Highly Selective Direct Reductive Amidation of Nitroarenes with Carboxylic Acids using Cobalt(II) Phthalocyanine/PMHS

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General experimental

Metal salts used were purchased from Merck, Germany. Metal phthalocyanines were synthesized by a reported procedure with some modification and characterized by FTIR and UV-VIS spectroscopy. Silica gel (60-120 mesh) used for column chromatography was purchased from Sisco Research Laboratories Pvt. Ltd. India and all other chemicals were purchased from Spectrochem, India, Merck, Germany, and Sigma-Aldrich, USA and were used without further purification. NMR spectra were recorded on Bruker Avance-300/600 spectrometers. Mass spectra were recorded on QTOF-Micro of Waters Micromass and Maxis-Bruker. The GC-MS analysis was carried out on a Shimadzu (QP 2010) series Gas Chromatogram-Mass Spectrometer (Tokyo, Japan), AOC-20i auto-sampler coupled, and a DB-5MS capillary column, (30 m x 0.25 mm i.d., 0.25 µm). The initial temperature of column was 70 °C held for 4 min. and was programmed to 230 °C at 4°C/min., then held for 15 min. at 230 °C; the sample injection volume was 2 µL in GC grade dichloromethane. Helium was used as carrier gas at a flow rate of 1.1 ml min⁻¹ on split mode (1: 50).

Procedure for synthesis of metal phthalocyanines

Metal phthalocyanines were synthesized by using a reported method with some modification.

Synthesis of Cobalt (II) phthalocyanine

A mixture of phthalimide (26.28 g, 0.18 mol), urea (55.2 g, 0.92 mol), $CoCl_2.6H_2O$ (11.85 g, 0.05 mol) and ammonium molybdate (4.69 g, 0.0038 mol) was heated under microwave irradiation for 3 min. The reaction mixture was cooled to room temperature and in sequence washed with 5% NaOH, distilled water and 2% HCl and finally with distilled water again. After that the resulting solid was dissolved in minimum quantity of concentrated H_2SO_4 and poured in distilled water to precipitate the desired cobalt (II) phthalocyanine, which were then filtered to give 9.5 g (48.5% yield) of cobalt (II) phthalocyanine.

Synthesis of Iron, Nickel and Copper(II) phthalocyanines

Iron, Nickel and Copper(II) phthalocyanines were prepared from FeSO₄.7H₂O, NiCl₂ and CuSO₄.7H₂O respectively using same procedure as described above.

General experimental procedure for reductive amidation of nitroarenes with carboxylic acids

To a stirred suspension of CoPc (0.01 mmol) in carboxylic acid (2 mL) were added nitroarene (1.0 mmol) and PMHS (4.0 H equiv.) at room temperature and then the temperature was raised to 100 °C. On completion of the reaction (as monitored by TLC), reaction mixture was dried under vacuum and the

crude product was analyzed directly by GC-MS. For the purification of desired product column chromatography was carried out (*n*-hexane: ethyl acetate).

Procedure for recyclability of the catalyst

To a stirred suspension of CoPc (0.01 mmol) in acetic acid (2 mL) were added nitrobenzene (1.0 mmol) and PMHS (4.0 H equiv.) at room temperature and then the temperature was raised to 100 °C. After 12 h, the reaction mixture was analyzed by GC and GC-MS. Further, nitrobenzene (1.0 mmol) and PMHS (4.0 H equiv.) were added to the reaction mixture and stirred at 100 °C for 12 h. The same procedure was repeated for further cycles and excellent yield of product was observed up to three cycles, whereas in forth cycle the yield was reduced.

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entry	carboxylic acid	solvent	yield (%) ^b
1	AcOH	EtOH	nr
2	AcOH	MeOH	5
3	AcOH	MeCN	nr
4	AcOH	DMSO	nr
5	AcOH	DMF	nr
6	AcOH	Toluene	nr
7	AcOH	PEG-400	nr
8	AcOH	EG	7
9	AcOH	DCE	nr
10	PhCO ₂ H	EG	nr
11	Cinnamic acid	EG	nr

Table S1. Reductive amidation of nitrobenzene in different solvents using stoichiometric amount of carboxylic acids^a

