

Pd-Catalyzed C–H Activation/C–N Bond Formation: A New Route to 1-Aryl-1*H*-benzotriazoles

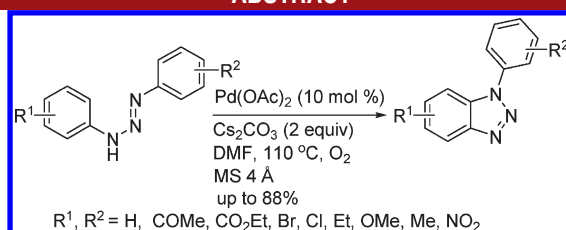
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Received February 25, 2011

ABSTRACT



A method for the C–H activation of aryl triazene compounds followed by intramolecular amination is described. It involves the use of a catalytic amount of Pd(OAc)_2 that efficiently effects the cyclization to provide 1-aryl-1*H*-benzotriazoles at moderate temperature.

Recent advances in cross-coupling reactions using transition metal catalysis provide effective methods for C–N bond formation.¹ Among them, C–H activation and

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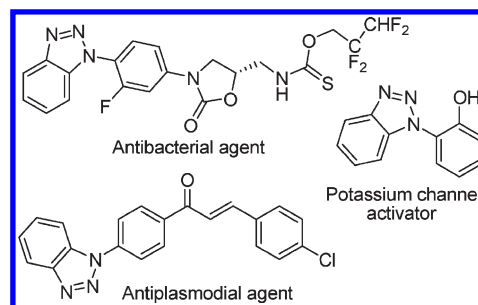
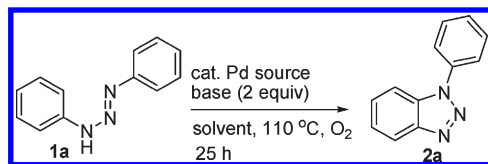


Figure 1. Examples of some biologically active 1-aryl-1*H*-benzotriazoles.

functionalization afford a simple and powerful tool for an atom economical process. Notable progress has been made using predominantly Ru,² Rh,³ Pd,⁴ Ag,⁵ and Cu⁶ based systems. Herein, we report a new approach to the

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Table 1. Optimization of Reaction Conditions

entry	Pd source	base	solvent	yield (%) ^{a,b}
1	Pd(OAc) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	DMSO	36
2	PdCl ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	DMSO	30
3	PdCl ₂ (PPh ₃) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	DMSO	15
4	Pd(OAc)₂	Cs₂CO₃	DMF	65(80^c)
5	Pd(OAc) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	DMF	23 ^d
6	Pd(OAc) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	xylene	n.d.
7	Pd(OAc) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	chlorobenzene	n.d.
8	Pd(OAc) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	1,4-dioxane	3
9	Pd(OAc) ₂	Na ₂ CO ₃	DMF	12
10	Pd(OAc) ₂	K ₂ CO ₃	DMF	72
11	Pd(OAc) ₂	KOH	DMF	5
12	Pd(OAc) ₂	K ₃ PO ₄	DMF	25
13	Pd(OAc) ₂	KO ^t Bu	DMF	n.d.
14	Pd(OAc) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	DMF	55 ^e
15	Pd(OAc) ₂	Cs ₂ CO ₃	DMF	32 ^f
16	-	Cs ₂ CO ₃	DMF	n.d.

^a (Phenylimino)-2-phenylhydrazine **1a** (1 mmol), Pd source (10 mol %), and base (2 mmol) were stirred at 110 °C in solvent (1 mL) under an oxygen balloon. ^b Isolated yield. ^c With MS 4 Å (100 mg). ^d Pd(OAc)₂ (5 mol %) used. ^e 1.5 equiv of Cs₂CO₃ was used. ^f Reaction temperature = 100 °C. n.d. = not detected.

synthesis of substituted 1-aryl-1H-benzotriazoles⁷ via Pd-catalyzed intramolecular C–H amination of triazene moieties. This method features the use of Pd(OAc)₂ that successfully effects C–H activation followed by C–N cross-coupling to afford the cyclized products at moderate temperatures.

