Wittig Olefination of Trifluoromethyl Ketones and Allylic Carbonates Mediated by Phosphines

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Abstract: The Wittig olefination of trifluromethyl ketones and allylic carbonates mediated by tributylphosphine was realized to give corresponding trifluoromethyl dienes in good yields with excellent *E*-selectivities.

Key words: Wittig, trifluoromethyl ketones, trifluoromethyl olefins, ylides, allylic carbonate

The phosphonium ylide has become established as a classic reagent for the olefination of carbonyl groups.¹ Generally, phosphonium ylides are generated from the salt of phosphine and haloalkanes in the presence of base (Scheme 1, equation a). In 1995, Lu et al. reported their pioneering phosphine-catalyzed [3+2] annulation of allenoates with electron-deficient olefins, involving phosphonium zwitterions (1,3-dipole) as the key intermediate (Scheme 1, equation b).^{2a} The phosphine-catalyzed annulation of allenoate then becomes a powerful tool for the construction of (hetero)cycles.² In 2003, the same group reported the generation of phosphonium allylic ylides from allylic carbonates and the application of these intermediates in annulation reactions (Scheme 1, equation c).³

In the past decade, allylic carbonates⁴ were successfully used as C_3 synthons in phosphine-catalyzed [3+2] annulations with olefins⁵ and imines,⁶ in [3+4] annulation with coumalate,⁷ and in [3+6] annulation⁸ with tropone. In addition, allylic carbonates were also used as C_1 synthons for phosphine-catalyzed [4+1] annulation.⁹ Interestingly, a phosphine-mediated Wittig olefination reaction of allylic carbonates and aldehydes was reported recently by He et al. (Scheme 1, equation d).¹⁰

Recently, we have reported an oxygen-version of the [3+2] annulation of allenoates with trifluoromethyl ketones, previously developed by Lu et al. (Scheme 2, equation a).¹¹ The use of trifluoromethyl ketones was the key to the success of the annulation reaction, compared with previously reported use of aldehydes.¹² Considering the many applications of fluorinated compounds¹³ and the ready availability of the allylic carbonates through Morita–Baylis–Hillman reaction,¹⁴ we were interested in exploring the phosphine-catalyzed (or mediated) reaction of allylic carbonates and trifluoromethyl ketones. The possible competition between annulation and olefination¹⁵ was also interesting (Scheme 2, equation b).

Initially, the model reaction of allylic carbonate **1a** and trifluoromethyl ketone **2a** with 10 mol% triphenylphosphine as the catalyst was investigated. No annulation product and only a trace of olefination product **3aa** was observed, along with the recovery of the substrates, for the 'catalytic' reaction. Based on an analysis of the mechanism (see below), it is clear that phosphine acts as the reagent for the olefination reaction. Thus, significantly more phosphine





EWG = electron-withdrawing group

Scheme 1 Generation of phosphonium ylides and their reactions



Scheme 2 Comparison of the reactions of allenoates and allylic carbonates with trifluoromethyl ketones

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was employed to optimize the reaction conditions (Table 1). It was found that 69% total yield of the olefination products was obtained when two equivalents of triphenylphosphine (Ph₃P) was used, albeit with poor E/Zselectivity (Table 1, entry 1). Solvent screening resulted in varied yields without improvement of E/Z-selectivities (Table 1, entries 2-6). Several phosphines were then tested in the reaction (Table 1, entries 7-13). Besides triphenylphosphine, other triarylphosphines with either electron-withdrawing (4-F, Cl) or electron-donating (4-Me, MeO) groups gave olefination products in similar yields and E/Z-selectivity (Table 1, entries 7-10). Better E/Z-selectivity resulted when methyldiphenylphosphine was used (Table 1, entry 11). Finally, trimethylphosphine and tri(*n*-butyl)phosphine were identified as optimal; application of these reagents gave the dienes in good yield with excellent *E*/*Z*-selectivity (Table 1, entries 12 and 13). In addition, no loss of yield or selectivity was observed when the amount of phosphine was reduced from 2 to 1.5 equivalents (Table 1, entry 14).

