Efficient Demethylation of N,N-Dimethylanilines with Phenyl Chloroformate in Ionic Liquids

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Abstract: Demethylation of N,N-dimethylanilines was carried out in various ionic liquids and acetonitrile as well as under solvent-free conditions. We have demonstrated that their reactivity dramatically depends on the ionic liquid employed; [bmim]Cl showed the best reactivity.

Key words: N,N-dimethylaniline, demethylation, phenyl chloroformate, ionic liquid, phenyl N-methyl-N-arylcarbamate

N-Dealkylation, especially N-demethylation, is important in organic synthesis as it can be applied to the demethylation of natural alkaloid products such as morphine to noromorphine or oxymorphone to noroxymorphone, respectively.1 N-Dealkylation of aliphatic and acyclic tertiary amine to dialkylamines is well known.¹ Initially, tertiary amines were treated with cyanogen bromide (von Braun reaction) to form the corresponding N,N-disubstituted cyanamide and alkyl bromide. Phosgene has also been employed to effect N-dealkylation. Recently, these reagents, due to their high toxicity and poor selectivity, were replaced by chloroformates. In 1967, effective Ndemethylation of tertiary amines with phenyl chloroformate was reported.² Generally, aliphatic tertiary amines react smoothly with phenyl chloroformate to provide the corresponding dealkylated N,N-dialkyl carbamates. Subsequently, many related reagents such as 2,2,2-trichlorochloroformate,^{3a} vinyl chloroformate,3b ethyl 1chloroethyl chloroformate,3c chlorothionoformate,3d and acetic anhydride/boron trifluoride,^{3e} were developed. Moreover, N-(2-acetoxyethyl) tertiary amines were converted to the corresponding secondary amine under photochemical conditions (350 nm) in the presence of 4,4'dimethoxybenzophenone.⁴ Once phenyl carbamates or methyl carbamates derived from the reaction of tertiary amines with phenyl chloroformate or methyl chloroformate are formed they can be smoothly converted to the corresponding free secondary amines under mild conditions, using (CH₃)₃SiI^{5a} or TBAF/THF.^{5b} However, the dealkylation of N,N-dialkylanilines using chloroformate esters to furnish the corresponding carbamate esters is extremely limited; long reaction times and drastic conditions are required compared with aliphatic and acyclic tertiary amines.² For example, N,N-dimethylaniline reacts with

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Table 1 Effects of Ionic liquids

	e CICO ₂ Ph (1.2 equiv) solvent, 80 °C, 3 h	
Entry	Solvent	Yield (%)
1	MeCN (1.5 mL)	24
2	Solvent-free	25
3	Solvent-free (NaCl, 3.0 equiv)	22
4	[bmim]SO ₃ C ₈ H ₁₇ (2.0 mL)	4
5	[emim]OTs (2.0 mL)	15
6	[bmpy]NTf ₂ (2.0 mL)	49
7	[bmpy]PF ₆ (2.0 mL)	64
8	[bmim]PF ₆ (2.0 mL)	70
9	[bmim]BF ₄ (2.0 mL)	69
10	[bmim]Br (2.0 mL)	80
11	[bdmim]Cl (2.0 mL)	90
12	[bmim]Cl (2.0 mL)	95
13	[bmim]Cl (4.0 mL)	20
14	[bmim]Cl (1.0 mL)	95
15	[bmim]Cl (0.5 mL)	94
16	[bmim]Cl (0.2 mL)	95
17	[bmim]Cl (0.1 mL)	88
18	[bmim]Cl (0.04 mL)	79

phenyl chloroformate at 100 °C to give the corresponding phenyl N-phenyl-N-methylcarbamate after 60 hours in 80% yield.²

Ionic liquids have become very popular as organic reaction media due to their ability to promote ionic reactions and also from an environmental point of view.⁶ Thus, these solvents possess many advantages, such as negligible vapor pressure, non-flammability, high thermal stability, and easy reusability. As a result they have been successfully used in Friedel-Crafts reaction,⁷ hydrogenation,⁸ Diels-Alder reactions,⁹ Heck, Suzuki, Sonogashira,

