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AN EFFICIENT AND CONVENIENT PROCEDURE FOR PREPARATION OF 1,1-DIACETATES FROM ALDEHYDES CATALYSED BY EXPANSIVE GRAPHITE

Tong-Shou Jin, Gui-Ying Du, Zhan-Hui Zhang and Tong-Shuang Li*

Department of Chemistry, Hebei University, Baoding 071002, Hebei Province, P.R.China.

Abstract: An easy preparation of 1,1-diacetates from aldehydes has been carried out in excellent yield under catalysis of expansive graphite at room temperature.

1,1-Diacetates are synthetically useful as protecting group for aldehydes^[1] due to their moderate stability and easy conversion into parent aldehydes.^[2-6] They are also important starting materials for synthesis of valuable intermediates of Diels-Alder cycloaddition reactions.^[7]

In the conventional methods, the synthesis of 1,1-diacetates were carried out under catalysis of strong proton acids such as sulphuric acid, phosphoric acid or methanesulphonic acid^[8] and Lewis acids, such as zinc chloride.^[9] These methods

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^{*} To whom correspondence should be addressed

have not been entirely satisfactory, owing to such drawbacks as low yields, long reaction time, emerging the problems of corrosivity, tedious workup and effluent pollution. In recent years, several groups have tried to improve yields, decrease reaction time and eliminate above unfavorable effects. Michie and Miller^[10] employed phosphorus trichloride as catalyst to give good yields for most of aldehydes, but reaction time ranging from 1 to 120 h and the yields are poor for aromatic aldehydes containing electron-withdrawing groups. Olah and Mehrotra succeeded in reducing the reaction time ranging from 1 to 18 h catalysed by Nafion-H.^[11] Kochhar *et al* developed a fast reaction (less than 30 min) even for α,β -unsaturated aldehydes and aromatic aldehydes having electron-withdrawing groups by using ferric chloride.^[6] More recently, Y-zeolite,^[12] β -zeolite,^[13] sulfated zirconia,^[14] HZSM-5 and tungstosilicic acid^[15] and montmorillonite clays^[16] were applied as catalysts for this purpose to obtain relatively better results.

Expansive graphite have been used as efficient catalysts for a variety of organic reactions.^[17-20] Herein we wish to report an easy and efficient procedure for the synthesis of 1,1-diacetates from aldehydes catalysed by expansive graphite.

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Expansive Graphite} \\ \text{RCHO} & \xrightarrow{\text{Ac}_2\text{O}, \text{ r.t., } 0.3-6 \text{ h}}_{65-98\%} \quad \text{RCH(OAc)}_2 \\ 1 & 2 \end{array}$$

As shown in Table, a series of 1,1-diacetates(2) were sythesized under catalysis of expansive graphite at room temperature. Both aromatic and aliphatic aldehydes gave good to excellent yield of the corresponding 1,1-diacetates. For example, furfural gave 2-furanylmethanediol diacetate(2n) in 82% yield and chloral diacetate(2b) was obtained in 65% yield by distillation. *p*-Nitrobenzaldehyde

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required relatively longer reaction time(6 h) possibly due to the strong electronwithdrawing nitro group.

Aldehyde (1)	Diacetate (2)	Solvent Isolated		bp/Torr or mp (°C)	
R	R	/Time(h)	Yield(%)	found	reported
Et (1a)	Et (2a)	none/1	85	120-124/30	115-118/8[6]
Cl ₃ CCH(OH) ₂ (1b)	Cl ₃ C (2b)	none/4	65	140-143/30	9 8-99 /6 ^[21]
C ₆ H ₅ (1c)	C ₆ H ₅ (2c)	none/0.5	96	45-46	4 4-46 ^[10]
4-CH ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (1d)	4-CH ₃ C ₆ H ₄ (2d)	none/0.4	98	81-82	7 8-8 0 ^[6]
4-MeOC ₆ H ₄ (1e)	4-MeOC ₆ H ₄ (2e)	none/0.3	98 ^a	64-65	64-65 ^[8]
4-ClC ₆ H ₄ (1 f)	4-CIC ₆ H ₄ (2f)	CCl ₄ /1	97	81-82	79-80 ^[8]
$3\text{-ClC}_6\text{H}_4(1\text{g})$	3-ClC ₆ H ₄ (2g)	none/1	95 ^a	65-66	65-66 ^[8]
4-0 ₂ NC ₆ H ₄ (1 h)	4-O ₂ NC ₆ H ₄ (2h)	CCl ₄ /6	93	125-126	124-125 ^[8]
3-0 ₂ NC ₆ H ₄ (1i)	3-0 ₂ NC ₆ H ₄ (2i)	CCl ₄ /4	94	65-66	63-64 ^[8]
2-HOC ₆ H ₄ (1j)	2-AcOC ₆ H ₄ (2j)	none/2	94 ^a	105-106	104-105 ^[22]
Ph ~~ (1k)	Ph ~ (2k)	none/1	97 ^a	84-85	84-87 ^[10]
2-furyl (11)	2-furyl (21)	none/3	82	51-53	52-54[12]
3-MeO-4-HOC ₆ H ₃ (1m)	3-MeO-4-AcOC ₆ H ₃ (2m)	CCl₄/2	93 ^a	90-91	79- 8 0 ^[8]
3,4-(OCH ₂ O)C ₆ H ₃ (1n)	3,4-(OCH ₂ O)C ₆ H ₃ (2n)	CCl ₄ /1	98 ^a	79-80	75-76 ^[8]

 Table. Convension of Aldehydes into 1,1-Diacetates in the Presence of

 Expansive Graphite

^a Satisfactory elemental analysis obtained: $C \pm 0.20$, $H \pm 0.19$.

Mention must be made here that phenol groups were also protected as acetates in hydroxyl containing aromatic aldehydes(1j and 1m). It is also worth noting that ketones, such as cyclohexanone and acetophenone, were not acetylised under these conditions. Therefore the present procedure is a selective preparation of 1,1diacetates of aldehydes in the presence of ketones. We also tried the reaction of maleic anhydride, phthalic anhydride and succinic anhydride with benzaldehyde in the catalysis expansive graphite. However, none of these reagents gave the corresponding cyclic diesters even the reaction mixtures were stirred at r.t. for 2 days and the materials were recovered quantitatively.

In conclusion, we provide an alternative tool for the preparation of 1,1diacetates from aldehydes, because of its operational simplicity, high yields, short reaction time and minimal environment impact.

Experimental

Boiling and melting points were uncorrected. The products were characterized by their melting or boiling points or/and IR, ¹H NMR and mass spectra and comparison with literature values.

Preparation of expansive graphite

A mixture of concentrated sulfuric acid (98%, 20 g), nitric acid (65%, 10 g), natural flake graphite (10 g) and potassium permanganate (0.7 g) was stirred at r.t. for 30 min. The expansive graphite was filtered, washed with water untill PH=6-7 and dried at 60 °C for 1 h.

General procedure for the preparatin of 1,1-diacetates(2)

A mixture of the aldehyde (1, 10 mmol), acetic anhydride (30 mmol) and expansive graphite (200 mg) was stirred at room temperature for the length of time indicated in Table. For the reactions with solvent CCl_4 (5 mL) was also added. The progress of the reaction was monitored by TLC. After completion, Et_2O (10 mL) was added to the reaction mixture and the expansive graphite was filtered off. The catalyst was washed with Et_2O (2 x 10 mL) and then the filtrate was washed with 5% HCl (20 mL), 5% NaHCO₃ and brine (2 x 20 mL) successively and dried (MgSO₄). The solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the residue was purified by distillation or crystallization from cyclohexane.

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