



Sub-stoichiometric oxidation of benzylic alcohols with commercially available activated MnO₂ under oxygen atmosphere: a green modification of the benzylic oxidation



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ABSTRACT

Benzylic and allylic alcohols were readily converted into aldehydes and ketones in the presence of sub-stoichiometric amounts of activated MnO₂ under oxygen atmosphere. No over-oxidation to carboxylic acid happened. The present procedure dramatically reduces the amounts of MnO₂ necessary for the oxidation and provides a greener modification of widely used oxidation method.

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1. Introduction

Oxidation of alcohols to aldehydes or ketones is an important transformation in organic synthesis.¹ Use of various oxidation methods, such as PCC or PDC oxidation,² Swern oxidation,³ TPAP oxidation,⁴ Dess-Martin periodate,⁵ TEMPO⁶ and AZADO,⁷ and MnO₂ based oxidation reaction,⁸ are currently used widely for organic synthesis. Among of these methods, MnO₂ oxidation occupies a unique position because it selectively oxidizes benzylic and allylic alcohols to the corresponding aldehydes and ketones. Although it provides a simple reaction procedure, MnO₂ should be activated beforehand; so far several activation methods are known, such as Attenborough method. Instead of these methods, commercially available activated MnO₂⁹ has been recently used as a convenient oxidant. Another drawback of the reaction is that it requires a large excess amount of MnO₂ reagents, a heavy metallic reagent, for achieving the sufficient oxidation results. Recently we have developed birnessite MnO₂¹⁰ as a new reagent for the oxidation.¹¹ We reported that cobalt-doped birnessite MnO₂ under oxygen atmosphere achieved dramatic reduction of the amounts of the oxidant; the oxidation of benzylic and allylic alcohols was achieved using only the sub-stoichiometric amounts of the manganese oxidant.¹² The necessary amounts of the manganese reagents reached 1/30

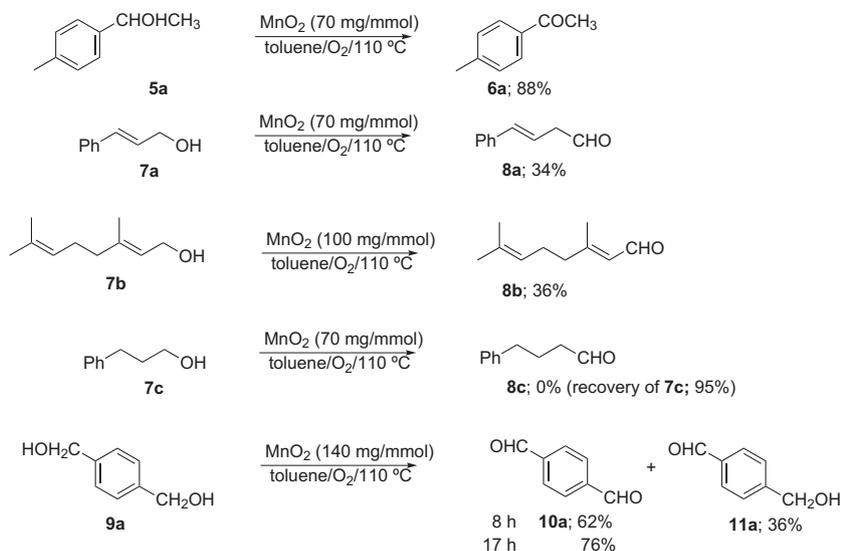
to 1/40 comparing with the conventional MnO₂ oxidation; 1 equiv or less amounts of the oxidant gave good results. During the course of our research, we thought that commercially available activated MnO₂ might perform the oxidation under similar reaction conditions, and such modification would provide a much greener method to organic synthesis. In this paper we show reduced amounts of activated MnO₂ also serves as a good oxidation reagents for benzylic and allylic alcohols. A dramatic reduction of the amounts of manganese oxide for the oxidation is demonstrated.