1H-Benzotriazoles are among the most important classes of heterocycles in biological and medicinal sciences. For example, 1H-benzotriazoles are structural motifs of many compounds that possess antibacterial, anticancer, antidepressant, antifungal, and antimalarial activities

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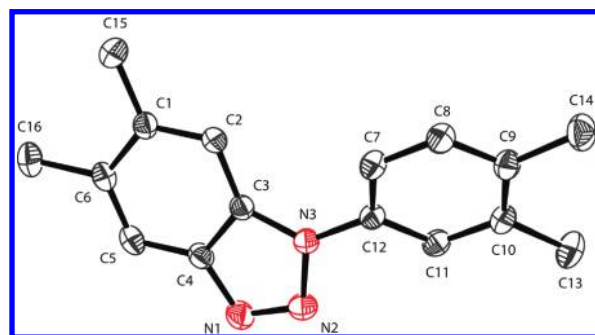
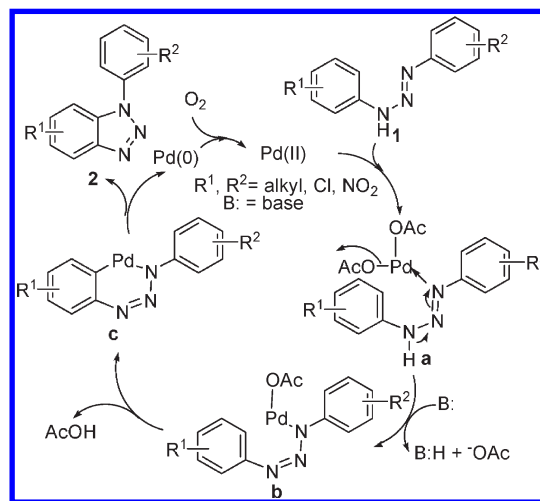


Figure 2. ORTEP diagram of 5,6-dimethyl-1-(3,4-dimethylphenyl)-1H-benzo[d][1,2,3]triazole **2m**. H-Atoms are omitted for clarity.¹⁴

Scheme 1. Proposed Catalytic Cycle



(Figure 1).⁸ They are also useful synthons in some versions of the Graebe–Ullmann reaction,⁹ especially in the synthesis of pyridoacridine,¹⁰ carboline,¹¹ and tetraazapentalenes.¹² 1H-Benzotriazoles also serve as synthetic auxiliaries in amidoalkylation, insertion, and imidoylation that have been used for the synthesis of heterocyclic compounds.^{10,11a,13} Development of newer methods for the construction of the functionalized 1H-benzotriazoles is thus important in synthetic organic chemistry.

First, the reaction conditions were optimized using (phenylimino)-2-phenylhydrazine **1a** as a model substrate with different Pd sources, solvents, and bases at varied temperature (Table 1). The reaction occurred to afford the desired 1-aryl-1H-benzotriazole **2a** in 36% yield when the substrate was stirred with 10 mol % Pd(OAc)₂ in DMSO at

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Table 2. Cyclization of (Phenylimino)-2-phenylhydrazines with Various Substituents on the Aryl Rings^a

entry	substrate	product (yield) ^{a,b,c}	entry	substrate	product (yield) ^{a,b,c}
1		 2a (80%)	13		 2h (60%)
2		 2b (80%)	14		 2i (72%)
3		 1c	15		 2j (75%)
4		 1d	16		 2k (72%)
5		 1e	17		 2l (75%)
6		 1f	18		 2m (88%)
7		 1g	19		 2n (77%)
8		 1h			
9		 1i			
10		 2f (72%)			
11		 2g (72%)			
12		 2f (57%)			

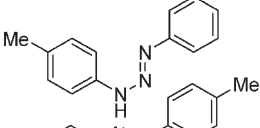
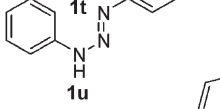
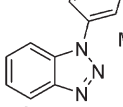
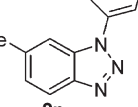
^a Reaction conditions: substrate **1a–s** (1 mmol), Pd(OAc)₂ (10 mol %), Cs₂CO₃ (2 mmol), and MS 4 Å (100 mg) were stirred in DMF (1 mL) at 110 °C under an O₂ balloon. ^b Isolated yield. ^c Single isomer. n.d. = not detected.