 Table 2
 Dealkylation of N,N-Dimethyl- and N,N-Diethylanilines²⁰



^a Starting amine was recovered.

and olefin metathesis reactions,¹⁰ Michael additions,¹¹ oxidation,¹² condensation reaction,¹³ formation of imines,¹⁴ 1,2-rearrangement,¹⁵ esterification of carboxylic acids and carboxylates,¹⁶ Williamson ether synthesis,¹⁷ and Grignard reaction.¹⁸ Recently, we also reported the highly efficient esterification of carboxylic acids and phosphonic acids with trialkyl orthoacetate in an ionic liquid.¹⁹ Here as a part of our study on the development of organic reactions with ionic liquids, we would like to report a dramatic rate acceleration by ionic liquids in the reaction of inert N,N-dimethylaniline with phenyl chloroformate; the reactivity is markedly dependent on the ionic liquid employed. All reactions proceeded under homogeneous conditions at 80 °C or 100 °C. The results for the reaction of N,N-dimethylaniline with phenyl chloroformate in MeCN, under solvent-free conditions, under solvent-free conditions with NaCl, and in various ionic liquids are shown in Table 1. Among them, [bmim]Cl showed the best reactivity, while [bdmim]Cl and [bmim]Br also showed high reactivity. However, [bmim]BF₄, [bmim]PF₆, [bmpy]PF₆, and [bmpy]NTf₂ showed moderate reactivity, and finally [emim]OTs and [bmim]O₃SC₈H₁₇ (1-butyl-3-methylimidazolium octanesulfonate) showed poorer reactivity than solvent-free or MeCN conditions. In all cases showing poor reactivity it was possible to recover the starting amines. Thus, the results indicate that the reactivity depends on the size of the anionic group in the ionic liquid; more specifically the reactivity is affected by ionic polar-

Table 3Reactivity of Chloroformates

Ме	reagent (1.2 equiv	^{')} R—N	•
Me [t	[bmim]Cl (2.0 mL), 80 °C		-OPh
	Reagent	Time (h)	Yield (%)
Me N Me	ClCO ₂ Et ClCO ₂ Ph	3 3	1 (74) ^a 95
Me H ₂₅ C ₁₂ —N Me	ClCO ₂ Et ClCO ₂ Ph	2 2	8 (82) ^a 94

^a Starting amine was recovered.

ity or charge density. The amount of ionic liquid is also important; we found 0.2–2.0 mL was optimal for 1 mmol substrate (Table 1, entries 12–18).

Based on these results, various *N*,*N*-dimethylaniline derivatives were treated with phenyl chloroformate in [bmim]Cl and under solvent-free conditions. In every reaction, the [bmim]Cl matrix promotes the reaction efficiently, especially for dimethylanilines bearing electron-withdrawing groups, as shown in Table 2.

We also looked at the reactivity of phenyl chlorofomate versus ethyl chloroformate (Table 3) with phenyl chloroformate showing much higher reactivity in [bmim]Cl for both substrates tested (Table 3).





Table 5	Effect of	Recycling	[bmim]PF ₆
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Me	CICO ₂ Ph (1.2 equiv)	Me
Me	[bmim]PF ₆ (2.0 mL), 100 °C, 6 h	OPh
Regeneration		Yield (%)
0		78
1		78
2		79
3		82
4		88

Next we looked at the selectivity of the reaction when two alkyl groups were present on the substrate. The selective demethylation of *N*-butyl-*N*-methylaniline with phenyl chloroformate in [bmim]Cl gave a higher reactivity and selectivity than the reaction performed under solvent-free conditions or in MeCN (Table 4).

Finally we tried to recycle the ionic liquid and to reuse it in further reactions. Unfortunately, [bmim]Cl cannot be conveniently extracted from the reaction mixture by standard procedures since it is soluble in water and cannot be washed with water after the extraction. However, the pure product can be obtained directly by distillation of the reaction mixture, and the remaining ionic liquid was reused for further demethylation reactions, maintaining the high yield of the carbamate ester. Fortunately, [bmim]PF₆ can be recovered by the standard extraction method since it is not soluble in water. Thus, after the extraction of the carbamate ester with ethyl acetate, the recovered [bmim] PF_6 was washed with water once and dried on a vacuum pump. It was then reused for the same demethylation reaction and the high yield of the carbamate ester was maintained (Table 5).

