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An Effective Synthesis of 2-Trifluoromethyl- or 2-(1,1-Difluoroalkyl)thiophenes

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Various thiophenecarboxylates carrying a 2-trifluoromethyl, 2-(1,1difluoroalkyl) or 2-polyfluoroalkyl group are synthesized conveniently from reaction of α -fluoroalkyl ketones 1, aldehydes 2 or ethyl α-fluoroalkylacetates 3 with methyl (or ethyl) 2-sulfanylacetates 4. A possible reaction pathway is suggested.

Fluorine-containing heterocyclic compounds are important in both academic and industrial fields. Regioselective replacement of hydrogen in a molecule by a fluorine or fluoroalkyl group may have profound influence on the biological and physical properties of such compounds.¹ Synthesis of thiophenes carrying a fluorinated side chain has received considerable attention in recent years.² Trifluoromethylthiophenes have been synthesized, for example, by fluorination of thiophenecarboxylic acid with sulfur tetrafluoride,3 trifluoromethylation of thiophenes,4 substitution of halogen on thiophene by trifluoromethyl group,⁵ condensation of trifluoromethylated acetylenic esters with 2-sulfanylacetates⁶ and the reaction of certain fluorine-containing unsaturated compounds with phosphorus pentasulfide. However, methods for synthesis of such compounds are still quite limited and usually hazardous reagents, complicated products or long synthetic routes were involved.

α-Fluoroalkyl ketones 1, aldehydes 2, and acetates 3 have been proved to be versatile precursors in our previous synthesis of fluoroalkyl-containing pyrimidines⁸ and pyrazoles.⁹ Here we report the synthesis of 2-fluoroalkylthiophenes from reaction of such compounds with alkyl 2-sulfanylacetates 4.

In the presence of sodium methoxide, α-fluoroalkylcarbonyl compounds 1, 10 2 and 311 reacted with methyl 2-sulfanylacetate (4a) in methanol at r.t. for about 5 hours to afford compounds 5, 6 or 7 in high yields. The results are summarized in the Table and expressed in Schemes 1 and 2.

Such a condensation reaction proceeded smoothly with α -fluoroalkyl ketones 1 to give products 5 in good yields (Scheme 1). ¹⁹F NMR spectra of **5** revealed that the fluoroalkyl group contained one less carbon than that of the corresponding starting material 1, ¹H NMR showed an aromatic proton at $\delta = 7.0-7.8$ and UV spectrum showed absorption at λ_{max} : 260–280 nm. All these suggested the presence of a thiophene system. α-Fluoroalkyl cycloketones 1d-f gave the aliphatic ring-fused 2-trifluoromethyl- (or 2-chlorodifluoromethyl)thiophene derivatives 5d-f.

The reaction also fitted well with α -fluoroalkyl aldehydes 2. Compounds 2a and 2b furnished 6a and 6b in 60% and 54% yield respectively (entry 6 and 7). The lower yield was attributed to the vulnerability of such an aldehyde under basic conditions.

Table. Reaction of α-Fluoroalkyl Carbonyl Compounds with Sulfanylacetates

Entry	Substrate 1, 2 or 3	Time (h)	Temp. (°C)	Base/Solvent ^a	Product ^b	Yield ^c (%)	
1	la la	4	20	A	5a	76	
2	1 d	4	20	A	5b	70	
3	1c	3	25	Α	5c	75	
4	1c	4	20	NaOCH ₃ /THF	5c	74	
5	1c	2	reflux	A	5c	60	
6	2a	5	20	A	6a	60	
7	2b	5	20	A	6b	54	
8	1d	4	25	A	5d	70	
9	1e	4	25	A	5e	78	
10	1e	5	25	В	5E	75	
11	1f	4	20	A	5f	77	
12	3a	5	20	A	7a	75	
13	3b	4	25	A	7a	72	
14	3a	5	20	В	7A	80	
15	3c	5	20	A	7e	75	
16	3d	4	20	A	7 d	72	
17	3e	4	20	A	7e	83	
18	3f	6	20	A	7 f	72	
19	3f	6	20	В	7 F	70	
20	3 g	6	20	A	7 g	80	
21	3h	5	20	A	7ที้	71	

A: NaOCH₃/HOCH₃; B: NaOC₂H₅/HOC₂H₅

^c Isolated yield based on substrate 1, 2 or 3.

