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Mercuric Nitrate-Mediated Deprotection of Oximes, Hydrazones, and Semicarbazones

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ABSTRACT

Mercuric nitrate in wet silica gel is found to be an excellent reagent for the regeneration of carbonyl compounds from oximes, hydrazones, and semicarbazones.

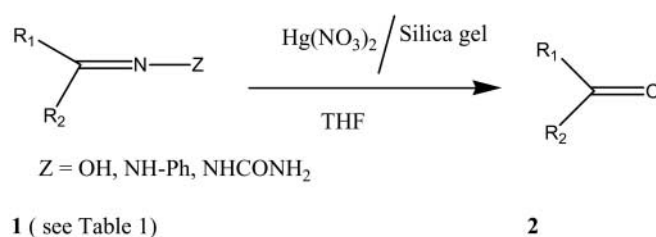
Key Words: Mercuric nitrate; Oximes; Hydrazones; Semicarbazones.

INTRODUCTION

Oximes, hydrazones, and semicarbazones are useful as preferred derivatives for the identification and characterization of carbonyl compounds.^[1] Since oximes can be prepared from non-carbonyl compounds,

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the regeneration of carbonyl compounds from oximes provides an alternative method for the preparation of aldehydes and ketones.^[2] Furthermore, they play an important role by protecting^[3] and selectively α -activating groups^[4] in organic chemistry. Therefore, there has been a continued interest in the development of procedures for the effective regeneration of carbonyl compounds from the corresponding stable and readily prepared oximes, hydrazones, and semicarbazones. As a result, several methods have been reported for the regeneration of carbonyl compounds from their oximes such as pyridinium chlorochromate,^[5] pyridinium chlorochromate-hydrogen peroxide,^[6] triethyl ammonium-chlorochromate,^[7] chromic-anhydride-chlorotrimethylsilane,^[8] dinitrogen tetroxide,^[9] titanium silicate,^[10] *N*-haloamide,^[11] manganese triacetate,^[12] Dess-Martin periodane,^[13] tetrabutyl-ammonium peroxydisulfate,^[14] clay supported ammonium chlorochromate,^[15] and clayfen.^[16] Although some of these methods are carried out under mild reaction conditions, most of them require strong acidic media, a strong oxidizing agent (which causes over oxidation), and expensive, and not readily available reagents. Additionally, they can require long reaction times for the regeneration of carbonyl compounds from oximes. Recently, some microwave techniques have been reported,^[17] which are valuable methods from the synthetic standpoint, but extreme precautions have to be taken as these reactions were performed under microwave irradiation or ultrasonic irradiation with an oxidant. Little attention has been paid to the regeneration of carbonyl compounds from hydrazones and semicarbazones.^[9,13,18,19] Thus, there is still a need to develop a new and facile procedure for the regeneration of carbonyl compounds from oximes, hydrazones, and semicarbazones.



2a. $\text{R}_1 = \text{R}_2 = \text{C}_6\text{H}_5$; **2b.** $\text{R}_1 = \text{C}_6\text{H}_5$, $\text{R}_2 = \text{Me}$; **2c.** $\text{R}_1 = p\text{-MeOC}_6\text{H}_4$, $\text{R}_2 = \text{H}$; **2d.** $\text{R}_1 = p\text{-BrC}_6\text{H}_4$, $\text{R}_2 = \text{H}$; **2e.** $\text{R}_1 = \text{R}_2 = -(\text{CH}_2)_5-$; **2f.** $\text{R}_1 = \text{R}_2 = -(\text{CH}_2)_4-$; **2g.** $\text{R}_1 = \text{C}_6\text{H}_5$, $\text{R}_2 = \text{H}$; **2h.** $\text{R}_1 = p\text{-ClC}_6\text{H}_4$, $\text{R}_2 = \text{Me}$; **2i.** $\text{R}_1 = p\text{-MeOC}_6\text{H}_4$, $\text{R}_2 = \text{Me}$.



Mercuric nitrate is an inexpensive reagent, which has been used extensively as an oxidizing agent.^[20] I believe this is the first report using mercuric nitrate as the reagent for the deprotection of oximes, hydrazones, and semicarbazones. Several oximes were deoximated using mercuric nitrate in silica gel in the presence of a small amount of water under reflux condition in tetrahydrofuran. Semicarbazones and hydrazones were deprotected the same way (Table 1). The conversions were clean and no undesirable side products

Table 1. Deprotection of oximes, hydrazones, and semicarbazones with mercuric nitrate in wet silica gel.

Entry	Substrate (1)	Product (2)	Time (hr)	Yield (%)	M.p./b.p. (°C) Lit ^a /obs
1	Benzophenone oxime	2a	6	94	48–49/46–47
2	Acetophenone oxime	2b	8	91	202/200–202
3	4-Methoxybenzaldehyde oxime	2c	5	86	248/245–247
4	4-Bromobenzaldehyde oxime	2d	5	89	55–58/55–57
5	Cyclohexanone oxime	2e	4	93	155/150–152
6	Cyclopentanone oxime	2f	5	88	130–131/ 128–129
7	Benzaldehyde oxime	2g	5	83	178–179/ 179–180
8	4-Chloroacetophenone oxime	2h	6	92	232/229–231
9	Benzophenone semicarbazone	2a	8	91	
10	4-Bromobenzaldehyde semicarbazone	2d	7	82	
11	4-Chloroacetophenone semicarbazone	2h	8	90	
12	Cyclohexanone semicarbazone	2e	5	88	
13	Acetophenone semicarbazone	2b	7	86	
14	Benzophenone phenylhydrazone	2a	8	83	
15	4-Chloroacetophenone phenylhydrazone	2h	4	89	
16	4-Bromobenzaldehyde phenylhydrazone	2d	7	91	
17	4-Methoxyacetophenone phenylhydrazone	2i	5	88	36–38/34–35

^aAvailable from Aldrich Chemical Company.



were observed. A few drops of water and silica gel were found to be essential for the success of the reaction. Without silica gel support, the reaction is sluggish with mercuric nitrate even after prolonged reaction periods.

In conclusion, a facile method has been developed for the regeneration of carbonyl compounds from their respective oximes, hydrazones, and semicarbazones using mercuric nitrate in wet silica gel.

EXPERIMENTAL

All the products are known compounds and were checked by comparison of their spectral data (IR, ^1H NMR) and physical properties with an authentic sample. The reaction was monitored by thin layer chromatography on silica gel because overoxidation may occur in some cases after cleavage of protecting groups. All yields refer to isolated products.

General Procedure for the Regeneration of Carbonyl Compounds from Oximes, Hydrazones, and Semicarbazones with Mercuric Nitrate

A mixture of substrate (oxime or hydrazone or semicarbazone, 1 mmol), mercuric nitrate monohydrate (1 mmol), silica gel (1 g), and water (1 mL) in THF (10 mL) was refluxed for the specified time (Table 1). After completion of the reaction, the reaction mixture was filtered. Then the filtrate was extracted with ethyl acetate and washed with sodium bicarbonate and water. The organic layer was dried over magnesium sulfate then concentrated and filtered through short silica gel column to afford a pure product in good to excellent yield.

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