In summary, demethylation of *N*,*N*-dimethylanilines was carried out in various ionic liquids, under solvent-free conditions, and in acetonitrile. Their reactivity dramatically depends on the ionic liquid employed, with [bmim]Cl showing the best reactivity.

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- (20) Phenyl N-Methyl-N-phenylcarbamate; Typical Procedure: A flask containing [bmim]Cl (2.0 mL) was dried under reduced pressure by a vacuum pump for 2 h at 80 °C. Then, N,N-dimethylaniline (1.0 mmol) and phenyl chloroformate (1.2 equiv) were added to the flask. The resulting mixture was stirred and heated at 80 °C for 3 h. Then H₂O (3 mL) was added and the reaction mixture was extracted with EtOAc (20×5 mL). The combined extract was condensed to give a residue; the purity of the product was about 50% due to the presence of phenyl chloroformate and a little ionic liquid. The residue was purified by preparative TLC (hexane-EtOAc, 7:1) to give pure phenyl N-methyl-N-phenylcarbamate in 95% yield; colorless oil; bp 155 °C (1 mmHg). IR (neat): 1730, 1600, 1205, 740, 695 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 7.39–7.09 (10 H, m), 3.39 (3 H, s). The following abbreviations are used in ^{13}C spectral data: p, s, t, q, for primary, secondary, tertiary, and quarternary carbon, respectively. ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): $\delta = 153.9$ (q), 151.2 (q), 142.8 (q), 129.1 (2 t), 128.9 (2 t), 126.5 (t), 125.8 (t), 125.3 (2 t), 121.5 (2 t), 38.1 (p). HRMS (FAB): m/z calcd for C₁₄H₁₄NO₂ (M + H): 228.1025; found: 228.1012.

Phenyl N-Methyl-N-phenylcarbamate; Distillation

Method: A flask containing [bmim]Cl (4.0 mL) was dried under reduced pressure by a vacuum pump for 2 h at 80 °C. Then, *N*,*N*-dimethylaniline (20.0 mmol)and phenyl chloroformate (1.2 equiv) were added to the flask. The resulting mixture was stirred and heated at 80 °C for 3 h. Then the reaction mixture was distilled to give pure phenyl *N*-methyl-*N*-phenylcarbamate in 90% yield; bp 155 °C (1 mmHg).

Phenyl N-Methyl-N-p-bromophenylcarbamate: Colorless oil; bp 210 °C (1 mmHg). IR (neat): 1720, 1590, 1200, 830, 740, 690 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): $\delta = 7.49-7.45$ (2 H, m), 7.34–7.09 (7 H, m), 3.38 (3 H, s). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): $\delta = 153.5$ (q), 151.0 (q), 141.8 (q), 131.9 (2 t), 129.1 (2 t), 127.2 (t), 125.3 (2 t), 121.4 (2 t), 121.4 (q), 38.1 (p). HRMS (FAB): m/z calcd for C₁₄H₁₃BrNO₂ (M + H): 306.0130; found: 306.0137. Phenyl N-Methyl-N-p-methylphenylcarbamate: Colorless oil; bp 170 °C (1 mmHg). IR (neat): 1720, 1595, 1205, 820, 740, 690 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 7.33–7.08 (9 H, m), 3.38 (3 H, s), 2.34 (3 H, s). ¹³C NMR $(CDCl_3, TMS): \delta = 154.0 (q), 151.3 (q), 140.3 (q), 136.4 (q),$ 129.6 (2 t), 129.1 (2 t), 125.7 (t), 125.2 (2 t), 121.6 (2 t), 38.2 (p), 20.9 (p). HRMS (FAB): m/z calcd for $C_{15}H_{16}NO_2$ (M + H): 242.1181; found: 242.1190. Phenyl N-Methyl-N-m-nitrophenylcarbamate: Colorless