2. Results and discussion

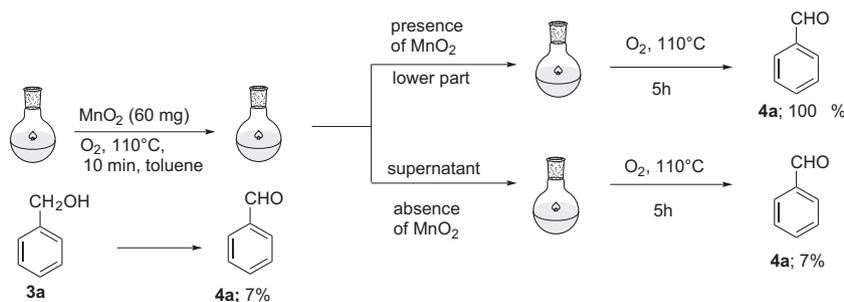
We first examined various conditions for the oxidation of benzhydrol **1**. The results are summarized in Table 1.

Benzhydrol **1** was readily oxidized under conventional reaction conditions employing large excess amounts of MnO₂, and benzophenone **2** was isolated in quantitative yield (entry 1). Use of reduce amounts of MnO₂, however, failed the smooth oxidation and compound **2** was detected only 7% (entry 2). This was almost the same for the reaction performed under oxygen atmosphere (entry 3). Heating of the reaction mixture improved the yield of **2** to 60% under nitrogen atmosphere (entry 4). Benzophenone **2** was obtained in quantitative yield when compound **1** was treated with sub-stoichiometric amounts of MnO₂ at 110 °C in toluene under air or oxygen atmosphere (entry 5 and 6). The amounts of MnO₂ were reduced to 50 mg/mmol without loss of the yields of **2** (entry 7),

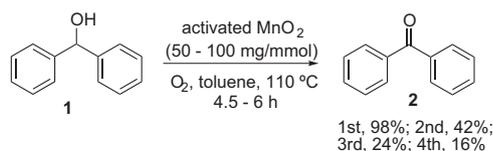
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Scheme 2. Oxidation of secondary benzyl alcohol and allylic alcohols.



Scheme 3. Oxidation in the presence or absence of MnO_2 .



Scheme 4. Recycling use of MnO_2 .

available. Present modification dramatically reduced the necessary amounts of MnO_2 for the smooth oxidation. The reduction reached almost 1/30 of the conventional method. We hope the present methods will contribute a green transformation reaction in organic synthesis.

3. Experimental section

Caution: The present conditions may have a risk of fire although it has never happened in our whole experimental works.

3.1. Oxidation of benzhydrol **1a** in the presence of sub-stoichiometric amounts of activated MnO_2 : preparation of benzophenone **2** (Table 1, entry 6). General procedure

Benzhydrol **1** (0.3831 g, 2.08 mmol) was dissolved in toluene (15 mL) and activated MnO_2 (purchased from Aldrich, 0.106 g, 1.92 mmol, 50 mg/mmol) was added to the solution. The reaction mixture was heated at 110 °C under oxygen atmosphere for 4 h.

Supernatant of the reaction mixture was scooped by pipet. Additional toluene (5 mL) was added to solid residue and washed the solid then the supernatant was scooped by pipet. This washing procedure was repeated for four times. All of toluene solution was combined and concentrated. Crude product was purified by flash chromatography (silica gel/hexane–EtOAc 3:1) to give **2** in 98% yield (0.373 g, 2.05 mmol). MnO_2 residue was examined for the recycling use of the oxidant (Scheme 4, see below). White solid; mp 47–48 °C (lit. 47–51 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.80 (dd, $J=8.2, 1.2$ Hz, 4H), 7.59 (dd, $J=10.6, 4.3$ Hz, 2H), 7.48 (dd, $J=10.8, 4.8$ Hz, 4H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 196.9, 137.7 (2C), 132.5 (2C), 130.2 (4C), 128.4 (4C).

Other benzaldehydes **4** were prepared in a similar manner.

3.1.1. *p*-Anisaldehyde (4b**).** Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.88 (s, 1H), 7.84 (d, $J=8.9$ Hz, 2H), 7.00 (d, $J=8.8$ Hz, 2H), 3.89 (s, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 191.0, 164.7, 132.1 (2C), 130.0, 114.4 (2C), 55.7.

3.1.2. *m*-Anisaldehyde (4c**).** Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.98 (s, 1H), 7.48–7.41 (m, 2H), 7.39 (d, $J=2.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.18 (dt, $J=6.6, 2.6$ Hz, 1H), 3.87 (s, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 192.4, 160.2, 137.9, 130.2, 123.8, 121.7, 112.0, 55.6.

