

Ag-Mediated Trifluoromethylthiolation of Inert Csp³–H BondYue Zhao,^{†,‡} Jin-Hong Lin,^{*,‡} Xiao-Chun Hang,^{*,‡} and Ji-Chang Xiao^{*,‡}[†]Key Laboratory of Flexible Electronics (KLOFE) and Institute of Advanced Materials (IAM), Nanjing Tech University (NanjingTech), 30 South Puzhu Road, Nanjing 211800, China[‡]Key Laboratory of Organofluorine Chemistry, Shanghai Institute of Organic Chemistry, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Sciences, 345 Lingling Road, Shanghai 200032, China

Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: Ag-mediated trifluoromethylthiolation of inert Csp³–H bond with CF₃SOCl is described. Widely available reagents and operational simplicity make this protocol attractive.

$$\text{R-H} + \text{CF}_3\text{SOCl} \xrightarrow{\text{Ag}_2\text{CO}_3, \text{K}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_8, \text{Ph}_3\text{P}} \text{R-SCF}_3$$

Due to its strong electron-withdrawing nature (Hammett constants $\sigma_p = 0.50$, $\sigma_m = 0.40$) and high lipophilicity (Hansch parameter $\pi = 1.44$),¹ the trifluoromethylthio group (CF₃S) has received increasing attention in medicinal chemistry, agrochemistry, and material science.² Consequently, determined efforts have been devoted to the development of efficient methods for the installation of a CF₃S moiety to organic molecules.^{2d,3} As C–H functionalization is an attractive concept because of its step economy, C–H trifluoromethylthiolation has become a straightforward strategy for CF₃S installation. Compared with trifluoromethylthiolation of the Csp²–H bond⁴ and Csp–H bond,⁵ trifluoromethylthiolation of the inert Csp³–H bond remains a challenging task.

In 2014, Qing reported a Cu-catalyzed Csp³–H trifluoromethylthiolation, in which the Csp³–H bond has to be an activated benzylic C–H bond (Scheme 1, eq 1).⁶ Shortly afterward, Besset disclosed a Pd-catalyzed trifluoromethylthiolation of inert Csp³–H bond. The desired products could be obtained in moderate yields, but a bulky directing group is required to be incorporated into the substrates (eq 2).⁷ Almost at the same time, Chen⁸ and Tang⁹ independently described a radical trifluoromethylthiolation of alkanes with AgSCF₃ under oxidative conditions (eqs 3 and 4). A wide substrate scope and good functional group compatibility were observed in both approaches. Recently, photocatalytic radical trifluoromethylthiolation was achieved by the group of Glorius (eq 5).¹⁰ Although good site selectivity and high yields were obtained, an expensive photocatalyst is needed. Apparently, the trifluoromethylthiolation reagents used in the above methods are expensive or have to be prepared via tedious synthetic procedures. We have been interested in the development of effective protocols for the incorporation of fluorine-containing functionalities into organic molecules.¹¹ We found that trifluoromethanesulfinic chloride (CF₃SOCl) could act as a trifluoromethylthio source to realize Ag-mediated radical trifluoromethylthiolation of inert Csp³–H bond (eq 6). All reagents in this protocol are widely available and easy to handle.

As it has been previously reported that phosphorus species could reduce CF₃SO₂Cl to provide active trifluoromethylthiolation intermediates,¹² Ph₃P was used as a reducing agent in

our initial attempts at the trifluoromethylthiolation of octane with CF₃SOCl (Table 1). A brief survey of the metal complex (entries 1–5) revealed that Ag₂CO₃ was quite effective (entry 2). Interestingly, no desired product was observed in other solvents (entries 6–8) except CH₃CN. An oxidant is necessary in the reaction, and replacing K₂S₂O₈ with other oxidants dramatically decreased the yield (entries 9 and 10). A reaction temperature of 60 °C proved superior to a lower or higher temperature (entry 2 vs entries 11 and 12). Increasing the loading of oxidant from 1.0 equiv to 1.5 equiv increased the yield to 77% (entry 13). However, the results were not reproducible (yields varied between 47% and 77%) if substrate 1a was used in the same equivalent with reagent 2 (entry 13). To our delight, the reaction could be well reproduced by using slight excess of substrate 1a (entry 14). A lower yield was obtained within a shorter reaction time (entry 15). One equivalent of Ag₂CO₃ was necessary, and decreasing the loading of Ag₂CO₃ led to the dramatic decrease in the yield (entries 16–19). No desired product was observed by replacing Ag₂CO₃ with K₂CO₃ (entry 20), suggesting that Ag₂CO₃ played a crucial role in the reaction.