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All new products have been characterized by ¹H NMR, ¹⁹F NMR, IR and MS.

Substrate	RfCXY	R	Product	Rf
1a	CF ₃ CF ₂	CH ₃	5a	CF ₃
1b	CF ₃ CBr ₂	C(CH ₃) ₃	5b	CF ₃
1c	Cl(CF ₂) ₄	C(CH ₃) ₃	5c	Cl(CF ₂) ₃
2a	Cl(CF ₂) ₄	H	6a	Cl(CF ₂) ₃
2b	F(CF ₂) ₄	H	6b	F(CF ₂) ₃

Substrate	RfCXY	n	Product	R'	Rf
1 d	CF ₃ CF ₂	1	5d	CH ₃	CF ₂
1e	CF ₃ CF ₂	2	5e	CH_3	CF_3
1e	CF_3CF_2	2	5E	C₂Ŭ₅	CF_3
1f	ClČF ₂ ČF ₂	2	5f	CH_3	ClČF ₂

Scheme 1

Ethyl α -fluoroalkylacetates 3 underwent a similar reaction and gave compounds 7 in good yields (Scheme 2). UV spectrum of 7 showed absorption at λ_{max} : 300-312 nm. 1H NMR spectra of 7 revealed not only the presence of an aromatic proton at $\delta=6.8-7.3$ and an aromatic hydroxyl proton at $\delta=9.0-9.5$ but also the disappearance of ethoxyl group in the starting materials 3. Thus the structure of 7 was suggested as 2-fluoroalkyl-4-hydroxy-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene.

Scheme 2

Since the dihalogenated carbon β to the carbonyl group in substrates 1, 2 and 3 became part of the thiophene skeleton with elimination of the β -halogens, 2-trifluoromethylthiophene derivatives were prepared from β,β -dihalogen- γ,γ,γ -trifluorocarbonyl compounds. Furthermore, (1,1-difluoroalkyl)thiophenes could be expected from $\beta,\beta,\gamma,\gamma$ -tetrafluorocarbonyl compounds. Compounds 8, derived from addition of 1,2-dibromotetrafluoroethane to ethyl vinyl ether followed by oxidation and esterification, reacted with alkenes or alkynes to afford such tetrafluoroalkylacetates in good yields. ¹² Such compounds 3f, 3g and 3h condensed with alkyl 2-sulfanylacetates 4 to afford 2-(1,1-difluoroalkyl)thiophenes 7f,7F,7g and 7h, respectively (Scheme 3).

a. 1) Na₂S₂O₄-NaHCO₃/CH₃CN-H₂O, 0°C 2) CrO₃-H₂SO₄/ acetone, reflux 3) TsOH-benzene/EtOH, reflux

b. BrCo(dmyH)₂, Zn/EtOH c. HSCH₂CO₂R',NaOR'/HOR'

Scheme 3

In these reactions, ethyl 2-sulfanylacetate (4b) could be used in ethanol instead of methyl 2-sulfanylacetate (4a) in methanol without any significant effect on the reaction (entry 10, 14 and 19). Reaction time could be reduced by raising the temperature. Strong base such as sodium methoxide (or sodium ethoxide) was necessary for the one-step condensation and solvents (methanol or ethanol) should match with the base. However, when sodium carbonate, triethylamine or potassium hydroxide was used as base, the reaction of 1c and 4a yielded an acyclic compound 10 as the major product (63%). Compound 10 condensed intramolecularly to give 5c in the presence of sodium methoxide (Scheme 4).