3.1.3. Piperonal (4d**).** White solid; mp 34.5–35 °C (lit. 35–39 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.81 (s, 1H), 7.41 (dd, $J=7.9, 1.6$ Hz, 1H), 7.33 (d, $J=1.5$ Hz, 1H), 6.93 (d, $J=7.9$ Hz, 1H), 6.07 (s, 2H), 1.57 (s, 2H);

^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 190.5, 153.2, 148.8, 132.0, 128.9, 108.5, 107.0, 102.2.

3.1.4. 3,4-Dimethoxybenzaldehyde (**4e**). White solid; mp 41.5–42.5 °C (lit. 40–43 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.85 (s, 1H), 7.46 (dd, $J=8.2, 1.9$ Hz, 1H), 7.41 (d, $J=1.8$ Hz, 1H), 6.98 (d, $J=8.2$ Hz, 1H), 3.97 (s, 3H), 3.94 (s, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 191.1, 154.6, 149.7, 130.2, 127.1, 110.4, 108.9, 56.3, 56.1.

3.1.5. 2-Naphthaldehyde (**4f**). White solid; mp 58–59 °C (lit. 58–61 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 10.16 (s, 1H), 8.35 (d, $J=0.5$ Hz, 1H), 8.01 (dd, $J=8.2, 0.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.96 (dd, $J=8.5, 1.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.94 (d, $J=8.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.91 (d, $J=8.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.65 (ddd, $J=8.2, 6.9, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.59 (ddd, $J=8.1, 6.9, 1.3$ Hz, 1H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 192.5, 136.6, 134.8, 134.2, 132.7, 129.6, 129.3, 129.2, 128.2, 127.2, 122.9.

3.1.6. 2-Furfural (**4g**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.66 (s, 1H), 7.90–7.55 (m, 1H), 7.25 (dd, $J=3.6, 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 6.60 (dt, $J=3.4, 1.3$ Hz, 1H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 178.0, 153.0, 148.2, 121.2, 112.7.

3.1.7. 4-Nitrobenzaldehyde (**4h**). Pale yellow solid; mp 102.5–103 °C (lit. 103–106 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 10.16 (s, 1H), 8.40 (d, $J=8.5$ Hz, 2H), 8.07 (d, $J=8.2$ Hz, 2H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 190.4, 151.2, 140.1, 130.6 (2C), 124.4 (2C).

3.1.8. 2-Nitrobenzaldehyde (**4i**). Pale yellow solid; mp 41–42 °C (lit. 42–44 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 10.43 (s, 1H), 8.12 (d, $J=7.9$ Hz, 1H), 7.96 (d, $J=7.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.80 (t, $J=7.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.76 (t, $J=7.4$ Hz, 1H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 188.3, 134.2, 133.8, 131.5, 129.8, 124.6.

3.1.9. 4-Chlorobenzaldehyde (**4j**). White solid; mp 44.5–45 °C (lit. 45–50 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.98 (s, 1H), 7.82 (d, $J=8.3$ Hz, 2H), 7.52 (d, $J=8.5$ Hz, 2H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 191.1, 141.1, 134.8, 131.0 (2C), 129.6 (2C).

3.1.10. 4-Bromobenzaldehyde (**4k**). White solid; mp 55–56 °C (lit. 55–58 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.97 (s, 1H), 7.75 (d, $J=8.3$ Hz, 2H), 7.69 (d, $J=8.4$ Hz, 2H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 191.2, 135.1, 132.6 (2C), 131.1 (2C), 129.9.

3.1.11. 2,6-Dichlorobenzaldehyde (**4l**). White solid; mp 67–68 °C (lit. 69–71 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 10.44 (s, 1H), 7.34 (s, 2H), 7.21 (s, 1H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 188.9, 137.0, 133.7 (2C), 130.5, 129.9 (2C).

3.1.12. 3-Bromobenzaldehyde (**4m**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.96 (s, 1H), 8.01 (s, 1H), 7.81 (d, $J=7.6$ Hz, 1H), 7.75 (ddt, $J=8.0, 1.8, 0.8$ Hz, 1H), 7.42 (t, $J=7.8$ Hz, 1H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 190.9, 138.1, 137.4, 132.5, 130.7, 128.5, 123.5.

