

Friedel–Crafts reaction of electron-rich (het)arenes with nitroalkenes

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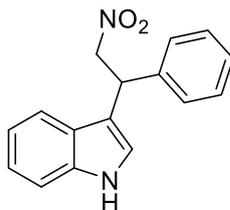
Experimental

All commercially available reagents were used without further purification. Solvents were purified using known procedures. Compounds **2a** [S1] and **2b** [S2] were prepared according to reported methods. All reactions were performed under an air atmosphere. ¹H, ¹³C NMR spectra were recorded in CDCl₃ with Bruker Avance-400 at ambient temperature. ¹³C spectra were ¹H decoupled. Chemical shifts are reported in δ-scale in parts per million (ppm) relative to the residual solvent peak (CHCl₃: δ = 7.26 ppm for ¹H) or to solvent (CDCl₃: δ = 77.00 ppm for ¹³C) as internal standards. Accurate-mass measurements (HRMS) were performed by ESI-TOF with a Thermo Scientific Orbitrap Elite mass spectrometer. Analytical TLC was carried out using Macherey-Nagel silica gel 60 F254 plates, the spots were visualized by UF. Preparative column chromatography was performed using Macherey-Nagel silica gel 60 (0.040–0.063 mm, 230–400 mesh). Melting points were measured with an Electrothermal IA 9200 apparatus and are uncorrected.

Friedel–Crafts alkylation. General procedure.

Magnesium iodide (0.025 mmol, 10 mol%, 6.9 mg) or calcium bis(trifluoromethanesulfonimide) (0.025 mmol, 10 mol%, 15 mg) and nitroalkene (0.25 mmol) were dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ or CHCl₃ (0.5 ml). The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 30 min in a glass vial, and the appropriate (het)arene (0.5 mmol) was added. After the reaction completion, the solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure. The crude residue was purified by column chromatography to afford the desired product.

3-(2-Nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-indole (3a) [S3]

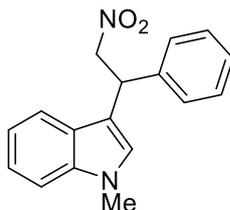


was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1a** (58 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/light petroleum, 1:1, then CH₂Cl₂/light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a grey solid, yield: 61 mg (93%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.07 (s, 1 H), 7.47 (d, J = 8.0 Hz, 1 H), 7.20–7.35 (m, 6 H), 7.22 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.08 (t, J = 7.5 Hz, 1 H), 6.99 (d, J = 1.8 Hz, 1 H), 5.20 (t, J = 8.2 Hz, 1 H), 5.07 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.2 Hz, 1 H), 4.95 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.2 Hz, 1 H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 139.1, 136.4, 128.9 (2C), 127.7 (2C), 127.50, 126.0, 122.6, 121.6, 119.9, 118.8, 114.3, 111.4, 76.7, 41.5.

1-Methyl-3-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-indole (3b) [S4]

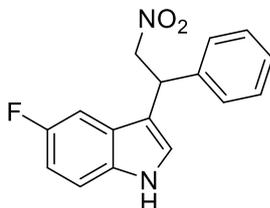


was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1b** (66 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/light petroleum, 1:2, then CH₂Cl₂/light petroleum, 1:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 58 mg (83%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.50 (d; 8.0 Hz; 1H), 7.26-7.40 (m; 7H), 7.12 (ddd, J = 8.6, 6.9, 1.0 Hz; 1H), 6.89 (s; 1H), 5.23 (t, J = 8.0 Hz; 1H), 5.07 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.0 Hz; 1H), 4.96 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.0 Hz; 1H), 3.75 (s; 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 139.3, 137.2, 128.8 (2C), 127.7 (2C), 127.4, 126.5, 126.3, 122.1, 119.4, 118.9, 112.7, 109.5, 79.5, 41.4, 32.7.

5-Fluoro-3-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-indole (3c) [S5]



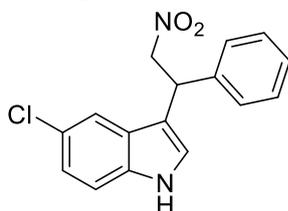
was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1c** (68 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/light petroleum, 1:1, then CH₂Cl₂/light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a white solid.