Scheme 4

Based on the above facts, the following reaction pathway is logically proposed (Scheme 4). Under basic conditions, compounds 1, 2 or 3 underwent dehydrohalogenation to give intermediates 9, which were attacked by the nucleophilic thiols 4 at the β -position and afforded intermediates 10. Such intermediates underwent intramolecular condensation and dehydration to afford the target products 5, 6 or 7.

In summary, 2-trifluoromethyl- and 2-(1,1-difluoroalkyl)thiophenecarboxylates as well as their analogues having a longer fluoroalkyl chain were synthesized. The carboxyl and hydroxyl group in these products are still reactive and thus such compounds could be considered as useful building blocks in the synthesis of compounds containing a 2-fluoroalkylthiophene moiety.

¹H NMR resonance spectra were obtained with CDCl₃ as solvent and internal TMS as standard on a FX-90Q spectrometer. ¹⁹F NMR spectra were measured with external CF₃COOH as standard and with upfield shifts positive using a Varian EM-360L spectrometer at 56.4 MHz. IR spectra were recorded as film for liquid and KCl plate for solid samples on a Shimadzu IR-440 spectrometer. Mass spectra were recorded by means of a HP5989A mass spectrometer. UV spectra were measured using CH₃OH as solvent on a HP 8451A diode array spectrophotometer. The solvents and reactants were reagent grade and were used without further purification. Light petroleum refers to the fraction boiling in the range 60–90°C.

Fluoroalkylthiophenes 5, 6 and 7; General Procedure:

To a solution of compound 1 (2 or 3) (5 mmol) and methyl 2-sulfanylacetate (6 mmol) in anhyd MeOH (10 mL) was added slowly NaOMe (20 mmol) and the mixture was stirred at r.t. for about 5 h (monitored by TLC or $^{19}{\rm F}\,{\rm NMR}$). After that, the mixture was poured into H₂O (50 mL) and extracted with Et₂O (3 × 50 mL). The combined extracts were successively washed with sat. aq NH₄Cl and brine, dried (Na₂SO₄) and then evaporated. The remained residue was column chromatographed with light petroleum/EtOAc as eluent (100:0-100:6) to give pure products 5, 6 or 7.

5-Methoxycarbonyl-4-methyl-2-trifluoromethylthiophene (5a):

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 2950$, 1730, 1260, 1120 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: $\delta = 7.34$ (1 H, s), 4.0 (3 H, s, CH₃), 2.70 (3 H, s).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -21.0$ (s, CF₃).

MS: m/e = 224 (M⁺, 23.18), 209 (M⁺-CH₃, 2.88), 193 (M⁺-OCH₃, 33.96), 165 (M⁺-CO₂CH₃, 1.0).

Analysis: Calc. for $C_8H_7F_3O_2S$: C, 42.86; H, 3.13; F, 25.45; S, 14.29. Found: C, 42.58; H, 2.77; F, 25.90; S, 13.74.

4-tert-Butyl-5-methoxycarbonyl-2-trifluoromethylthiophene (5b):

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 2960$, 1740, 1300, 1230, 1130 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: $\delta = 7.41$ (1 H, s), 3.90 (3 H, s, CH₃), 1.50 (9 H, s).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -21.5$ (s, CF₃).

MS: $m/e = 266 (M^+, 8.10), 251 (M^+-CH_3, 11.33), 235 (M^+-OCH_3, 6.84), 219 (M^+-HOCH_3-CH_3, 100), 191 (M^+-HCO_2CH_3-CH_3, 18.28).$

Analysis: Calc. for $C_{11}H_{13}F_3O_2S$: C, 49.62; H, 4.89; F, 21.42; S, 12.03. Found: C, 49.22; H, 4.92; F, 21.45; S, 12.48.

4-tert-Butyl-2- $(\omega$ -chlorohexaftuoropropyl)-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (5c):

UV (nm): 278.

