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Study on the Synthesis of 1,2-diketones

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A novel method is discussed for preparation of 1,2-diketones: Esters **1** was used as starting material, the intermediate enol **2** was obtained from sodium and trimethylsilyl chloride via acyloin condensation reaction, while bromine water was used in the further experiment as the oxidation reagent to oxidize compound **2** in the mixed solvent THF/H₂O. Four kinds of 1,2-diketones have been synthesized in the new way, one is straight chain compound **3a**, **3b** and the other is ring compound **3c**, **3d**. The target compounds were confirmed by IR and ¹H NMR.

Keywords 1,2-diketone, synthesis, acyloin condensation, oxidation

INTRODUCTION

1,2-diketones, as an interesting building block, has important application in synthesis chemistry^[1,2] and they are one class of important intermediates that are used widely in organic synthesis. It was used in the synthesis of ring-enlargement reactions and special structure compounds.^[3,4] Moreover, 1,2-diketones are widely employed in the preparation of heterocycles.^[5] As such, we studied the 1,2-diketones compounds synthetic methodologies. The synthetic methods for constructing 1,2-diketones have been reported.^[6,7] In this article, we found a new 1,2-diketones synthetic method and synthesized two kinds of 1, 2-diketones in this way (Scheme 1).

EXPERIMENTAL

General Procedure

All reactions were carried out under argon and monitored by thin-layer chromatograph (TLC). Melting point (uncorrected) was measured with a XT4 melting point apparatus. ¹H NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian EM-300 spectrometer, using CDCl₃ as solvent and TMS as the internal standard.

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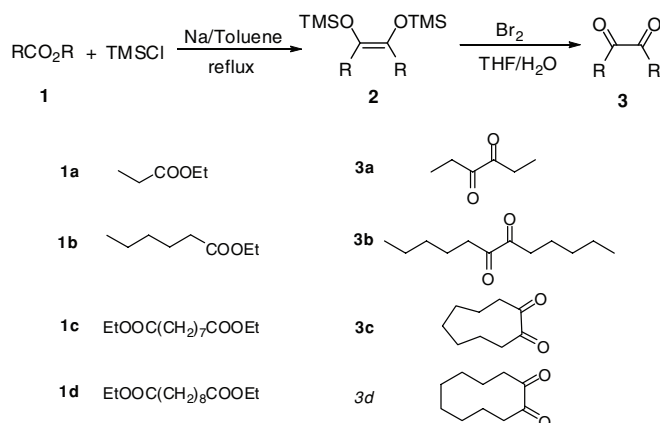
Synthesis of Hexane-3,4-dione **3a**

50 mL toluene and 2.2 g (92.7 mmol) Na contained in a 250 mL three-neck flask, to the mixture 10.0 g (92.0 mmol) TMSCl was added under vigorous stirring, then ethyl propionate **1a** 3.0 g (30.0 mmol) was slowly added dropwise. When the addition was complete, the reaction mixture was stirred for about 8 hours at refluxing temperature. After cooling, the mixture is filtered and concentrated *in vacuo*, gave intermediate enol **2a**. IR (KBr) ν cm⁻¹: 3029(HC=CH), 1677(C=C), 1252(C-Si). **2a** and 10 mL THF contained in a 100 mL two-neck flask, 13 mL H₂O were added into the solution, then 40% bromine water was added until the bromine water does not fade. The excessive bromine was neutralized by an appropriate amount of propenol. The crude product mixture is extracted with methylene chloride and dried with magnesium sulfate and concentrated in *vacuo*. Pure 1,2-diketones was obtained by distillation under reduced pressure (52–54°, 1810 Pa) and characterized by IR and ¹H NMR spectral data. The desired 1,2-diketone **3a** (2.60 g, 62.5%), colorless liquid.

The IR spectrum indicated the presence of 2950 cm⁻¹ (–CH₃), 2850 (–CH₂, –CH₃), 1710 (–C=O); ¹H NMR spectrum (CDCl₃) δ ppm: 2.72(q, 4H, COCH₂–), 1.04(t, 6H, –CH₃).

