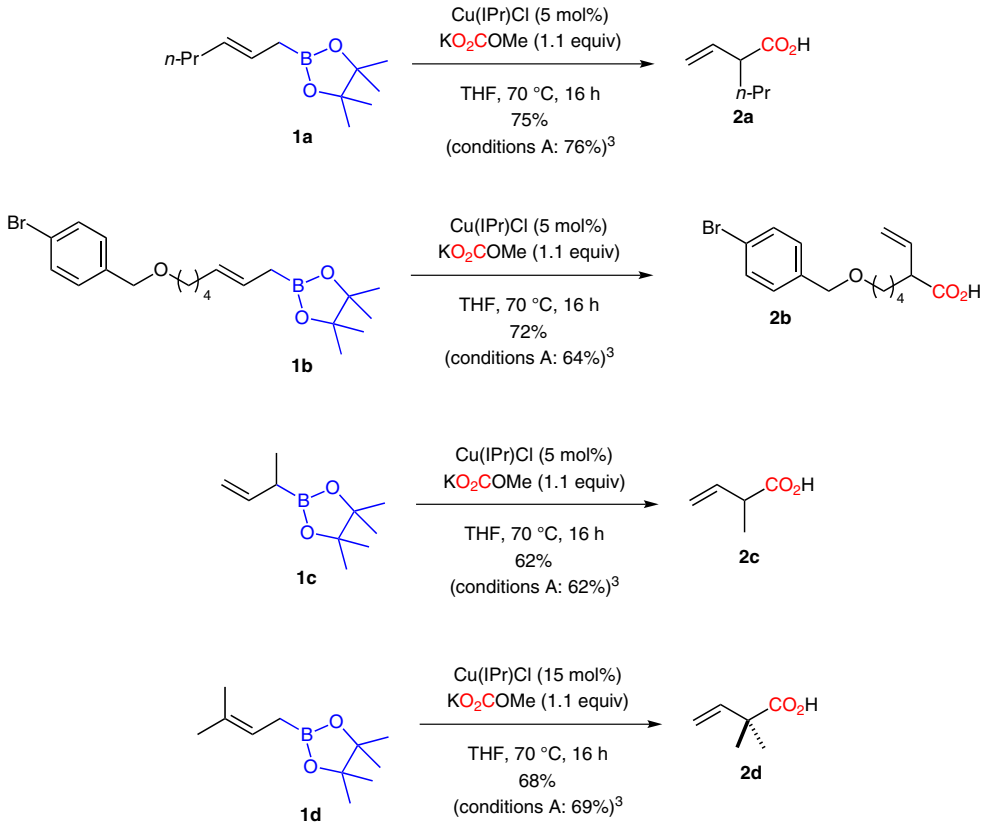
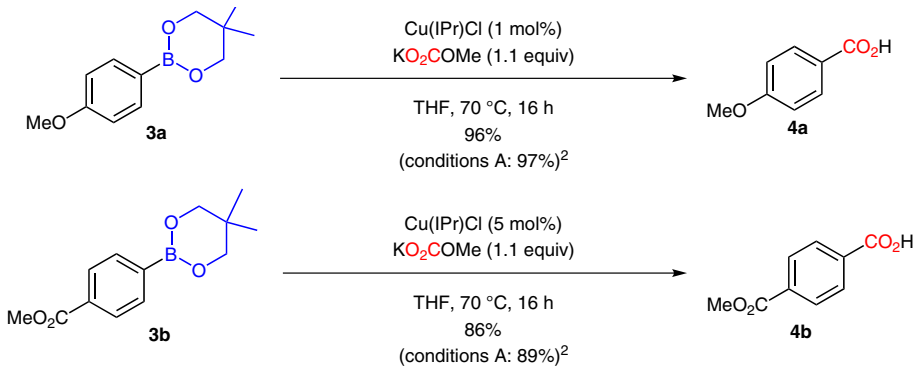


Scheme 2 Copper-catalyzed carboxylation of allylboronic esters with PMC



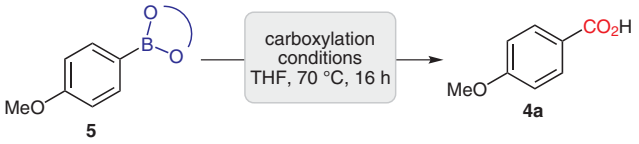
Scheme 3 Copper-catalyzed carboxylation of arylboronic neopentylglycol esters with PMC

with PMC (entry 2) both gave very good yields of **4a**, as determined by ^{1}H NMR analysis (Table 2, conditions A). Reactions of boronic esters **5a′** and **5a″** with PMC were also highly efficient (entries 3 and 4).