With the optimized reaction conditions in hand (Table 1, entry 14), we then investigated the substrate scope of the Ag-mediated trifluoromethylthiolation of inert Csp³–H bond. As shown in Scheme 2, a variety of alkanes could be converted smoothly into the desired products in moderate to high yields. A large-scale reaction (10 mmol CF₃SOCl) could also give the desired product in a good yield (3a, 75% ¹⁹F NMR yield), demonstrating the potential application of this reaction. Some trifluoromethylthiolation products are volatile, and therefore, lower isolated yields compared to ¹⁹F NMR yields were obtained. Although C–H bond dissociation energies decrease in the order of secondary > tertiary, both secondary and tertiary carbons were found to be quite reactive, and tertiary carbon showed a higher reactivity. If two tertiary carbons were present in the substrates, trifluoromethylthiolation would prefer to take place at the position which is remote from electron-withdrawing groups (3q–3t). A wide range of

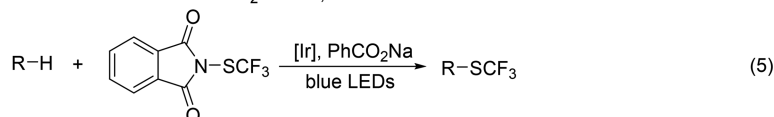
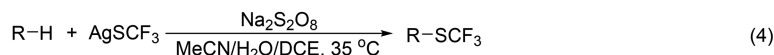
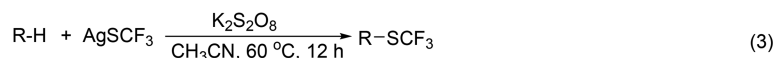
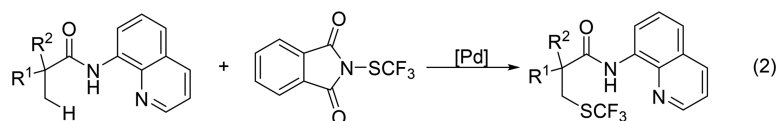
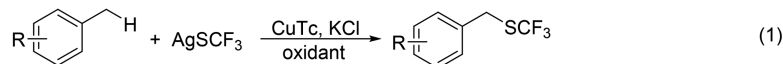
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Scheme 1. Csp³–H Trifluoromethylthiolation

Previous work:



This work:

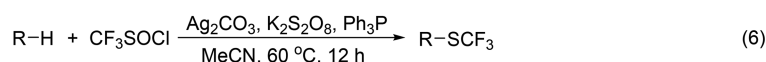


Table 1. Optimization of the Reaction Conditions

$\text{1a} + \text{CF}_3\text{SOCl} \xrightarrow[\text{solvent, 60 } ^\circ\text{C, 12 h}]{\text{MX, Ph}_3\text{P, K}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_8} \text{3a}$				
entry	MX	solvent	ratio ^b	yield (%) ^c
1	AgNO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	0
2	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	55
3	AgF	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	21
4	CuSCN	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	0
5	CuCl	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	0
6	Ag ₂ CO ₃	DMF	1:1:1:1.5:1	0
7	Ag ₂ CO ₃	DCM	1:1:1:1.5:1	0
8	Ag ₂ CO ₃	PhCH ₃	1:1:1:1.5:1	0
9 ^d	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	trace
10 ^e	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	trace
11 ^f	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	46
12 ^g	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1	57
13	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1:1:1:1.5:1.5	77
14	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1.5:1:1:1.5:1.5	80
15 ^h	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1.5:1:1:1.5:1.5	65
16	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1.5:1:0.8:1.5:1.5	57
17	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1.5:1:0.6:1.5:1.5	35
18	Ag ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1.5:1:0.5:1.5:1.5	0
19	—	CH ₃ CN	1.5:1:0:1.5:1.5	0
20	K ₂ CO ₃	CH ₃ CN	1.5:1:1:1.5:1.5	0