3.1.13. 4-Tolualdehyde (**4n**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.95 (s, 1H), 7.77 (d, $J=7.9$ Hz, 2H), 7.32 (d, $J=7.9$ Hz, 2H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 192.1, 145.7, 134.3, 130.0 (2C), 129.8 (2C), 22.0.

3.1.14. 3-Tolualdehyde (**4o**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.98 (s, 1H), 7.72–7.61 (m, 2H), 7.47–7.33 (m, 2H), 2.43 (s, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 192.8, 139.0, 136.5, 135.4, 130.1, 129.0, 127.3, 21.3.

3.1.15. 2-Tolualdehyde (**4p**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 10.27 (s, 1H), 7.80 (dd, $J=7.6, 1.3$ Hz, 1H), 7.47 (td, $J=7.5, 1.4$ Hz, 1H), 7.36 (t, $J=7.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.26 (d, $J=7.0$ Hz, 1H), 2.67 (s, 3H);

^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 193.0, 140.7, 134.2, 133.8, 132.2, 131.9, 126.4, 19.7.

3.1.16. 4-Methylacetophenone (**6**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.85 (d, $J=8.2$ Hz, 2H), 7.25 (d, $J=8.6$ Hz, 2H), 2.57 (s, 3H), 2.41 (s, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 198.0, 144.0, 134.8, 129.3 (2C), 128.5 (2C), 26.6, 21.7.

3.1.17. Cinnamaldehyde (**8a**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.69 (d, $J=8.1$ Hz, 1H), 7.62–7.51 (m, 2H), 7.47 (dd, $J=16.1, 1.5$ Hz, 1H), 7.47–7.34 (m, 3H), 6.71 (ddd, $J=15.8, 7.6, 0.7$ Hz, 1H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 193.9, 153.0, 134.1, 131.4, 129.2, 128.7, 128.6.

3.1.18. Citroneral (**8b**). Colorless oil; ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.98 (d, $J=8.2$ Hz, 1H), 5.87 (d, $J=8.1$ Hz, 1H), 5.11–5.01 (m, 1H), 2.25–2.17 (m, 4H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 1.67 (s, 3H), 1.60 (s, 3H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 191.5, 164.1, 133.1, 127.5, 122.6, 40.7, 25.8, 25.7, 17.9, 17.7.

3.1.19. Terephthalaldehyde (**10a**). White solid; mp 112–113 °C (lit. 114–116 °C); ^1H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 10.13 (s, 2H), 8.05 (s, 4H); ^{13}C NMR (126 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 191.6 (2C), 140.1 (2C), 130.3 (2C).

3.2. Procedure for leaching test (Scheme 3)

A mixture of benzyl alcohol **3a** (0.1195 g, 1.105 mmol), tridecane (internal standard, 0.1971 g, 1.069 mmol) and MnO_2 (59.8 mg, 0.68 mmol) in toluene (10 mL) was heated at 110 °C under oxygen atmosphere for 10 min. GC analysis revealed the yield of benzaldehyde **4a** was 7%. The reaction mixture was divided into two, one was supernatant, and the other was the reaction mixture containing MnO_2 . The two reaction mixture were heated at 110 °C under oxygen atmosphere for additional 5 h. GC analyses indicated the yields of **4a** were 7% for the former solution and 100% for the latter mixture.

3.3. Recycling use of MnO_2 (Scheme 4), second time and later

A mixture of **1** (0.365 g, 1.98 mmol) and MnO_2 (recovered from the reaction of **1**, see above) in toluene (10 mL) was heated at 110 °C under oxygen atmosphere for 6 h. Supernatant of the reaction mixture was separated and MnO_2 residue was washed with toluene for three times. The supernatant and the wash solution were combined and evaporated. Crude product was purified through flash chromatography (silica gel/hexane–EtOAc 3:1) to give **2** in 42% yield (0.150 g, 0.82 mmol). The third time use was examined from **1** (0.343 g, 1.876 mmol) and **2** was isolated in 24% yield (0.080 g, 0.44 mmol). The fourth time use was examined from **1** (0.311 g, 1.69 mmol) and **2** was isolated in 16% yield (0.048 g, 0.263 mmol).

Supplementary data

Spectroscopic charts for compounds **2**, **4**, **6**, **8**, and **10**. Supplementary data related to this article can be found at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tet.2013.04.109>.

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