We further evaluated the scope of the reaction with a range of arylboronic pinacol esters, which is a class of organoboron that is widely used in, for example, Suzuki–Miyaura cross-coupling reactions, and can be easily prepared by a number of methods such as Miyaura borylation or iridium-catalyzed C–H borylation.[6] Compound **4a** was isolated in 90% yield in the reaction of **5a** with PMC (Table 3, entry 1). Reaction of electron-deficient substrates **5b**–**d** (entries 2–4) led to the isolation of the corresponding carboxylic acids in good yields. Benzoic acid could be prepared from phenylboronic pinacol ester **5e** in 71% (entry 5). Multiply substituted benzoic acids with varied electronic properties could also be prepared from the corresponding arylboronic pinacol esters in moderate yields (entries 6–8). A good yield (77%) could be obtained for 3-furoic acid **4i** under the current carboxylation conditions.

In conclusion, potassium methyl carbonate, which can be easily prepared, stored, and handled, can serve as a highly efficient carboxylating agent of organoboronic esters under copper catalysis. The yields obtained in these reactions are generally comparable to those run under copper-catalyzed carboxylation with carbon dioxide.

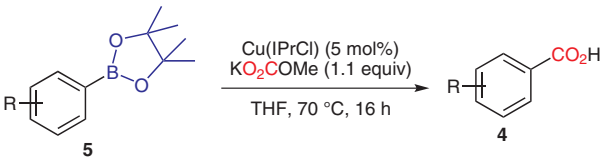
Table 2 Carboxylation of Arylboronic Esters



Entry	Boronic ester	Carboxylating conditions	**4a** (%)[a]
1	**5a**	A[b]	85
2	**5a**	C[c]	96
3	**5a′**	C[c]	82
4	**5a″**	C[c]	95

[a] Determined by ^{1}H NMR analysis of the crude mixture after work-up, using an internal standard.
[b] Reaction conditions: Cu(IPr)Cl (5 mol%), *t*-BuOK (1.1 equiv), CO_2 (1 atm).
[c] Reaction conditions: Cu(IPr)Cl (5 mol%), KO_2COMe (1.1 equiv).

Table 3 Carboxylation of Arylboronic Pinacol Esters with PMC



Entry	Product	Yield (%)
1	**4a**	90
2	**4b**	78
3	**4c**	89
4	**4d**	80
5	**4e**	71
6	**4f**	62
7	**4g**	63
8	**4h**	58
9	**4i**	77

Cu(IPr)Cl (Aldrich), *t*-BuOK (sublimed, Aldrich) and MeOK (Fluka) were used as received. PMC, allyl- and aryl boronic esters were prepared according to reported procedures.[2–4] All reactions were carried out under an atmosphere of argon unless otherwise stated. Analytical thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed by using Merck 60 F254 pre-coated silica gel plate. Flash column chromatography (FC) was undertaken on Merck silica gel 60. ^{1}H and ^{13}C NMR spectra were recorded with a Bruker-400 and referenced to residual protiated solvent (resonances downfield to the standard are reported as positive). All ^{13}C NMR spectra were proton decoupled. The abbreviations s, d, t and m stand for the resonance multiplicity singlet, doublet, triplet, and multiplet, respectively. THF was dried over alumina under N_2 by using a Grubbs-type solvent purification system.

Carboxylation of Allylboronic Pinacol Esters with PMC; General Procedure (Scheme 1)

In a glovebox, Cu(IPr)Cl (9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 5 mol%) and PMC (45 mg, 0.39 mmol, 1.1 equiv) were charged to a glass reaction tube. A solution of **1** (0.36 mmol) in THF (1 mL) was added, the tube was sealed, taken out of the glovebox, and heated at 70 °C for 16 h. After cooling to r.t., H_2O (2 mL) was added and the reaction mixture was acidified with aqueous HCl (1 M), and saturated with sodium chloride. After extraction with Et_2O (3 × 3 mL), the organic phase was dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate and concentrated under vacuo. The product was purified by silica gel column chromatography.