Yield: 64 mg (90%).

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.13 (s; 1H), 7.28-7.35 (m; 5H), 7.23 (dd, $J = 9.0, 4.3$ Hz; 1H), 7.05-7.07 (m; 2H), 6.94 (dt, $J = 9.1, 2.3$ Hz; 1H), 5.12 (t, $J = 8.0$ Hz; 1H), 5.04 (dd, $J = 12.4, 8.0$ Hz; 1H), 4.93 (dd, $J = 12.4, 8.0$ Hz; 1H).

^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 157.7 (d, $J = 235.2$ Hz), 138.8, 132.9, 129.0 (2C), 127.6 (3C), 126.4 (d, $J = 10$ Hz), 123.2, 114.3 (d, $J = 4.2$ Hz), 112.1 (d, $J = 9.2$ Hz), 111.1 (d, $J = 26.1$ Hz), 103.8 (d, $J = 26.1$ Hz), 79.35, 41.39.

5-Chloro-3-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-indole (3d) [S6]

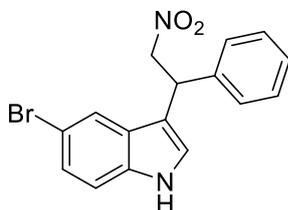


was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1d** (76 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2f** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH_2Cl_2 and MgI_2 as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 1:1, then CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 58 mg (77%).

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.14 (s; 1H), 7.40 (s; 1H), 7.22-7.36 (m; 1H), 7.14 (dd, $J = 8.7, 1.6$ Hz; 1H), 7.05 (d, $J = 2.2$ Hz; 1H), 5.13 (t, $J = 8.0$ Hz; 1H), 5.02 (dd, $J = 12.5, 8.0$ Hz; 1H), 4.91 (dd, $J = 12.5, 8.0$ Hz).

^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 138.7, 134.8, 129.0 (2C), 127.7, 127.6 (2C), 127.1, 125.6, 123.0, 122.8, 118.2, 113.9, 112.4, 79.3, 41.3.

5-Bromo-3-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-indole (3e) [S4]

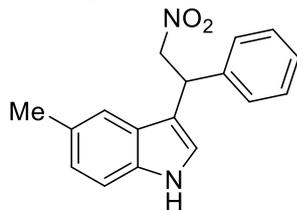


was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1e** (76 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2f** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH_2Cl_2 and MgI_2 as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 1:1, then CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 81 mg (94%).

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 8.14 (s; 1H), 7.56 (d, $J = 1.64$ Hz; 1H), 7.25-7.35 (m; 6H), 7.19 (d, $J = 8.7$ Hz; 1H), 7.03 (d, $J = 2.4$ Hz; 1H), 5.12 (t, $J = 8.0$ Hz; 1H), 5.02 (dd, $J = 12.5, 8.0$ Hz; 1H), 4.91 (dd, $J = 12.5, 8.0$ Hz).

^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 138.6, 135.0, 129.0 (2C), 127.8, 127.7, 127.60 (2C), 125.6, 122.7, 121.4, 113.9, 113.2, 112.8, 79.3, 41.2.

5-Methyl-3-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-indole (3f) [S6]

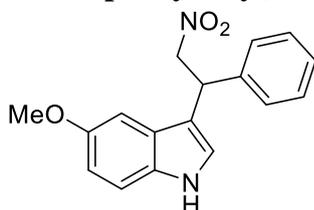


was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1f** (66 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:1, then CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 64 mg (91%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.95 (s; 1H), 7.23-7.36 (m; 7H), 7.05 (d, J = 8.3 Hz; 1H), 6.93 (d, J = 2.5 Hz; 1H), 5.18 (t, J = 7.8 Hz; 1H), 5.05 (dd, J = 12.5, 7.8 Hz; 1H), 4.94 (dd, J = 12.5, 7.8 Hz; 1H), 2.44 (s; 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 139.2, 134.7, 129.2, 128.9 (2C), 127.7 (2C), 127.5, 126.2, 124.3, 121.8, 118.3, 113.7, 111.0, 79.5, 41.3, 21.5.

