

Chapter 16 - Chemistry of Benzene: Electrophilic Aromatic Substitution

Oxidation of Substituents

Benzene rings are inert to oxidation, but alkyl groups attached to the benzene ring can be readily oxidized to benzoic acids upon treatment with potassium permanganate. This only occurs if there are benzylic hydrogens (or oxygen, e.g. ketone).



Benzylic bromination occurs just like allylic bromination of alkenes. Bromination under these radical conditions occurs in the benzylic position because this is the most stable radical.



Reduction of Substituents

Under normal hydrogenation conditions, benzene rings are not reduced. This requires more forcing conditions and more reactive catalysts. Functional groups attached can be reduced (e.g. alkenes, nitro groups, ketones). This allows you to make products that cannot be obtained by Friedel-Crafts alkylations.



Synthesis Strategies

In order to think about multi-step synthesis, it is useful to carry out a Retrosynthetic Analysis of the route.

Work backwards from the target molecule to the starting material Determine if each step is reasonable.

For synthesis dealing with Aromatic Rings, it is useful to keep in mind several things.

Which groups can be directly added to the ring Which groups must be made by modification of other substituents Activators, deactivators - o,p- or m- directors For alkyl groups it is often best to do FC-Acylation followed by reduction

Aromatic Functionalization Chart



Retrosynthetic Analysis for how to synthesize p-nitrobenzoic acid





R



R

Naming

R

Alcohols are generally named by dropping the e, and adding ol. If required, the position of the OH group is given by numbering either before the name, or in the middle of the name. There are several common names that are used for alcohols.



Alcohols are classified according to their degree of alkyl substitution.



Properties of Alchols

Alcohols can be weakly acidic or weakly basic. The amount of solvent stabilization, inductive effects and resonance effects will influence the acidity of alcohols. Some pK_a values for various alcohols are listed below. Notice the phenols are much more acidic than normal alcohols. This is due to resonance stabilization of the negative charged formed after deprotonation.