2-Vinylpentanoic Acid (2a)[3]

Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale. Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **2a**.

Yield: 34 mg (75%); colorless oil.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 10.51 (br s, 1 H), 5.86–5.77 (m, 1 H), 5.19–5.15 (m, 2 H), 3.03 (dd, *J* = 15.5, 7.6 Hz, 1 H), 1.81–1.72 (m, 1 H), 1.60–1.51 (m, 1 H), 1.43–1.28 (m, 2 H), 0.92 (t, *J* = 7.3 Hz, 3 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 180.8, 135.7, 117.7, 50.0, 34.2, 20.3, 13.9.

6-[(4-Bromobenzyl)oxy]-2-vinylhexanoic Acid (2b)[3]

Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale. Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **2b**.

Yield: 68 mg (72%); colorless oil.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 7.46 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2 H), 7.20 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2 H), 5.86–5.77 (m, 1 H), 5.20–5.16 (m, 2 H), 4.43 (s, 2 H), 3.45 (t, *J* = 6.5 Hz, 2 H), 3.06–3.01 (m, 1 H), 1.82–1.78 (m, 1 H), 1.66–1.38 (m, 5 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 180.3, 137.8, 135.6, 131.7, 129.5, 121.6, 118.0, 72.33, 70.4, 50.2, 31.9, 29.6, 23.9.

2-Methylbut-3-enoic Acid (2c)[3]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale. Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **2c**.

Yield: 22 mg (62%); colorless oil.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 5.98–5.89 (m, 1 H), 5.17 (t, *J* = 14.5 Hz, 1 H), 3.22–3.15 (m, 1 H), 1.31 (d, *J* = 7.1 Hz, 3 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 180.8, 136.6, 116.6, 43.6, 16.6.

2,2-Dimethylbut-3-enoic Acid (2d)[3]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale. Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **2d**.

Yield: 28 mg (68%); colorless oil.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 6.05 (dd, *J* = 17.4, 10.6 Hz, 1 H), 5.17–5.09 (m, 2 H), 1.33 (s, 6 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 183.2, 142.1, 113.6, 44.9, 24.5.

Carboxylation of Arylboronic Esters with PMC; Typical Procedure
In a glovebox, Cu(IPr)Cl catalyst and PMC (62.8 mg, 0.55 mmol, 1.1 equiv) were charged to a glass reaction tube. A solution of **3** (0.50 mmol) in THF (1.5 mL) was added, the tube was sealed, taken out of the glovebox, and heated at 70 °C for 16 h. After cooling to r.t., H_2O (2 mL) was added and the reaction mixture was acidified with aqueous HCl (1 M), and saturated with sodium chloride. After extraction with EtOAc (3 × 5 mL), the organic phase was dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate and concentrated under vacuo. The product was purified by silica gel column chromatography.

4-Methoxybenzoic Acid (4a; Scheme 2)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.50 mmol scale of **3a** with Cu(IPr)Cl (2 mg, 0.005 mmol, 1 mol%). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4a**.

Yield: 73 mg (96%); white amorphous solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 8.00 (m, 2 H), 7.02 (m, 2 H), 3.88 (s, 3 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 167.4, 164.5, 132.5, 123.8, 114.6, 55.9.

4-Methoxybenzoic Acid (4a; Table 3, Entry 1)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale of **5a** with Cu(IPr)Cl (9 mg, 0.018 mmol, 5 mol%). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4a**.

Yield: 49 mg (90%); white amorphous solid.

4-(Methoxycarbonyl)benzoic Acid (4b; Scheme 2, Equation 2 or Table 3, Entry 2)[6]
Reaction was performed on a 0.50 mmol scale of **3b** (Scheme 2, equation 2) or **5c** (Table 3, entry 3) with Cu(IPr)Cl (12 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4c** as white amorphous solid (78 mg, 86% for Scheme 2, or 70 mg, 78% for Table 3, entry 3).

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 8.16 (m, 2 H), 8.11 (m, 2 H), 3.93 (s, 3 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 166.9, 166.6, 135.4, 134.9, 130.6, 130.3, 52.7.