With the optimized reaction conditions in hand, the reaction scope was then briefly investigated (Table 2). It was found that both aryltrifluoromethyl ketones with electron-

Table 1 Optimization of Reaction Conditions

OE Ph	Boc CO ₂ Me + Ph (2.0)	$ \begin{array}{c} O \\ CF_3 \\ CF_3 \\ solve \\ aquiv) $	2.0 equiv) ent, reflux	E CO ₂ Me
	1a	2a	(ma	ajor isomer) 3aa
Entry	R ₃ P	Solvent	dr ratio ^a	Yield (%) ^b
1	Ph ₃ P	CH ₂ Cl ₂	1:0.17:0.1	69
2	Ph ₃ P	toluene	1:0.14:0.21	66
3	Ph ₃ P	THF	1:0.13:0.17	66
4	Ph ₃ P	MeCN	1:1.36:0.12	42
5	Ph ₃ P	EtOAc	1:1.0:0.44	48
6	Ph ₃ P	MeOH	N.D. ^c	0
7	$(4-FC_6H_4)_3P$	CH_2Cl_2	1:0.14:0.26	53
8	$(4-ClC_6H_4)_3P$	CH_2Cl_2	1:0.14:0.23	47
9	$(4-\text{MeOC}_6\text{H}_4)_3\text{P}$	CH_2Cl_2	1:0.19:0.13	52
10	$(4-\text{MeC}_6\text{H}_4)_3\text{P}$	CH_2Cl_2	1:0.19:0.13	54
11	Ph ₂ PMe	CH_2Cl_2	1:0.10:0.03	53
12	Me ₃ P	CH_2Cl_2	1:0:0.04	49
13	$(n-\mathrm{Bu})_3\mathrm{P}$	CH_2Cl_2	1:0:0.03	57
14	$(n-Bu)_3 P^d$	CH_2Cl_2	1:0:0.03	65

^a Determined by ¹H NMR (300 MHz) analysis of the isolated product with (E,E)-**3aa** as the major isomer.

^b Isolated yield.

^c N.D. = not determined.

^d 1.5 equivalents were used.

donating $(Ar = 4-Me, 4-MeOC_6H_4)$ and electron-withdrawing $(Ar = 4 - ClC_6H_4)$ substituents worked well, to furnish the corresponding dienes in good yields (Table 2, entries 2–4). Ketone 2e, with a meta-methylphenyl group worked well to give the corresponding diene 3ae in 69% yield (Table 2, entry 5). Ketone 2f, with a 2-thienyl group, also worked but with somewhat low yield (Table 2, entry 6). Several allylic carbonates with a range of aryl groups were also tested (Table 2, entries 7-10). Substrates with both electron-donating (Ar = 4-Me C_6H_4) and electronwithdrawing substituents (Ar = 4-ClC₆H₄) were tolerated (Table 2, entries 7-8). Both meta- and ortho-substituted substrates (1d and 1e, R = 3-ClC₆H₄, 2-ClC₆H₄) showed comparable results to those obtained with para-substituted substrates (1c, R = 4-ClC₆H₄; Table 2, entries 9, 10 vs. 8). The structure of the diene **3aa** was unambiguously established by X-ray analysis of its crystal (Figure 1).