^aReaction conditions: **1a**, **2** (0.4 mmol), MX (1 equiv), Ph₃P (1.5 equiv), and K₂S₂O₈ in CH₃CN (3 mL) at 60 °C for 12 h. ^bMolar ratio of **1a**/**2**/MX/Ph₃P/K₂S₂O₈. ^cThe yields were determined by ¹⁹F NMR spectroscopy. ^dNaIO₄ was used instead of K₂S₂O₈. ^ePhI(OAc)₂ was used instead of K₂S₂O₈. ^fThe reaction temperature was 50 °C. ^gThe reaction temperature was 70 °C. ^hThe reaction time was 6 h.

functional groups could be tolerated, such as ketones, esters, amides, ethers, halides, and nitriles, demonstrating the synthetic utility of this protocol. To our surprise, the benzylic C–H bond is inert under these conditions. For instance, no desired product was observed for the conversion of toluene or 1-ethylnaphthalene.

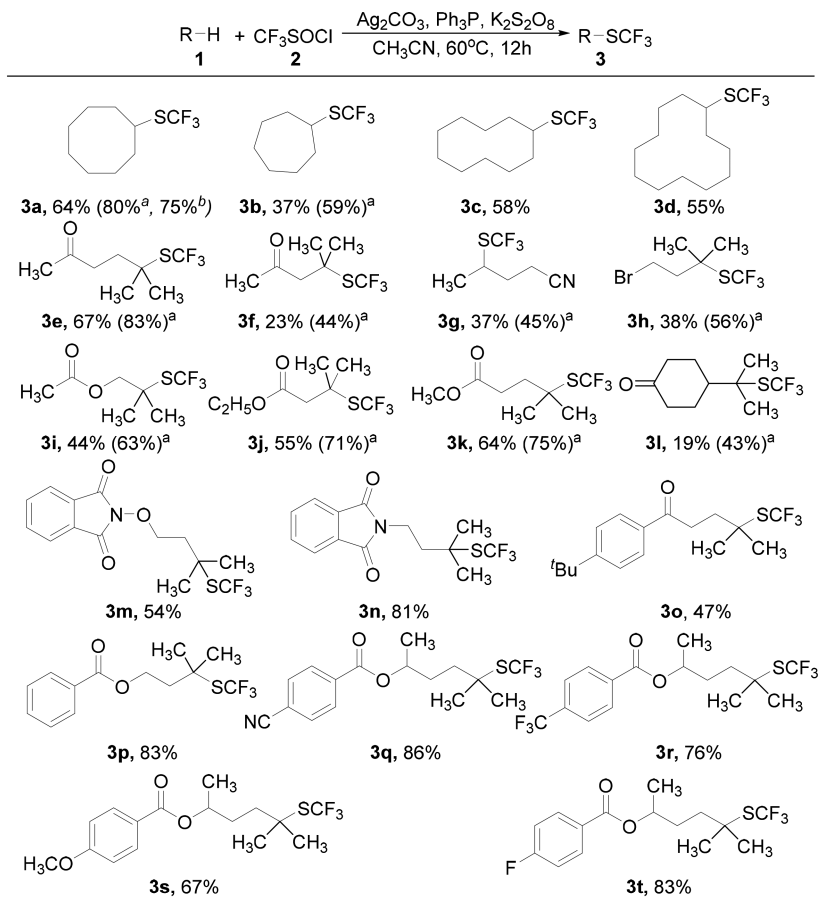
Some preliminary experimental results were collected to gain more mechanistic insights into the C–H trifluoromethylthio-

iolation process. The reaction gave the desired product in low yields in the presence of a radical scavenger, such as TEMPO (2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-oxyl), hydroquinone, or 1,4-dinitrobenzene, suggesting that a radical pathway may be involved (Scheme 3, eq 1). For the conversion of substrate **1o**, a cyclization product (**3o'**) was produced in 45% yield (eq 2), further supporting the radical mechanism. Without the presence of the CF₃SOCl/Ph₃P system, substrate **1o** could also be converted into cyclization product **3o'**, indicating that the Ag₂CO₃/K₂S₂O₈ system would lead to the generation of a radical intermediate from the substrate (eq 3).