Synthesis of Dodecane-6,7-dione **3b**

50 mL toluene and 2.2 g (92.7 mmol) Na contained in a 250 mL three-neck flask, to the mixture 10.0 g (92.0 mmol) TMSCl was added under vigorous stirring, then ethyl caproate **1a** 4.0 g (21.0 mmol) slowly added dropwise. When the addition was complete, the reaction mixture was stirred for about 8 hours at refluxing temperature. After cooling, the mixture is filtered and concentrated in *vacuo*, given intermediate enol **2a**. IR (KBr) ν cm⁻¹: 3029(HC=CH), 1677(C=C), 1252(C-Si). **2a** and 10 mL THF contained in a 100 mL two-neck flask, 13 mL H₂O were added into the solution, then 40% bromine water was added until the bromine water did not fade. The excessive bromine was neutralized by an appropriate amount of propenol. The crude product mixture is extracted with methylene chloride and dried with magnesium sulfate and concentrated in *vacuo*. Pure 1,2-diketone was obtained by column chromatography (silica, petroleum ether/EtOAc=15:1) and characterized by IR and ¹H NMR spectral data. The desired 1,2-diketone **3a** (2.60 g, 62.5%), Yellow solid, M.p. 33–34°C.



The IR spectrum indicated the presence of 2940 cm^{-1} ($-\text{CH}_3$), 2850 ($-\text{CH}_2$, $-\text{CH}_3$), 1712 ($-\text{C}=\text{O}$); $^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum (CDCl_3) δ ppm: 2.71(t, 4H, COCH_2 -), 1.59(m, 4H, $-\text{CH}_2$ -), 1.28(m, 8H, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2$ -), 0.89(t, 6H, CH_3 -).

Synthesis of Cyclononane-1,2-dione **3c**

1,2-diketones **3c** were prepared in a similar manner to that for the preparation of **3a**, starting with azelaic acid diethyl ester **1c**. The desired 1,2-diketone **3c** was obtained by column chromatography (silica, petroleum ether/ EtOAc =150:1). Compound **3c** is yellow liquid (1.68g, 51.9%). The IR spectrum indicated the presence of 2895 ($-\text{CH}_2$), 1741 ($-\text{C}=\text{O}$); $^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum (CDCl_3) δ ppm: 2.68(t, 4H, COCH_2 -), 1.76(m, 4H, $-\text{CH}_2$ -), 1.48(m, 4H, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2$ -), 1.28(m, 2H, $-\text{CH}_2$ -).

Synthesis of Cyclodecane-1,2-dione **3d**

1,2-diketones **3d** were prepared in similar manner to that for the preparation of **3b**, starting with dimethyl sebacate **1d**. The desired 1,2-diketone **3d** was obtained by column chromatography (silica, petroleum ether/ EtOAc =200:1). Compound **3d** is yellow solid (1.68g, 49.8%), M.p. $32\text{--}33^\circ\text{C}$. The IR spectrum indicated the presence of 2896 ($-\text{CH}_2$), 1693 ($-\text{C}=\text{O}$); $^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum (CDCl_3) δ ppm: 2.65(t, 4H, COCH_2 -), 1.89(m, 4H, $-\text{CH}_2$ -), 1.46(m, 4H, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2$ -), 1.26(m, 4H, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2$ -).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Esters were used as starting material, 1,2-diketones **3a–3d** were synthesized using the new method. The products **3** were characterized by IR and $^1\text{H-NMR}$. The spectroscopic data of the products are found to be identical with expected structures.

The new method we provides here is an easier procedure to synthesize the 1,2-diketones. The preparation of intermediate enol **2** is a key step. In the synthesis of intermediate enol **2**, the sodium should be broken down bit by bit as soon as possible to improve the reaction yield, while the reaction was carried out under nitrogen. The ester **1** must be slowly added so as to avoid the by-products.

With ethyl acetate as reactant, the reaction did not occur. An analysis of the causes may be due to low boiling point of ethyl acetate, the high reaction temperature is not accessible enough.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we found a new method of synthesizing 1,2-diketone and synthesized four kinds of 1,2-diketones in this way. The target compounds were confirmed by IR and $^1\text{H-NMR}$.

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