 Table 2
 Wittig Olefination of Morita–Baylis–Hillman Carbonates

 with Trifluoromethylketones
 Page 100 (2000)

		2Me + Ar (2.0 equ	Ar CF_3 CH_2Cl_2 , reflux (2.0 equiv) 24 h			CO ₂ Me E CF ₃	
Entry	1	R	2	Ar	3	Yield (%) ^a	
1	1a	Ph	2a	Ph	3aa	65	
2	1 a	Ph	2b	$4-MeC_6H_4$	3ab	58	
3	1 a	Ph	2c	$4-MeOC_6H_4$	3ac	69	
4	1a	Ph	2d	$4-ClC_6H_4$	3ad	61	
5	1a	Ph	2e	$3-\text{MeC}_6\text{H}_4$	3ae	69	
6	1a	Ph	2f	2-thienyl	3af	58	
7	1b	$4-MeC_6H_4$	2a	Ph	3ba	67	
8	1c	$4-ClC_6H_4$	2a	Ph	3ca	72	
9	1d	$3-ClC_6H_4$	2a	Ph	3da	66	
10	1e	2-ClC ₆ H ₄	2a	Ph	3ea	76	

^a Isolated yield of (E,E)-**3** with dr >20:1 in all cases.

A possible mechanism for the olefination reaction is depicted in Scheme 3. The phosphonium allylic ylide **A** is initially generated from the phosphine and allylic carbonate. Addition of the ylide to the trifluoromethyl ketone gives the adduct **B**, which collapses to furnish the dienes and phosphine oxide. The vicinal position of the oxygen and phosphine oxide, which gives dienes as the product rather than dihydrofuran as for the reaction of allenoate with ketone.¹¹ The better *E*-selectivity for the olefination catalyzed by $(n-Bu)_3P$ rather than Ph₃P may be due to the favored formation of trialkylphosphine oxide.



Figure 1 X-ray structure of diene 3aa



Scheme 3 Proposed reaction mechanism

In conclusion, the trialkylphosphine-mediated Wittig olefination of trifluoromethyl ketones gives the corresponding trifluoromethyl dienes in good yields with good *E*selectivities. The formation of olefins is different to the reported formation of dihydrofuran for the phosphine-catalyzed annulation of allenoates and ketones.

Unless otherwise indicated, all starting materials were obtained from commercial suppliers and used as received. The allylic carbonates were prepared according to literature methods.^{3,5–8} Anhydrous THF and toluene were distilled from sodium and benzophenone. Anhydrous CH₂Cl₂ was distilled from CaH₂. Anhydrous EtOAc and MeCN were dried over molecular sieves. All reactions utilizing air- or moisture-sensitive reagents were performed in oven-dried glassware with magnetic stirring under a nitrogen atmosphere. Column chromatography was performed with silica gel 200–300 mesh.

Wittig Olefination of Allylic Carbonates with Trifluoromethylketones; Typical Procedure

To a stirred solution of allylic carbonate 1 (0.25 mmol) and trifluoromethylketone 2 (0.5 mmol) in CH_2Cl_2 (5 mL), was added tributylphosphine (0.375 mmol). The solution was stirred at reflux temperature for 24 h. The reaction mixture was concentrated under reduced pressure, and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (CH_2Cl_2 -petroleum ether, typically 3:1) to furnish the corresponding diene **3**.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 2-Benzylidene-5,5,5-trifluoro-4-phenylpent-3-enoate (3aa)

Yield: 76 mg (65%); white solid; mp 92–93 °C; $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1716, 1645, 1494, 1358, 1259, 1167, 953, 898, 765 $\rm cm^{-1}.$

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.48 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.28–7.15 (m, 8 H), 7.07–7.05 (m, 2 H), 7.01–7.00 (m, 1 H), 3.31 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 166.9, 143.3, 134.62 (q, J = 29.3 Hz), 134.58, 132.7, 130.2, 129.9, 128.8, 128.75, 128.73, 128.6 (q, J = 6.2 Hz), 128.4, 126.9, 123.6 (q, J = 272 Hz), 52.0.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -64.8$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for $C_{19}H_{15}F_3O_2$: 332.1024; found: 332.1027.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 2-Benzylidene-5,5,5-trifluoro-4-*p*-tolylpent-3-enoate (3ab)