5-Methoxy-3-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-indole (3g) [S4]

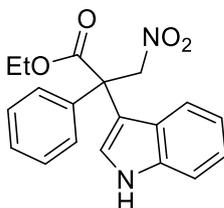


was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1g** (73 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:1, then CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 57 mg (78%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.04 (s; 1H), 7.31-7.35 (m; 4H), 7.26-7.29 (m; 1H), 7.21 (dd, J = 6.8, 2.7 Hz; 1H), 6.96 (d, J = 2.4 Hz; 1H), 6.86-6.89 (m; 2H), 5.15 (dd, J = 8.5, 7.5 Hz; 1H), 5.04 (dd, J = 12.5, 7.5 Hz), 4.93 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.5 Hz; 1H) 3.79 (s; 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 154.0, 139.0, 131.5, 128.9 (2C), 127.7 (2C), 127.5, 126.5, 122.2, 113.8, 112.6, 112.1, 100.7, 79.4, 55.8, 41.4.

Ethyl 2-(1H-Indol-3-yl)-3-nitro-2-phenylpropanoate(3h) [S3]

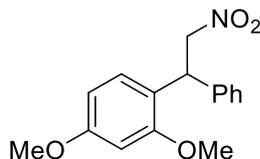


was obtained following the general procedure using indole **1a** (58 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2b** (55 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CHCl₃ and Ca(NTf₂)₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 4:1, then CH₂Cl₂), the product was obtained as a white solid, yield: 76 mg (90%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 8.28 (s, 1 H), 7.49 (d, J = 2.5 Hz, 1 H), 7.30–7.38 (m, 6 H), 7.11 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1 H), 6.87 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1 H), 6.77(d, J = 8.21 Hz, 1 H), 5.66 (d, J = 13.6 Hz, 1 H), 5.45 (d, J = 13.6 Hz, 1 H), 4.20–4.33 (m, 2 H), 1.21 (t, J = 7.07 Hz, 3 H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 170.7, 137.8, 136.4, 128.2 (2 C), 127.7 (2 C), 127.7, 125.1, 124.9, 121.5, 120.2, 119.1, 111.4, 80.6, 61.8, 54.5, 13.6 (one aromatic quaternary carbon atom was not unambiguously assigned).

2,4-Dimethoxy-1-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)benzene (4a)



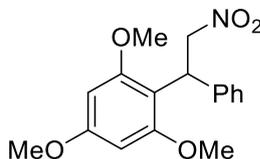
was obtained following the general procedure using 1,3-dimethoxybenzene (69 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:2, then CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 49 mg (68%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.23-7.34 (m; 5H), 6.96 (d, J = 9.3 Hz; 1H), 6.44 (d, J = 2.4 Hz; 1H), 6.42 (dd, J = 8.5, 2.4 Hz; 1H), 5.19 (dd, J = 8.8, 7.4 Hz; 1H), 5.02 (dd, J = 12.8, 7.4 Hz; 1H), 4.94 (dd, J = 12.8, 8.8 Hz; 1H), 3.81 (s; 3H), 3.78 (s; 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 160.2, 157.8, 139.2, 129.0, 128.7, 127.8, 127.1, 119.9, 104.2, 100.0, 78.0, 55.4, 55.9, 42.9.

HRMS (ESI): m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₆H₁₇NO₄: 288.1236; found: 288.1231.