^aReaction conditions: nitrobenzene (1.0 mmol), carboxylic acid (5.0 mmol), CoPc (1 mol%), PMHS (4.0 H equiv.), ^bGC yield. DMSO = dimethylsulfoxide, DMF = dimethylformamide, PEG = polyethylene glycol, EG = ethylene glycol, DCE = dichloroethane.

entry	solvent	yield (%) ^b
1	EtOH	nr
2	MeOH	6
3	MeCN	nr
4	DMSO	nr
5	DMF	9
6	Toluene	nr
7	PEG-400	18
8	EG	22
9	DCE	10
10	EG	20°
11	EG	12 ^d
12	EG	24 ^e
13	EG	7^{f}
14	EG	20 ^g

Table S2 Reductive amidation of nitrobenzene in different solvents in the presence of mineral acids using stoichiometric amount of carboxylic acids^a

^aReaction conditions: nitrobenzene (1.0 mmol), AcOH (3.0 mmol), CoPc (1 mol%), PMHS (4.0 H equiv.), 1M HCl in solvent (2 mL) at 100 °C for 12h. ^bIsolated yield. ^c1M HBr was used instead of HCl. ^d2.0 mmol AcOH was used. ^c5.0 mmol AcOH was used. ^f0.5M HCl was used. ^g2.0M HCl was used. nr = no reaction, DMSO = dimethylsulfoxide, DMF = dimethylformamide, PEG = polyethylene glycol, EG = ethylene glycol, DCE = dichloroethane.

Spectral data of isolated compounds

1. *N*-Acetylaniline (Table 2, entry 1)¹



¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 300 MHz) δ 2.15 (s, 3H), 7.10 (t, 1H, J = 7.3 Hz), 7.28-7.33 (m, 2H), 7.52 (d, 2H, J = 7.7 Hz), 8.01 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 75 MHz) δ 24.8, 120.5, 124.6, 129.3, 138.4, 169.3; HRESIMS calcd for C₈H₁₀NO [M+H]⁺ 136.0762, found 136.0734.

2. *N*-Acetyl-4-fluoroaniline (Table 2, entry 2)²



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.11 (s, 3H), 7.00-7.06 (m, 2H), 7.50-7.55 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 22.6, 115.0, 115.3, 121.9, 122.0, 135.0, 158.0, 161.2, 170.5; HRESIMS calcd for C₈H₈N₃OS [M+H]⁺ 154.0668, found 154.0631.

3. N-Acetyl-4-chloroaniline (Table 2, entry 3)³



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.09 (s, 3H), 7.20 (d, 2H, J = 8.8 Hz), 7.46 (d, 2H, J = 8.8 Hz); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 23.8, 121.6, 129.0, 129.2, 137.3, 170.4; HRESIMS calcd for C₈H₉ClNO [M+H]⁺ 170.0373, found 169.0348.

4. *N*-Acetyl-4-bromoaniline (Table 2, entry 4)⁴



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.04 (s, 3H), 7.29-7.38 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 23.6, 116.5, 121.5, 131.6, 137.4, 169.8; HRESIMS calcd for C₉H₉N₂O [M+H]⁺ 213.9868, found 213.9811.

5. 4-(N-Acetylamino)toluene (Table 2, entry 5)⁵



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.15 (s, 3H), 2.31 (s, 3H), 7.10 (d, 2H, J = 8.1 Hz), 7.38 (d, 2H, J = 8.1 Hz), 7.69 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 21.2, 24.7, 120.5, 129.8, 134.2, 135.8, 168.9; HRESIMS calcd for C₉H₁₂NO [M+H]⁺ 150.0919, found 150.0950.

6. 4-(N-Acetylamino)phenol (Table 2, entry 6)⁵



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.09 (s, 3H), 6.71-6.76 (m, 2H), 7.28-7.32 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 24.2, 116.9, 124.1, 132.4, 156.1, 172.1; HRESIMS calcd for C₈H₁₀NO₂ [M+H]⁺ 152.0712, found 152.0729.

7. Methyl-3-(*N*-acetylamino)benzoate (Table 2, entry 7)⁶



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.14 (s, 3H), 3.89 (s, 3H), 7.37-7.42 (m, 1H), 7.71-7.73 (m, 1H), 7.77-7.81 (m, 1H), 8.21 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 22.8, 51.6, 120.8, 124.4, 124.8, 128.9, 130.9, 139.3, 167.2, 170.7; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₀H₁₂NO₃ [M+H]⁺ 194.0817, found 194.0809.