4-Fluorobenzoic Acid (4c; Table 3, Entry 3)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.50 mmol scale of **5d** with Cu(IPr)Cl (12 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4d**.

Yield: 63 mg (89%); white amorphous solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 8.13–8.08 (m, 2 H), 7.28–7.23 (m, 2 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 167.8, 166.0 (d, *J* = 141 Hz), 133.3 (d, *J* = 9 Hz), 128.0, 116.2 (d, *J* = 22 Hz).

4-(Trifluoromethyl)benzoic Acid (4d; Table 3, Entry 4)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale of **5e** with Cu(IPr)Cl (9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 5 mol%) and PMC (45 mg, 0.39 mmol, 1.1 equiv). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4e**.

Yield: 55 mg (80%); white amorphous solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 8.24 (m, 2 H), 7.87 (d, *J* = 8.12 Hz, 2 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 166.5, 135.2, 134.6 (q, *J* = 32.0 Hz), 131.2, 126.4 (q, *J* = 4.0 Hz), 124.9 (q, *J* = 271.0 Hz).

Benzoic Acid (4e; Table 3, Entry 5)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.50 mmol scale of **5b** with Cu(IPr)Cl (12 mg, 0.025 mmol, 5 mol%). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4b**.

Yield: 43 mg (71%); white amorphous solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 11.42 (br s, 1 H), 8.05 (m, 2 H), 7.53 (m, 1 H), 7.39 (m, 2 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$): δ = 172.6, 133.9, 130.4, 129.5, 128.6.

4-Chloro-3-(trifluoromethyl)benzoic Acid (4f; Table 3, Entry 6)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale of **5f** with Cu(IPr)Cl (9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 5 mol%) and PMC (45 mg, 0.39 mmol, 1.1 equiv). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4f**.

Yield: 50 mg (62%); white amorphous solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 8.36 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1 H), 8.26 (m, 1 H), 7.82 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 165.6, 137.1 (q, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 135.5, 133.1, 131.1, 129.5 (q, *J* = 6.5 Hz), 128.9 (q, *J* = 31.0 Hz), 123.6 (q, *J* = 271.0 Hz).

3,4-Dimethoxybenzoic Acid (4g; Table 3, Entry 7)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale of **5g** with Cu(IPr)Cl (9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 5 mol%) and PMC (45 mg, 0.39 mmol, 1.1 equiv). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4g**.

Yield: 42 mg (63%); slightly yellow solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 7.66 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 2.0 Hz, 1 H), 7.55 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1 H), 7.04 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1 H), 3.89 (s, 3 H), 3.87 (s, 3 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 167.6, 154.5, 150.0, 124.5, 123.7, 113.4, 111.8, 56.21, 56.17.

3,4-Dichlorobenzoic Acid (4h; Table 3, Entry 8)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale of **5h** with Cu(IPr)Cl (9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 5 mol%) and PMC (45 mg, 0.39 mmol, 1.1 equiv). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4h**.

Yield: 40 mg (58%); white amorphous solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 8.12 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1 H), 7.96 (dd, *J* = 8.4, 2.0 Hz, 1 H), 7.72 (d, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 1 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 165.7, 137.6, 133.1, 132.3, 132.0, 131.8, 130.2.

3-Furoic Acid (4i; Table 3, Entry 9)[7]
Reaction was performed on a 0.36 mmol scale of **5i** with Cu(IPr)Cl (9 mg, 0.02 mmol, 5 mol%) and PMC (45 mg, 0.39 mmol, 1.1 equiv). Purification by silica gel column chromatography (Et_2O–CH_2Cl_2, 1→5% with 0.1% HCO_2H) afforded **4i**.

Yield: 31 mg (77%); white amorphous solid.

^{1}H NMR (400 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 8.07 (m, 1 H), 7.54 (m, 1 H), 6.65 (m, 1 H).

^{13}C {^{1}H} NMR (100 MHz, acetone-d_6): δ = 164.1, 149.0, 145.2, 120.5, 110.7.

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Supporting Information for this article is available online at http://www.thieme-connect.com/products/ejournals/journal/10.1055/s-00000084.

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