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 2970$, 1740, 1240, 1130 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: $\delta = 7.76$ (1 H, s), 3.92 (3 H, s, CH₃), 1.50 (9 H, s).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -11.0$ (2F, s, CF₂Cl), 24.0 (2F, s, CF₂C), 42.3 (2F, s). MS: m/e = 382 (M⁺, 14.28), 367 (M⁺-CH₃, 17.97), 351 (M⁺-OCH₃, 9.27), 335 (M⁺-HOCH₃-CH₃, 100), 307 (M⁺-HCO₂CH₃-CH₃, 8.14).

Analysis: Calc. for $C_{13}H_{13}ClF_6O_2S$: C, 40.78; H, 3.40; F, 29.80; S, 8.37. Found: C, 40.50; H, 3.28; F, 30.17; S, 8.28.

2- $(\omega$ -Chlorohexafluoropropyl)-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (6 a):

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 2900$, 1720, 1280, 1180 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: δ = 7.76 (1 H, d, J = 3 Hz), 7.40 (1 H, d, J = 3 Hz), 3.93 (3 H, s).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -11.3$ (2F, s), 23.3 (2F, s), 42.0 (2F, s).

MS: m/e = 326 (M⁺, 20.04), 295 (M⁺-OCH₃, 30.63), 191 (M⁺-ClCF₂CF₂, 100).

HRMS: Calc. for $C_9H_5^{35}ClF_6O_2S$: 325.9603, Found: 325.9617; for $C_9H_5^{37}ClF_6O_2S$: 327.9573, Found: 327.9554.

2-Heptafluoropropyl-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (6b):

¹H NMR: δ = 7.76 (1 H, d, J = 3.0 Hz), 7.40 (1 H, d, J = 3.0 Hz), 3.96 (3 H, s).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = 2.10$ (3F, s), 25.5 (2F, s), 48.5 (2F, s).

MS: $m/e = 310 \text{ (M}^+, 37.66)$, 291 (M⁺-F, 5.96), 279 (M⁺-OCH₃, 72.67), 191 (M⁺-CF₃CF₂, 100), 160 (4.07), 132 (28.66).

HRMS: Calc. for $C_9H_5F_7O_2S$: 309.9935, Found: 309.9899. Analysis: Calc. for $C_9H_5F_7O_2S$: C, 34.84; H, 1.61; Found: C, 34.88; H, 1.86.

 $5-Methoxy carbonyl-3, 4-propylene-2-trifluoromethyl thiophene~ \textbf{(5\,d)};$

¹H NMR: δ = 3.91 (3 H, s, CH₃), 2.90 (4 H, m), 2.46 (2 H, m).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -21.8$.

MS: $m/e = 250 \text{ (M}^+, 52.99)$, 232 (M⁺-F+1, 21.71), 214 (15.16), 199 (24.47), 149 (40.14), 91 (100).

Analysis: Calc. for $C_{10}H_9F_3O_2S$: C, 48.0; H, 3.60; F, 22.8; S, 12.80. Found: C, 47.98; H, 3.59; F, 22.78; S, 12.81.

3,4-Butylene-5-methoxycarbonyl-2-trifluoromethylthiophene (5e): UV (nm): 280.

 $^{1}{\rm H}$ NMR: $\delta = 3.90$ (3 H, s, CH₃), 3.03 (2 H, m), 2.81 (2 H, m), 1.76 (4 H, m).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -21.6$.

MS: $m/e = 264 (M^+, 100), 249 (M^+-CH_3, 95.26), 233 (M^+-OCH_3, 32.94), 205 (M^+-CO_2CH_3, 53.39), 185 (10.66), 165 (26.30).$

Analysis: Calc. for $C_{11}H_{11}F_3O_2S$: C, 50.0; H, 4.17; F, 21.59; S, 12.12. Found: C, 49.99; H, 4.09; F, 21.15; S, 12.08.

3,4-Butylene-5-ethoxycarbonyl-2-trifluoromethylthiophene (5E):

 $^{1}{\rm H}$ NMR: $\delta = 4.26$ (2 H, q, CH₂), 3.0 (2 H, m), 2.76 (2 H, m), 1.73 (4 H, m), 1.35 (3 H, t).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -21.6$.