8. 3-(N-Acetylamino)benzonitrile (Table 2, entry 8)¹



¹H NMR (CDCl₃, 600 MHz) δ 2.20 (s, 3H), 7.38-7.41 (m, 2H), 7.72 (d, 1H, J = 6.6 Hz), 7.89 (s, 1H), 7.93 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CDCl₃, 150 MHz) δ 24.5, 112.8, 118.5, 122.8, 123.9, 127.6, 129.9, 138.8, 168.9; HRESIMS calcd for C₉H₉N₂O [M+H]⁺ 161.0715, found 161.0704.

9. 4-(*N*-Acetylamino)acetophenone (Table 2, entry 9)⁷



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.16 (s, 3H), 2.56 (s, 3H), 7.68-7.71 (m, 2H), 7.94-7.97 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 23.0, 25.4, 119.0, 129.6, 132.6 143.7, 170.9, 198.4; HRESIMS calcd for C₈H₈N₃OS [M+H]⁺ 178.0868, found 178.0851.

10. 1,4-Di-(N-acetylamino)benzene (Table 2, entry 10)⁵



¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 600 MHz) δ 1.99 (s, 6H), 7.45 (s, 4H), 9.83 (s, 2H); ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 150 MHz) δ 24.3, 119.8, 135.0, 168.4; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₀H₁₃N₂O₂ [M+H]⁺ 193.0977, found 193.0942.

11. 3-(N-Acetylamino)styrene (Table 2, entry 11)⁸



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.13 (s, 3H), 5.24 (d, 1H, *J* = 11.0 Hz), 5.76 (d, 1H, *J* = 17.5 Hz), 6.66-6.75 (m, 1H), 7.16 (d, 1H, *J* = 7.6 Hz), 7.26 (m, 1H), 7.43 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.0 Hz), 7.65 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 24.3, 114.8, 119.2, 121.0, 123.5, 130.4, 138.4, 140.1, 140.6, 172.1; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₀H₁₂NO [M+H]⁺ 162.0919, found 162.0933.

12. N-Acetyl-3-nitroaniline (Table 2, entry 12)⁹



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 600 MHz) δ 2.15 (s, 3H), 7.50 (s, 1H), 7.82 (d, 1H, J = 6.0 Hz), 7.90 (d, 1H, J = 6.0 Hz), 8.57 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 150 MHz) δ 24.2, 115.6, 119.6, 126.6, 131.1, 141.6, 150.2, 172.3; HRESIMS calcd for C₈H₉N₂O₃ [M+H]⁺ 181.0613, found 181.0637.

13. 1,4-Di-(N-acetylamino)benzene (Table 2, entry 13)⁵



¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 300 MHz) δ 2.00 (s, 6H), 7.46 (s, 4H), 9.85 (s, 2H); ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 75 MHz) δ 24.1, 119.6, 134.8, 168.2; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₀H₁₃N₂O₂ [M+H]⁺ 193.0977, found 193.0934.

14. 2-(N-Acetylamino)fluorine (Table 2, entry 14)¹⁰



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.14 (s, 3H), 3.82 (s, 2H), 7.21-7.26 (m, 1H), 7.29-7.34 (m, 1H), 7.45-7.50 (m, 2H), 7.68-7.73 (m, 2H), 7.80 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 24.0, 37.8, 118.2, 120.2, 120.5, 121.0, 126.1, 127.5, 127.9, 138.9, 139.3, 142.7, 144.6, 145.4, 171.7; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₅H₁₄NO [M+H]⁺ 224.1075, found 224.1021.

15. 4-(N-Actylamino)phthalide (Table 2, entry 15)¹¹



¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 600 MHz) δ 2.06 (s, 3H), 5.32 (s, 2H), 7.56 (d, 1H, J = 6.0 Hz), 7.75 (d, 1H, J = 6.0 Hz), 8.17 (s, 1H), 10.28 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 150 MHz) δ 24.1, 69.8, 114.0, 123.3, 125.2, 125.5, 140.1, 141.6, 168.9, 170.7; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₀H₁₀NO₃ [M+H]⁺ 192.0661, found 192.0637.