110 °C under an oxygen balloon. The catalytic activity of the Pd sources were compared, and Pd(OAc)₂ was found to

(14) Recrystallization of **2m** in CH₂Cl₂ gave single crystals whose X-ray data were collected on a Bruker SMART APEX equipped with a CCD area detector using Mo K α radiation in the scan range 1.47°–28.02°; C₁₆H₁₇N₃, *M*_w = 251.3304, orthorhombic; *Pbca*; *a* = 13.2943(7) Å, *b* = 7.4099(4) Å, *c* = 27.6216(14) Å; $\alpha = 90^\circ$, $\beta = 90^\circ$, $\gamma = 90^\circ$; *V* = 2721.0(2) Å³; *Z* = 8; *D*_{calcd} = 1.227 mg m⁻³; *T* = 296(2) K; Scan range 1.47° < θ < 28.02°; crystal dimension 0.44 × 0.36 × 0.26 mm³; 3161 reflns, 1810 unique reflections (*I* > 2 σ (*I*)); *R*₁ = 0.0497; *wR*₂ = 0.1191; GOF (on *F*²) = 0.995.

be superior to PdCl₂ and PdCl₂(PPh₃)₂. Replacing the solvent from DMSO to DMF gave **2a** in 65% yield. The yield of **2a** was further increased to 80% when a 4 Å molecular sieve was added as an additive. In contrast, solvents such as xylene, chlorobenzene, and 1,4-dioxane gave inferior results. The reaction was effective with Cs₂CO₃, K₂CO₃, K₃PO₄, KOH, and Na₂CO₃, and Cs₂CO₃ yielded the best results. No product was obtained using KO^tBu as the base. Lowering of the reaction temperature

Table 3. Cyclization of Unsymmetrical (Phenylimino)-2-phenylhydrazines^a

entry	substrate	products ^b		yield ^c
		2o:2p		
1		2:1		75%
2		2:1		75%
				

^a Reaction conditions: substrate **1t–u** (1 mmol), Pd(OAc)₂ (10 mol %), Cs₂CO₃ (2 mmol), and MS 4 Å (100 mg) were stirred in DMF (1 mL) at 110 °C under an O₂ balloon. ^b Regioisomeric ratio was determined by 400 MHz ¹H NMR of the crude reaction mixture. ^c Isolated yield.

(100 °C) or the amount of the catalyst (5 mol %) or the base (1.5 equiv) gave **2a** in < 55% yield. Control experiments confirmed that no product was obtained in the absence of the palladium source. In summary, the optimal conditions in DMF include Pd(OAc)₂ (10 mol %) and Cs₂CO₃ (2 equiv) at 110 °C for 25 h under an oxygen balloon.

Next, the scope of the protocol was studied for the substrates having substituents on the aryl rings (Table 2). (Phenylimino)-2-phenylhydrazines **1b**, **1e–g**, and **1i** having two 3-NO₂, 4-Cl, 4-Et, and 4-Me substituents proceeded in the C–H amination to afford the benzotriazoles **2b** and **2c–e** in 70–85% yield. In contrast, the substrates **1c–d** and **1h** with two 4-COMe, 4-CO₂Et, and 4-OMe groups showed no cyclization and the starting materials were recovered, whereas (phenylimino)-2-phenylhydrazines **1j–s** having Cl, Me, and Et substituents readily

underwent cyclization to give the corresponding benzotriazoles **2f–n** in 55–88% yield. Recrystallization of **2m** in CH₂Cl₂ gave single crystals whose structure was confirmed by X-ray analysis (Figure 2). The substrates **1e** and **1l** with a Br group provided the debrominated products **2a** and **2f** exclusively.^{4a} These results suggest that the cyclization is controlled by both steric and electronic factors on the aryl rings.

Finally, to reveal the regioselectivity, the reactions of the unsymmetrical substrates **1t–u** were studied (Table 3). Both of the substrates underwent cyclization to provide a 2:1 mixture of the regioisomers **2o** and **2p** in 75% yield. In both of the substrates, the cyclization occurred preferentially on the nonsubstituted aryl ring. These results suggest that the isomerization of triazenes can occur easily under the conditions used in this system.

The proposed catalytic cycle is shown in Scheme 1.^{4a} The substrates **1a–l** may undergo coordination with Pd(II) to give intermediate **a** that could lead to the formation of **b** in the presence of base. The latter may undergo C–H activation to give the six-membered palladacycle **c** that could afford the target 1-aryl-1H-benzotriazole and Pd(0). The reduced Pd could be oxidized in the presence of oxygen to complete the catalytic cycle.

In summary, a novel protocol for the synthesis of 1-aryl-1H-benzotriazole is developed via C–H activation followed by intramolecular amination employing a Pd(II) catalyst under relatively milder conditions. Further study to understand the precise mechanism as well as to expand the range of substrates is currently underway in our laboratory.

Acknowledgment. We thank the Department of Science and Technology, New Delhi, and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi, for financial support.

Supporting Information Available. Experimental procedure, characterization data, and NMR spectra (¹H and ¹³C) of the products. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.