Yield: 70 mg (58%); white solid; mp 76–77 °C; $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1711, 1591, 1119, 892, 739 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.48 (d, *J* = 1.2 Hz, 1 H), 7.34–7.28 (m, 5 H), 7.01–6.95 (m, 5 H), 3.32 (s, 3 H), 2.21 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 167.1, 143.1, 138.8, 134.70 (q, J = 29.2 Hz), 134.67, 130.2, 129.9, 129.8, 128.7, 128.6, 128.2 (q, J = 6.2 Hz), 127.8, 127.1, 123.6 (q, J = 272 Hz), 52.0, 21.3.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -64.8$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₂₀H₁₇F₃O₂: 346.1181; found: 346.1185.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 2-Benzylidene-5,5,5-trifluoro-4-(4-methoxyphenyl)pent-3-enoate (3ac)

Yield: 85 mg (69%); white solid; mp 88–89 °C; $R_f = 0.3$ (petroleum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1718, 1607, 1514, 1254, 1169, 1114 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.49 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.35–7.29 (m, 5 H), 7.03–6.95 (m, 3 H), 6.74–6.69 (m, 2 H), 3.69 (s, 3 H), 3.37 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 167.2, 159.9, 143.0, 134.7, 134.4 (q, *J* = 29.2 Hz), 132.9 (q, *J* = 2.1 Hz), 130.2, 130.1, 129.9, 128.8, 127.9 (q, *J* = 6.2 Hz), 127.2, 123.7 (q, *J* = 272 Hz), 113.8, 55.3, 52.1.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -64.9$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₂₀H₁₇F₃O₃: 362.1130; found: 362.1134.

(2E,3E)-Methyl 2-Benzylidene-4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5,5,5-tri-fluoropent-3-enoate (3ad)

Yield: 76 mg (61%); white solid; mp 53–54 °C; $R_f = 0.5$ (petroleum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1722, 1636, 1492, 1286, 1172, 764 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.52 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.32–7.28 (m, 5 H), 7.17–7.12 (m, 2 H), 7.03–7.02 (m, 1 H), 6.96–6.93 (m, 2 H), 3.43 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 166.7, 143.8, 134.9, 134.5, 133.5 (q, *J* = 29.6 Hz), 131.1, 130.2, 130.12, 130.09, 129.2 (q, *J* = 6.2 Hz), 128.8, 128.7, 126.3, 123.3 (q, *J* = 272 Hz), 52.2.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -65.0$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₁₉H₁₄ClF₃O₂: 366.0634; found: 366.0638.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 2-Benzylidene-5,5,5-trifluoro-4-*m*-tolylpent-3enoate (3ae)

Yield: 84 mg (69%); colorless oil; $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum ether-EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1719, 1636, 1260, 1119, 693 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.47 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.30 (m, 5 H), 7.07 (t, *J* = 7.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.01–6.98 (m, 2 H), 6.88–6.81 (m, 2 H), 3.34 (s, 3 H), 2.17 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 167.0, 143.2, 138.0, 134.69 (q, J = 29.2 Hz), 134.68, 132.6, 130.2, 129.8, 129.6, 129.2, 128.8, 128.6, 128.4 (q, J = 6.2 Hz), 127.1, 125.9, 123.6 (q, J = 272 Hz), 52.0, 21.5.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -64.8$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₂₀H₁₇F₃O₂: 346.1181; found: 346.1184.

(2*E*,3*Z*)-Methyl 2-Benzylidene-5,5,5-trifluoro-4-(thiophen-2-yl)pent-3-enoate (3af)

Yield: 69 mg (58%); white solid; mp 70–71 °C; $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1716, 1596, 1433, 1286, 1257, 1172, 1121, 765 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.65 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.38–7.30 (m, 5 H), 7.24 (dd, *J* = 5.1, 1.2 Hz, 1 H), 7.00–6.96 (m, 2 H), 6.89 (dd, *J* = 8.1, 3.6 Hz, 1 H), 3.44 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 166.7, 144.3, 134.5, 133.2, 130.9, 130.2, 129.1, 128.9, 128.7, 128.3 (q, *J* = 6.1 Hz), 127.9, 127.2, 126.6, 123.1 (q, *J* = 272 Hz), 52.2.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -65.6$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₁₇H₁₃F₃O₂S: 338.0588; found: 338.0592.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 5,5,5-Trifluoro-2-(4-methylbenzylidene)-4-phenylpent-3-enoate (3ba)