1,3,5-Trimethoxy-2-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)benzene (4b) [S7]

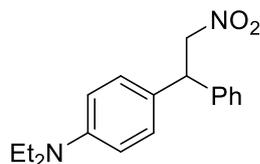


was obtained following the general procedure using 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene (84 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:2, then CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 44 mg (56%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.32 (d, J = 7.6 Hz; 1H), 7.26 (t, J = 7.6 Hz, 1H), 7.18 (t, J = 7.0 Hz; 1H), 6.13 (s; 2H), 5.50 (t, J = 7.8 Hz; 1H), 5.24 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.4 Hz, 1H), 5.13 (dd, J = 12.5, 7.4 Hz; 1H), 3.80 (s; 6H), 3.79 (s; 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 160.5, 158.9 (2C), 140.5, 128.2 (2C), 127.5 (2C), 126.5, 92.8, 91.1 (2C), 78.2, 55.7 (2C), 55.2, 38.5.

N,N-diethyl-4-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)aniline (4c) [S8]

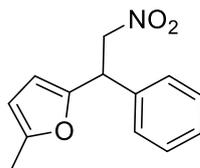


was obtained following the general procedure using *N,N*-diethylaniline (75 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:2, then CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 62 mg (46%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.31-7.35 (m; 2H), 7.22-7.27 (m; 3H), 7.06 (d, J = 8.7 Hz; 2H), 6.61 (d, J = 8.7 Hz; 2H), 4.97 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.2 Hz; 1H), 4.92 (dd, J = 12.5, 8.2 Hz; 1H), 4.80 (t, J = 8.2 Hz; 1H), 3.33 (q, J = 7.1 Hz; 4H), 1.14 (t, J = 7.1 Hz; 6H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 147.0, 140.0, 128.8 (2C), 128.5 (2C), 127.6 (2C), 127.22, 125.3, 111.8 (2C), 79.6, 48.2, 44.2, 12.5.

2-Methyl-5-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)furan (4d) [S9]

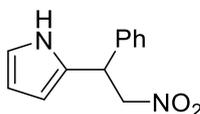


was obtained following the general procedure using 2-methylfuran (42 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:2, then CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 26 mg (44%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.28-7.37 (m; 5H), 5.97 (d, J = 3.0 Hz; 1H), 5.88-5.89 (m; 1H), 4.99 (dd, J = 12.0, 7.6 Hz; 1H), 4.87 (t, J = 7.6 Hz; 1H), 4.89 (dd, J = 12.0, 7.6 Hz; 1H), 2.25 (s; 3H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 152.2, 150.0, 137.1, 129.0 (2C), 128.0 (2C), 127.9, 108.1, 106.3, 78.2, 43.6, 13.5.

2-(2-Nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-pyrrole (5) [S6]

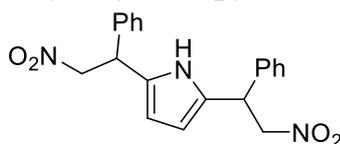


was obtained following the general procedure using pyrrole (67 mg, 1 mmol), **2a** (37 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CH₂Cl₂ and MgI₂ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:2, then CH₂Cl₂/ light petroleum, 1:1), the product was obtained as a brown oil, yield: 30 mg (46%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.84 (s; 1H), 7.29-7.38 (m; 3H), 7.23-7.26 (m; 2H), 6.69 (dd, J = 2.5, 1.6 Hz; 1H), 6.18 (q, J = 2.8 Hz; 1H), 6.08-6.10 (m; 1H), 4.99 (dd, J = 11.8, 7.5 Hz; 1H), 4.90 (t, J = 7.5 Hz; 1H), 4.81 (dd, J = 11.8, 7.5 Hz; 1H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 137.9, 129.2 (2C), 128.1, 127.9 (2C), 118.2, 108.6, 105.7, 79.2, 42.9 (one quaternary aromatic carbon was not unambiguously assigned).

2,5-Bis(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)-1H-pyrrole (*dl*-6 + *meso*-6) [S10]

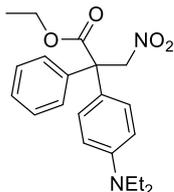


was the second product in the above reaction, yield: 22 mg (31%).

¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 7.54 (s; 1H), 7.51 (s; 1H), 7.24-7.36 (m; 6H), 7.14-7.17 (m; 4H), 6.01 (d, J = 2.6 Hz; 2H), 5.99 (d, J = 2.6 Hz; 2H), 4.87-4.91 (m; 2H), 4.69-4.81 (m; 2H).