MS: m/e = 278 (M⁺, 48.62), 259 (M⁺-F, 6.11), 249 (M⁺-C₂H₅, 100), 231 (39.12), 223 (19.75), 205 (62.91).

3,4-Butylene-2-chlorodifluoromethyl-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (5f):

¹H NMR: δ = 3.90 (3 H, s, CH₃), 3.03 (2 H, m), 2.85 (2 H, m), 1.76 (4 H, m).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -36.3$.

MS: $m/e = 280 \text{ (M}^+, 31.26), 265 \text{ (M}^+\text{-CH}_3, 16.08), 245 \text{ (M}^+\text{-Cl}, 100), 229 (5.12), 217 (5.12), 185 (21.30).$

Analysis: Calc. for $C_{11}H_{11}ClF_2O_2S$: C, 47.06; H, 3.92; F, 13.55; S, 11.41; Cl: 12.66. Found: C, 47.16; H, 3.93; F, 14.11; S, 11.38; Cl: 12.23.

4-Hydroxy-5-methoxycarbonyl-2-trifluoromethylthiophene (7 a):

IR: $\nu_{\text{max}} = 3300$ (O–H), 1680, 1570 (C=C), 1440, 1290 (C–O), 1140 (C–C, C–F) cm $^{-1}$.

¹H NMR: δ = 9.0 (1 H, s, OH), 7.33 (1 H, s), 4.0 (3 H, s, CH₃). ¹⁹F NMR: δ = -20.0 (3F, s).

 $MS: m/e = 226 (M^+, 6.91), 194 (M^+-HOCH_3, 15.48), 178 (M^+-OH-OCH_3, 23.68), 149 (M^+-CH_3CO_2H-OH, 77.01), 57 (100).$

Analysis: Calc. for $C_7H_5F_3O_2S$: C, 37.17; H, 2.21; F, 25.22; S, 14.16. Found: C, 36.87; H, 2.14; F, 25.04; S, 14.33.

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5-Ethoxycarbonyl-4-hydroxy-2-trifluoromethylthiophene (7 A):

 ^{1}H NMR: $\delta = 9.43$ (1 H, s, OH), 7.0 (1 H, s), 4.30 (2 H, q, CH₂), 1.4 (3 H, t).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -20.5$ (2F, s).

 $MS: m/e = 240 (M^+, 26,47), 223 (M^+-OH, 51.33), 195 (M^+-OC_2H_5, 100)$

2-Chlorodifluoromethyl-4-hydroxy-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (7d):

IR: v_{max} : = 3300, 1680, 1560, 1440, 1230, 1120 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: δ = 9.50 (1 H, s, OH), 7.10 (1 H, s), 3.92 (3 H, s, CH₃). ¹⁹F NMR: δ = -35.0 (2F, s).

MS: m/e = 242 (M⁺, 58.45), 210 (M⁺-HOCH₃, 100), 175 (210-Cl, 18.40), 154 (175-F, 22.57).

Analysis: Calc. for $C_7H_5ClF_2O_2S$: C, 34.64; H, 2.06; F, 15.70; Cl, 14.64. Found: C, 33.98; H, 1.92; F, 16.0; S, 14.35.

2- $(\omega$ -Chlorohexafluoropropyl)-4-hydroxy-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (7e):

UV (nm): 312.

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 3300$, 1680, 1570, 1190, 1120 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: δ = 9.53 (1 H, s, OH), 7.10 (1 H, s), 4.0 (3 H, s, CH₃). ¹⁹F NMR: δ = -10.4 (2F, s), 26.0 (2F, m), 43.0 (2F, s).

MS: $m/e = 342 \,(\text{M}^+, 9.10), 310 \,(\text{M}^+\text{-HOCH}_3, 19.02), 294 \,(\text{M}^+\text{-OH-OCH}_3, 9.67), 262 \,(18.61), 244 \,(51.11), 149 \,(69.22), 69 \,(100).$

Analysis: Calc. for $C_9H_5ClF_6O_3S$: C, 31.53; H, 1.46; F, 33.28; S, 9.34. Found: C, 31.32; H, 1.29; F, 33.27; S, 9.34.