Yield: 81 mg (67%); white solid; mp 121–122 °C; $R_f = 0.4$ (petro-leum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1711, 1603, 1261, 1162, 1106, 811, 739 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.48 (s, 1 H), 7.26–7.11 (m, 9 H), 7.00 (s, 1 H), 3.29 (s, 3 H), 2.30 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 167.1, 143.5, 140.5, 134.4 (q, J = 29.5 Hz), 132.9, 131.9, 130.4, 129.6, 128.9 (q, J = 6. 2 Hz), 128.85, 128.79, 128.4, 125.9, 123.7 (q, J = 272 Hz), 51.9, 21.6.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -64.8$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₂₀H₁₇F₃O₂: 346.1181; found: 346.1184.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 2-(4-Chlorobenzylidene)-5,5,5-trifluoro-4phenylpent-3-enoate (3ca)

Yield: 90 mg (72%); white solid; mp 118–119 °C; $R_f = 0.4$ (petro-leum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 2962, 1711, 1489, 1437, 1257, 1164, 823, 766 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.41 (s, 1 H), 7.28–7.14 (m, 7 H), 7.04–7.01 (m, 2 H), 6.96–6.95 (m, 1 H), 3.36 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 166.7, 141.8, 135.9, 135.1 (q, J = 29.5 Hz), 133.0, 132.5, 131.3, 129.1, 128.9, 128.7, 128.4, 128.1 (q, J = 6.2 Hz), 127.4, 123.5 (q, J = 272 Hz), 52.1.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -64.8$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₁₉H₁₄ClF₃O₂: 366.0634; found: 366.0637.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 2-(3-Chlorobenzylidene)-5,5,5-trifluoro-4phenylpent-3-enoate (3da)

Yield: 84 mg (66%); white solid; mp 74–75 °C; $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum ether–EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1723, 1434, 1288, 1172, 1120, 786 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.38 (s, 1 H), 7.24–7.23 (m, 1 H), 7.20–7.11 (m, 6 H), 7.00–6.96 (m, 3 H), 3.40 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 166.6, 141.5, 136.3, 135.2 (q, J = 29.5 Hz), 134.7, 132.3, 129.9, 129.8, 129.7, 128.7, 128.4, 128.3, 128.2, 127.94 (q, J = 6.3 Hz), 127.93, 123.4 (q, J = 272 Hz), 52.2.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): δ = -65.0.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₁₉H₁₄ClF₃O₂: 366.0634; found: 366.0637.

(2*E*,3*E*)-Methyl 2-(2-Chlorobenzylidene)-5,5,5-trifluoro-4phenylpent-3-enoate (3ea)

Yield: 95 mg (76%); colorless oil; $R_f = 0.4$ (petroleum ether-EtOAc, 10:1).

IR (KBr): 1715, 1594, 1435, 1250, 1171, 1119 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz): δ = 7.62 (s, 1 H), 7.30–7.11 (m, 7 H), 6.92–6.90 (m, 3 H), 3.44 (s, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz): δ = 166.7, 139.9, 134.82 (q, J = 29.4 Hz), 134.81, 133.0, 132.3, 130.8, 130.7, 129.9, 128.9, 128.8, 128.6, 128.4, 127.8 (q, J = 6.2 Hz), 126.6, 123.4 (q, J = 272 Hz), 52.3.

¹⁹F NMR (CDCl₃, 376 MHz): $\delta = -65.0$.

HRMS (EI): m/z [M]⁺ calcd for C₁₉H₁₄ClF₃O₂: 366.0634; found: 366.0638.

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