Although Ph₃P is a reducing agent and K₂S₂O₈ is an oxidizing agent, the reaction between them is quite slow, whereas the reaction of Ph₃P with CF₃SOCl occurred rapidly. Almost no Ph₃P was converted by heating the mixture of Ph₃P and K₂S₂O₈ at 60 °C for 10 min. But, after the mixture of Ph₃P and CF₃SOCl was stirred for 10 min, CF₃SOCl was completely consumed to produce a major product, CF₃SSCF₃, which was confirmed by ¹⁹F NMR spectroscopy (δ: −46.2 ppm)¹³ and GC-MS (M⁺: 201.9) (Scheme 4, eq 1). ³¹P NMR analysis of the reaction mixture revealed that Ph₃P was completely converted into two species, Ph₃P=O and (Ph₃P⁺Cl[−] Cl[−]) (δ: +65 ppm)¹⁴ (eq 1). The molar ratio of these two species determined by ³¹P NMR spectroscopy was 3.4:1 [Ph₃P=O/(Ph₃P⁺Cl[−] Cl[−])]. After the complete conversion of CF₃SOCl into CF₃SSCF₃, substrate **1a** and the Ag₂CO₃/K₂S₂O₈ reagent system were added, and the resultant mixture was stirred at 60 °C for 12 h (eq 2). A 60% ¹⁹F NMR yield of the desired product was obtained, suggesting that CF₃SSCF₃ is a key intermediate for this trifluoromethylthiolation process.

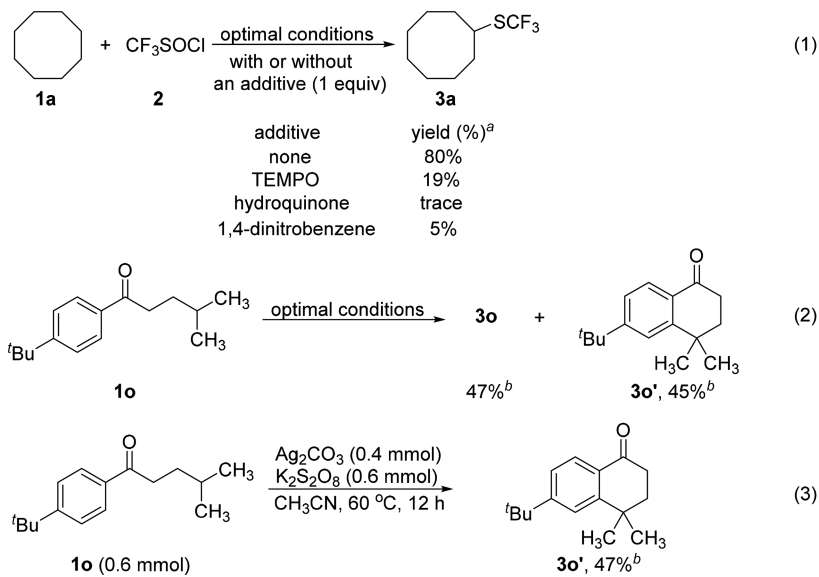
On the basis of the above results, the plausible mechanism is proposed as shown in Scheme 5. CF₃SOCl could be reduced by Ph₃P to form CF₃SCI (trifluoromethanesulfonyl chloride) via a halogen bonding process to form chlorophosphonium salt (ClP⁺Ph₃) and an Arbuzov conversion to release Ph₃P=O.¹² A further halogen bonding process between Ph₃P and CF₃SCI generates chlorophosphonium salt (ClP⁺Ph₃) and trifluoromethylthio anion (CF₃S[−]), which attacks CF₃SCI to produce CF₃SSCF₃ and a chloride anion. The disproportionation of peroxydisulfate anion in the presence of a Ag⁺ salt gives a sulfate radical anion.¹⁵ The abstraction of a hydrogen atom

Scheme 2. Ag-Mediated Trifluoromethylthiolation of Inert Csp³-H Bond^c



^a Isolated yields. Reaction conditions: substrate **1** (1.5 equiv), CF₃SOCl (0.4 mmol, 1 equiv), Ag₂CO₃ (1 equiv), Ph₃P (1.5 equiv), and K₂S₂O₈ (1.5 equiv) in CH₃CN (3 mL) at 60 °C for 12 h. Within the schematic: ^athe yields were determined by ¹⁹F NMR spectroscopy; ^ba 75% ¹⁹F NMR yield was obtained by increasing the reaction scale to 10 mmol (CF₃SOCl).