2-(1,1-Difluoro-3-phenylprop-2-enyl)-4-hydroxy-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (7f):

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 3260$, 2900, 1670, 1560, 1340, 1170, 1040 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: δ = 9.45 (1 H, s, OH), 7.30 (5 H, m), 6.93 (1 H, d, J = 12 Hz), 6.85 (1 H, s), 6.0 (1 H, td, J = 12, 12 Hz), 3.90 (3 H, s, CH₃).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -2.20$ (2F, d, J = 12 Hz).

MS: $m/e = 310 \,(\text{M}^+, 78.02), 278 \,(\text{M}^+\text{-HOCH}_3, 100), 264 \,(\text{M}^+\text{-OH-OCH}_3, 13.54), 249 \,(21.36), 231 \,(12.29), 208 \,(\text{M}^+\text{-PhCCh}, 29.80), 176 \,(208\text{-HOCH}_3, 95.64).$

Analysis: Calc. for $C_{15}H_{12}F_2O_3S$: C, 58.06; H, 3.87; F, 12.26. Found: C, 57.71; H, 3.88; F, 12.00.

2-(1,1-Diffuoro-3-phenylprop-2-enyl)-4-hydroxy-5-ethoxycarbonyl-thiophene (**7F**):

¹H NMR: δ = 9.40 (1 H, s, OH), 7.20 (5 H, m), 6.85 (1 H, d, J = 12 Hz), 6.77 (1 H, s), 5.92 (1 H, td, J = 12 Hz), 4.30 (2 H, q, CH₂), 1.38 (3 H, t, CH₃).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = -1.70$ (2F, d, J = 12, 12 Hz).

MS: $m/e = 324 \text{ (M}^+, 78.17), 278 \text{ (M}^+\text{-HOC}_2\text{H}_5, 100), 261 (4.26), 177 (19.42), 159 (39.67), 133 (26.96).$

2-(1,1-Difluoroheptyl)-4-hydroxy-5-methoxycarbonylthiophene (7 \mathbf{g}):

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 3300$, 2960, 1680, 1570, 1450, 1360, 1170 cm⁻¹.

¹H NMR: δ = 9.53 (1 H, s, OH), 6.85 (1 H, s), 3.95 (3 H, s), 2.10 (2 H, m), 1.34 (8 H, m), 0.90 (3 H, m).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = 10.0$ (2F, t, J = 12 Hz).

MS: m/e = 292 (M⁺, 56.04), 260 (M⁺-HOCH₃, 100), 245 (M⁺-HOCH₃-CH₃, 2.72), 207 (M⁺-C₆H₁₃, 55.72).

Analysis: Calc. for $C_{13}H_{18}F_2O_3S$: C, 53.42; H, 6.16; F, 13.10; S, 10.96. Found: C, 53.30; H, 6.00; F, 13.07; S, 11.52.

4-Hydroxy-5-methoxycarbonyl-2-(1,1-difluoro-3-methoxycarbonyl-propyl)thiophene (7h):

UV (nm): 306.

IR: $v_{\text{max}} = 3300$, 2950, 1740, 1670, 1560, 1440, 1300, 1160 cm⁻¹. ¹H NMR: $\delta = 9.50$ (1 H, s, OH), 6.86 (1 H, s, Ha), 3.93 (3 H, s), 3.72 (3 H, s), 2.57 (4 H, m).

¹⁹F NMR: $\delta = 13.0$ (2F, t, J = 16 Hz).

MS: m/e = 294 (M⁺, 79.92), 275 (M⁺-F, 7.76), 262 (M⁺-CH₃O₂CCH₂CH₂, 100), 243 (6.22), 215 (17.22), 140 (71.84). Analysis: Calc. for C₁₁H₁₂F₂O₅S: C, 44.9; H, 4.08; F, 12.93; S, 10.88. Found: C, 45.05; H, 4.02; F, 13.24; S, 10.96.

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