16. 6-(N-Acetylamino)benzothiazole (Table 2, entry 16)¹²



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.17 (s, 3H), 7.52 (dd, 1H, J = 1.8, 8.8 Hz), 7.95 (d, 1H, J = 8.8 Hz), 8.47 (d, 1H, J = 1.8 Hz), 9.11 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 22.9, 112.5, 119.5, 122.7, 134.6, 137.0, 149.4, 154.9, 170.8; HRESIMS calcd for C₉H₉N₂OS [M+H]⁺ 193.0436, found 193.0411.

17. 4-(N-Acetylamino)-2,1,3-benzothiadiazole (Table 2, entry 17)¹³



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.31 (s, 3H), 7.58-7.63 (m, 1H), 7.68-7.71 (m, 1H), 8.32 (d, 1H, J = 7.1 Hz); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 24.4, 117.6, 118.3, 132.0, 132.2, 149.9, 156.8, 172.7; HRESIMS calcd for C₈H₈N₃OS [M+H]⁺ 194.0388, found 194.0345.

18. 5-(N-Acetylamino)isoquinoline (Table 2, entry 18)¹⁴



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 2.31 (s, 3H), 7.67-7.31 (m, 1H), 7.93-8.01 (m, 3H), 8.48 (d, 1H, J = 6.0 Hz), 9.26 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 23.5, 117.5, 127.1, 128.2, 128.9, 130.8, 132.7, 134.0, 143.1, 153.6, 172.9; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₁H₁₁N₂O [M+H]⁺ 187.0871, found 187.0886.

19. 4-(N-acetylamino)phthalimide (Table 2, entry 19)



¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 300 MHz) δ 2.11 (s, 3H), 7.73 (d, 1H, J = 8.1 Hz), 7.80-7.84 (m, 1H), 8.12-8.13 (m, 1H), 10.52 (s, 1H), 11.56 (brs, 1H); ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 75 MHz) δ 24.1, 112.3, 123.0, 123.9, 126.2, 134.0, 144.6, 168.7, 168.9, 169.1.

20. 6-(N-Acetylamino)chromone (Table 2, entry 20)¹⁵



¹H NMR (DMSO-d₆, 300 MHz) δ 2.07 (s, 3H), 6.30 (d, 1H, J = 6.0 Hz), 7.58 (d, 1H, J = 9.0 Hz), 7.88-7.92 (m, 1H), 8.24 (d, 1H, J = 6.0 Hz), 8.30 (s, 1H), 10.25 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (DMSO-d₆, 75 MHz) δ 24.8, 112.5, 114.0, 119.8, 125.2, 126.4, 137.4, 152.6, 157.5, 169.4, 171.1; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₁H₁₀NO₃ [M+H]⁺ 204.0661, found 204.0643.

21. 4-(N-Acetylamino)chalcone (Table 2, entry 21)¹⁶



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 600 MHz) δ 2.13 (s, 1H), 7.53 (d, 2H, J = 6.0 Hz), 7.61-7.75 (m, 7H), 8.05 (d, 2H, J = 6.0 Hz); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 150 MHz) δ 23.9, 120.8, 121.5, 129.5, 129.6, 130.5, 131.6, 134.0, 139.4, 142.3, 145.8, 171.7, 192.2; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₀H₁₂NO₃ [M+H]⁺ 266.1181, found 266.1169.

22. N-Phenylpropanamide (Table 3, entry 3)⁵



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 300 MHz) δ 1.20 (t, 3H, J = 7.5 Hz), 2.39 (q, 2H, J = 7.5 Hz), 7.08 (t, 1H, J = 7.4 Hz), 7.27-7.32 (m, 2H), 7.54 (d, 2H, J = 7.7 Hz); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 75 MHz) δ 9.2, 30.0, 120.2, 124.0, 128.7, 138.9, 174.4; HRESIMS calcd for C₉H₁₂NO [M+H]⁺ 150.0919, found 150.0922.

23. N-Phenylbutanamide (Table 3, entry 4)¹⁷



¹H NMR (CD₃OD, 600 MHz) δ 0.99-1.00 (m, 3H), 1.71-1.72 (m, 2H), 2.33 (s, 2H), 7.07 (s, 1H), 7.28 (s, 2H), 7.53 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (CD₃OD, 150 MHz) δ 13.8, 20.1, 39.7, 121.1, 124.9, 129.6, 139.7, 174.4; HRESIMS calcd for C₁₀H₁₄NO [M+H]⁺ 164.1075, found 164.1054.

¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra of isolated compounds

In ¹H NMR spectra, peaks at δ 3.31 and 4.90 correspond to trace amount of protonated solvent in CD₃OD and peaks at δ 2.50 and 3.34 correspond to trace amount of protonated solvent in DMSO-d₆.

1. *N*-Acetylaniline in CDCl₃ (Table 2, entry 1)







2. *N*-Acetyl-4-fluoroaniline in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 2)





3. *N*-Acetyl-4-chloroaniline in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 3)





4. *N*-Acetyl-4-bromoaniline in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 4)







5. 4-(*N*-Acetylamino)toluene in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 5)





6. 4-(*N*-Acetylamino)phenol in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 6)







7. Methyl-3-(*N*-acetylamino)benzoate in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 7)







8. 3-(N-Acetylamino)benzonitrile in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 8)







9. 4-(N-Acetylamino)acetophenone in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 9)





10. 1,4-Di-(*N*-acetylamino)benzene in DMSO-d₆ (Table 2, entry 10)



¹H NMR



11. 3-(N-Acetylamino)styrene in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 11)





12. N-Acetyl-3-nitroaniline in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 12)



¹H NMR



13. 1,4-Di-(*N*-acetylamino)benzene in DMSO-d₆ (Table 2, entry 13)





14. 2-(N-Acetylamino)fluorine in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 14)





15. 4-(N-Actylamino)phthalide in DMSO-d₆ (Table 2, entry 15)



16. 6-(N-Acetylamino)benzothiazole in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 16)



¹H NMR



17. 4-(N-Acetylamino)-2,1,3-benzothiadiazole in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 17)





18. 5-(N-Acetylamino)isoquinoline in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 18)







19. 4-(N-acetylamino)phthalimide in DMSO-d₆ (Table 2, entry 19)



20. 6-(N-Acetylamino)chromone in DMSO-d₆ (Table 2, entry 20)





21. 4-(N-Acetylamino)chalcone in CD₃OD (Table 2, entry 21)







22. N-Phenylpropanamide in CD₃OD (Table 3, entry 3)







23. N-Phenylbutanamide in CD₃OD (Table 3, entry 4)







HRMS (ESI) of isolated compounds

1. *N*-Acetylaniline (Table 2, entry 1)



2. *N*-Acetyl-4-fluoroaniline (Table 2, entry 2)





3. *N*-Acetyl-4-chloroaniline (Table 2, entry 3)



4. N-Acetyl-4-bromoaniline (Table 2, entry 4)





5. 4-(*N*-Acetylamino)toluene (Table 2, entry 5)





6. 4-(N-Acetylamino)phenol (Table 2, entry 6)



7. 3-(N-Acetylamino)benzonitrile (Table 2, entry 8)



8. 4-(N-Acetylamino)acetophenone (Table 2, entry 9)



9. 1,4-Di-(N-acetylamino)benzene (Table 2, entry 10)



10. N-Acetyl-3-nitroaniline (Table 2, entry 12)





11. 1,4-Di-(N-acetylamino)benzene (Table 2, entry 13)





12. 2-(N-Acetylamino)fluorine (Table 2, entry 14)

13. 4-(N-Actylamino)phthalide (Table 2, entry 15)

14. 6-(N-Acetylamino)benzothiazole (Table 2, entry 16)

15. 4-(N-Acetylamino)-2,1,3-benzothiadiazole (Table 2, entry 17)

16. 6-(N-Acetylamino)chromone (Table 2, entry 20)

17. 4-(N-Acetylamino)chalcone (Table 2, entry 21)

18. N-Phenylpropanamide (Table 3, entry 3)

19. N-Phenylbutanamide (Table 3, entry 4)

Mechanistic study

Experimental procedure for reaction of PMHS with AcOH

PMHS (4.0 mmol) was treated with AcOH (2.0 mL) at 100 °C for 12 h. The solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure and resultant product was dissolved in CDCl₃ for NMR analysis.

Experimental procedure for reaction of PMHS with CoPc

PMHS (4.0 mmol) was treated with CoPc (1.0 mol%) at 100 °C for 12 h under solvent free conditions. The resultant product was dissolved in CDCl₃ for NMR analysis.

¹HNMR spectrum of PMHS in CDCl₃

¹HNMR spectrum of PMHS + AcOH reaction (600 MHz, CDCl₃)

¹HNMR spectrum of PMHS + CoPc reaction (600 MHz, CDCl₃)

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