Scheme 3. Mechanistic Evidence^c



^cWithin the schematic: ^athe yield was determined by ¹⁹F NMR spectroscopy; ^bisolated yield.

from the substrates by the sulfate radical anion would readily occur to generate an alkyl radical. The reaction of the alkyl radical with CF_3SSCF_3 provides the final trifluoromethylth-

iolation product and a trifluoromethylthio radical ($\text{CF}_3\text{S}^\bullet$), the combination of which with the alkyl radical also furnishes the trifluoromethylthiolation product.

(s, 3F). HRMS-ESI (m/z): calcd for $C_8H_{17}F_3O_2SN [M + NH_4]^+$, 248.0927; found, 248.0926. IR(KBr): 2962, 2929, 1734, 1466, 1371, 1119, 1035, 869, 805, 756, 721 cm^{-1} .

Methyl 4-Methyl-4-((trifluoromethyl)thio)pentanoate (3k).⁹ 64% yield; 59 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 3.66 (s, 3H), 2.47 (t, J = 8.3 Hz, 2H), 2.01 (t, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 1.43 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 173.7, 131.1 (q, J = 307.6 Hz), 52.1, 51.5, 37.9, 30.1, 29.5. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.97 (s, 3F). GC-MS (EI) m/z : 129.1 ($[M - SCF_3]^+$).

4-(2-((Trifluoromethyl)thio)propan-2-yl)cyclohexan-1-one (3l).¹⁰ 19% yield; 18 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 2.45–2.21 (m, 6H), 2.05–1.99 (m, 1H), 1.62–1.51 (m, 2H), 1.46 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 210.9, 131.3 (q, J = 309.1 Hz), 55.5, 46.4, 40.9, 27.7, 27.2. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.01 (s, 3F). GC-MS (EI) m/z : 240.1 (M^+).

2-(3-Methyl-3-((trifluoromethyl)thio)butoxy)isoindoline-1,3-dione (3m).⁸ 54% yield; 72 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 7.83–7.79 (m, 2H), 7.76–7.73 (m, 2H), 4.38 (t, J = 6.4 Hz, 2H), 2.22 (t, J = 6.4 Hz, 2H), 1.56 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 163.7, 134.9, 131.0 (q, J = 307.6 Hz), 129.2, 123.9, 75.5, 50.8, 40.9, 30.0. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.89 (s, 3F). MS (EI) m/z : 232.1 ($[M - SCF_3]^+$).

2-(3-Methyl-3-((trifluoromethyl)thio)butyl)isoindoline-1,3-dione (3n).⁸ 81% yield; 103 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 7.82–7.80 (m, 2H), 7.70–7.68 (m, 2H), 3.82 (t, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 2.04 (t, J = 7.9 Hz, 2H), 1.52 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 168.3, 134.3, 132.4, 131.0 (q, J = 307.9 Hz), 123.5, 50.4, 41.1, 34.5, 29.6. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.76 (s, 3F). GC-MS (EI) m/z : 317.1 (M^+).

1-(4-(tert-Butyl)phenyl)-4-methyl-4-((trifluoromethyl)thio)pentan-1-one (3o). 47% yield; 62 mg; colorless liquid. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 7.92 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 7.49 (d, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 3.14 (t, J = 7.8 Hz, 2H), 2.14 (t, J = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 1.51 (s, 6H), 1.35 (s, 9H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 199.1, 157.3, 134.5, 131.3 (q, J = 309.1 Hz), 128.4, 125.9, 52.1, 37.1, 35.5, 34.4, 31.4, 30.0. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.77 (s, 3F). HRMS-ESI (m/z): calcd for $C_{17}H_{24}F_3OS [M + H]^+$, 333.1494; found, 333.1494. IR(KBr): 2967, 2907, 2870, 1683, 1606, 1568, 1470, 1392, 1318, 1225, 1098, 999, 842, 755, 583 cm^{-1} .

3-Methyl-3-((trifluoromethyl)thio)butyl benzoate (3p).⁹ 83% yield; 97 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 8.03 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.56 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.44 (t, J = 7.7 Hz, 2H), 4.52 (t, J = 6.7 Hz, 2H), 2.21 (t, J = 6.7 Hz, 2H), 1.56 (s, 6H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 166.7, 133.4, 131.1 (q, J = 307.6 Hz), 130.4, 129.9, 128.7, 61.9, 50.6, 41.6, 30.1. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.76 (s, 3F). GC-MS (EI) m/z : 292.1 (M^+).

