SYNLETT Spotlight 245

This feature focuses on a reagent chosen by a postgraduate, highlighting the uses and preparation of the reagent in current research

O-(Diphenylphosphinyl)hydroxylamine

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Introduction

Electrophilic amination gains more and more importance with the increasing interest in primary amines. Indeed they are valuable as synthetic intermediates or entries into nitrogen-containing heterocyclic systems. Moreover, electrophilic amination allows a direct metal-free access to hydrazines.

To perform electrophilic amination, activated hydroxylamines are the most common kind of reagents used.¹ Lots of such hydroxylamines exist, but *O*-(diphenylphosphinyl)hydroxylamine (**1**) presents many advantages. In fact, it has the most extensive track record for amination.² Compared to other activated hydroxylamines, the diphenylphosphinyl reagent has the best reputation for stability:

The solid compound may be stored for long periods at 0 °C and does not show any degradation when employed below 140 °C.³ It presents only a low tendency toward side reactions and supports strong bases like lithium diisopropylamide or butyllithium.¹

Compound **1** is not commercially available but it can be readily and rapidly prepared in a one-step reaction from diphenylphosphonic chloride and hydroxylamine.⁴

Scheme 1

Abstracts

(A) The direct amination of stabilized enolates or enolate-like compounds can be achieved in good to excellent yields using **1**.⁵ The more stabilized the carbanion is, the higher is the achieved yield. Depending on the steric hindrance of substrates, chirality may be introduced.⁶ An obvious application is the synthesis of amino acids.⁷

(B) The stabilization of carbanions by conjugate systems as aryls or olefins allows their amination by **1**. The cyclopentadiene derivatives obtained are often used in stereoselective Diels–Alder reactions.⁸

(C) The electrophilic amination of lithium diene- and trienediolate of unsaturated carboxylic acids leads to useful unsaturated amino acids. The amination occurs selectively at the α -carbon. The moderate yields are induced by the difficult isolation of this kind of amino acids due to their well-known instability.⁹

(D) Access to a wide range of primary amines is easily provided starting from the corresponding halogen derivatives by an Umpolung strategy. The amination yield increases in the order $\text{RMgBr} < \text{RMgCl}$.^{1,4}

(E) A highly efficient metal-free strategy to synthesize hydrazines from secondary amines bearing an electron-withdrawing group can be carried out using **1**.¹⁰ If the substrate is a primary amine protected by a Boc group, a monosubstituted hydrazine can be synthesized in only two steps.

(F) Electrophilic N-amination of aromatic π -electron-rich nitrogen heterocycles occurs in high yields.^{3,11} It often represents the key step of the synthesis of variously substituted bicycles. For example, they can be easily obtained by heating the hydrazine derivatives in a sealed tube in the presence of formamide.¹²

(G) Compound **1** may furnish ammonium salts from tertiary amines.¹³ Ammonium salts can be very interesting reagents for further reactions (cf. H).

(H) A novel efficient method for the aziridination of a large range of enone systems uses a key reagent prepared in situ by N-amination of a tertiary amine.¹⁴

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