oil; bp 240 °C (1 mmHg). IR (neat): 1740, 1600, 1200, 810, 750, 695 cm^{-1} . ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): $\delta = 8.27 - 8.26 (1 \text{ H}, 100 \text{ H})$ m), 8.07-8.05 (1 H, m), 7.75-7.73 (1 H, m), 7.54-7.50 (1 H, m), 7.37-7.33 (2 H, m), 7.20-7.13 (3 H, m), 3.48 (3 H, s). 13 C NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): $\delta = 153.3$ (q), 150.6 (q), 148.3 (q), 143.8 (q), 131.3 (t), 129.5 (t), 129.2 (2 t), 125.6 (t), 121.3 (2 t), 120.7 (t), 120.1 (t), 37.5 (p). HRMS (FAB): m/z calcd for C₁₄H₁₃N₂O₄ (M + H): 273.0875; found: 273.0879. Phenyl N-Methyl-N-naphthylcarbamate: White solid; mp 86-87 °C. IR (paraffin): 1720, 1595, 1200, 695 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): $\delta = 8.00-6.92$ (12 H), 3.49–3.41 (3 H). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): $\delta = 154.6$ (q), 151.2 (q), 139.1 (q), 134.4 (q), 130.0 (q), 128.9 (2 t), 128.4 (t), 128.1 (t), 126.8 (t), 126.2 (t), 125.6 (t), 125.1 (t), 124.7 (t), 122.2 (t), 121.4 (2 t), 38.4 (p). HRMS (FAB): m/z calcd for $C_{18}H_{16}NO_2$ (M + H): 278.1181; found: 278.1165.

Phenyl *N***-Butyl-***N***-phenylcarbamate**: Colorless oil; bp 150 °C (1 mmHg). IR (neat): 1720, 1595, 1200, 745, 690 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 7.42–7.09 (10 H, m), 3.78–3.74 (2 H, m), 1.66–1.59 (2 H, m), 1.40–1.31 (2 H, m), 0.93–0.89 (3 H, t, *J* = 7.3 Hz). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 153.8 (q), 151.3 (q), 141.5 (q), 129.1 (2 t), 129.0 (2 t), 127.3 (t), 126.9 (t), 125.1 (2 t), 121.5 (2 t), 50.6 (s), 30.2 (s), 19.8 (s), 13.7 (p). HRMS (FAB): *m/z* calcd for C₁₇H₂₀NO₂ (M + H): 270.1494; found: 270.1488.

Phenyl N-Ethyl-N-phenylcarbamate: Colorless oil; bp 160 °C (1 mmHg). IR (neat): 1720, 1595, 1200, 750, 690 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 7.42–7.08 (10 H, m), 3.83–3.79 (2 H, m), 1.24–1.21 (3 H, m). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 153.6 (q), 151.3 (q), 142.8 (q), 129.1 (2 t), 129.0 (2 t), 127.3 (t), 126.9 (t), 125.1 (2 t), 121.5 (2 t), 45.8 (s), 13.8 (p). HRMS (FAB): *m*/*z* calcd for C₁₅H₁₆NO₂ (M + H): 242.1181; found: 242.1170.

Phenyl N-Methyl-N-dodecylcarbamate: Colorless oil; bp 180 °C (1 mmHg). IR (neat): 1730, 750, 690 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 7.36–7.37 (2 H, m), 7.20–7.09 (3 H, m), 3.43–3.31 (2 H), 3.06–2.98 (3 H), 1.63 (2 H), 1.32–1.26 (18 H, m), 0.91–0.86 (3 H, m). ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, TMS): δ = 153.6 (q), 151.3 (q), 142.8 (q), 129.1 (2 t), 129.0 (2 t), 127.3 (t), 126.9 (t), 125.1 (2 t), 121.5 (2 t), 45.8 (s), 13.8 (p). HRMS (FAB): *m/z* calcd for C₂₀H₃₄NO₂ (M + H): 320.2590; found: 320.2596.