5-Methyl-5-((trifluoromethyl)thio)hexan-2-yl 4-Cyanobenzoate (3q).⁹ 86% yield; 119 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 8.11 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.73 (d, J = 8.2 Hz, 2H), 5.18–5.13 (m, 1H), 1.95–1.68 (m, 4H), 1.44 (s, 6H), 1.37 (d, J = 6.3 Hz, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 164.7, 134.7, 132.5, 131.2 (q, J = 307.6 Hz), 130.3, 118.3, 116.6, 72.8, 51.8, 38.9, 31.4, 29.7, 20.2. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.80 (s, 3F). GC-MS (EI) m/z : 244.1 ($[M - SCF_3]^+$).

5-Methyl-5-((trifluoromethyl)thio)hexan-2-yl 4-(Trifluoromethyl)benzoate (3r).⁹ 76% yield; 118 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 8.14 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 7.71 (d, J = 8.1 Hz, 2H), 5.30–4.93 (m, 1H), 1.98–1.66 (m, 4H), 1.46 (s, 6H), 1.39 (d, J = 6.3 Hz, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 165.3, 134.7 (q, J = 32.7 Hz), 134.2, 131.3 (q, J = 309.1), 130.3, 125.7 (q, J = 3.7 Hz), 124.0 (q, J = 272.6 Hz), 72.5, 51.9, 39.0, 31.5, 29.8, 20.4. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.83 (s, 3F), -63.18 (s, 3F). ESI (m/z): $C_{16}H_{18}F_6O_2SNa [M + Na]^+$, 411.1.

5-Methyl-5-((trifluoromethyl)thio)hexan-2-yl 4-Methoxybenzoate (3s).⁹ 67% yield; 93 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 7.98 (d, J = 8.6 Hz, 2H), 6.91 (d, J = 8.8 Hz, 2H), 5.13–5.09 (m, 1H), 3.85 (s, 3H), 1.93–1.67 (m, 4H), 1.45 (s, 6H), 1.35 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 166.2, 163.6, 131.8, 131.3 (q, J = 307.6 Hz), 123.3, 113.9, 71.2, 55.7, 52.0, 39.1, 31.6, 29.8, 20.4. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.76 (s, 3F). GC-MS (EI) m/z : 350.2 (M^+).

5-Methyl-5-((trifluoromethyl)thio)hexan-2-yl 4-Fluorobenzoate (3t).⁹ 83% yield; 112 mg. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 8.06–8.02 (m, 2H), 7.10 (t, J = 8.5 Hz, 2H), 5.15–5.11 (m, 1H), 1.92–1.68 (m, 4H), 1.45 (s, 6H), 1.36 (d, J = 6.2 Hz, 3H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 166.1 (d, J = 253.5 Hz), 165.5, 132.4 (d, J = 9.8 Hz), 131.3 (q, J = 307.6 Hz), 127.2 (d, J = 3.4 Hz), 115.8 (d, J = 21.9 Hz), 71.9, 51.9, 39.0, 31.6, 29.8, 20.4. ^{19}F NMR (376 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : -35.80 (s, 3F), -105.96 ~ -106.05 (m, 1F). GC-MS (EI) m/z : 237.1 ($[M - SCF_3]^+$).

6-(tert-Butyl)-4,4-dimethyl-3,4-dihydronaphthalen-1(2H)-one (3o'). 45% yield; 41 mg; colorless liquid. 1H NMR (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 7.95 (d, J = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.42 (d, J = 1.9 Hz, 1H), 7.33 (dd, J = 8.3, 19 Hz, 1H), 2.70 (t, J = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 2.01 (t, J = 6.8 Hz, 2H), 1.39 (s, 6H), 1.34 (s, 9H). ^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, $CDCl_3$) δ : 198.5, 157.7, 152.3, 129.1, 127.5, 123.9, 122.6, 37.6, 35.6, 35.4, 34.4, 31.4, 30.1. HRMS-ESI (m/z): calcd for $C_{16}H_{23}O [M + H]^+$, 231.1743; found, 231.1743. IR(KBr): 3351, 2961, 2868, 1685, 1604, 1465, 1387, 1285, 1198, 1092, 1021, 880, 837, 810, 696, 655, 569, 485 cm^{-1} .

■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge on the ACS Publications website at DOI: 10.1021/acs.joc.8b02207.

Copies of 1H , ^{19}F , and ^{13}C NMR spectra of compounds (PDF)

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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