¹³C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 137.71, 137.65, 129.49, 129.18, 129.12, 128.16, 128.12, 127.8, 127.7, 106.5, 106.1, 79.11, 79.06, 42.7 (two quaternary carbons were not unambiguously assigned).

Ethyl 2-(4-(diethylamino)phenyl)-3-nitro-2-phenylpropanoate (7a)



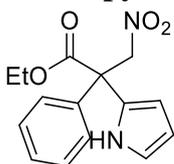
was obtained following the general procedure using *N,N*-diethylaniline (75 mg, 0.5 mmol), **2b** (55 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CHCl_3 and $\text{Ca}(\text{NTf}_2)_2$ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 1:1, then CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a light-yellow oil, yield: 35 mg (38%).

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.27-7.32 (m; 5H), 7.03 (d, $J = 9.0$ Hz; 2H), 6.57 (d, $J = 9.0$ Hz; 1H), 5.47 (d, $J = 14$ Hz; 1H), 5.31 (d, $J = 14$ Hz; 1H), 4.22-4.33 (m; 2H), 3.33 (q, $J = 7.1$ Hz; 4H), 1.25 (t, $J = 7.2$ Hz; 3H), 1.15 (t, $J = 7.1$ Hz; 6H).

^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 171.2, 147.0, 139.7, 129.2 (2C), 128.4 (2C), 128.1 (2C), 127.5, 124.9, 111.0 (2C), 81.6, 61.9, 57.9, 44.2 (2C), 13.9, 12.7 (2C).

HRMS (ESI): m/z $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ calcd for $\text{C}_{21}\text{H}_{27}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$: 371.1971; found: 371.1978.

Ethyl 3-nitro-2-phenyl-2-(1*H*-pyrrol-2-yl)propanoate (7b)



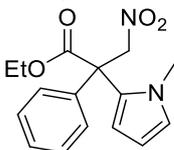
was obtained following the general procedure using pyrrole (67 mg, 1 mmol), **2b** (55 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CHCl_3 and $\text{Ca}(\text{NTf}_2)_2$ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 1:1, then CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as a white solid, yield: 58 mg (81%), m.p. 112-113 °C.

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 9.39 (s; 1H), 7.30-7.34 (m; 3H), 7.09-7.11 (m, 2H), 6.82 (dt, $J = 2.6, 1.4$ Hz; 1H), 6.20 (q, $J = 3.1$ Hz; 1H), 6.10 – 6.02 (m; 1H), 5.44 (d, $J = 15.0$ Hz; 1H), 5.17 (d, $J = 15.0$ Hz; 1H), 4.43 – 4.28 (m; 2H), 1.32 (t, $J = 7.1$ Hz; 3H).

^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 171.1, 138.3, 128.8 (2C), 128.4 (2C), 127.3, 127.0, 118.5, 108.1, 106.9, 79.8, 62.6, 54.1, 13.8.

HRMS (ESI): m/z $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ calcd for $\text{C}_{15}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$: 289.1188; found: 289.1183.

Ethyl 2-(1-methyl-1*H*-pyrrol-2-yl)-3-nitro-2-phenylpropanoate (7c)



was obtained following the general procedure using *N*-methylpyrrole (81 mg, 1 mmol), **2b** (55 mg, 0.25 mmol) in CHCl_3 and $\text{Ca}(\text{NTf}_2)_2$ as the catalyst. After purification by gradient column chromatography (CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 1:1, then CH_2Cl_2 / light petroleum, 3:1), the product was obtained as an oil, yield: 50 mg (66%).

^1H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 7.28–7.36 (m, 3H), 7.20-7.27 (m, 2H), 6.60 (t, $J = 2.1$ Hz; 1H), 6.14 (d, $J = 2.3$ Hz; 2H), 5.55 (d, $J = 14.1$ Hz; 1H), 4.99 (d, $J = 14.1$ Hz; 1H), 4.47-4.22 (m; 2H), 3.07 (s, 3H), 1.30 (t, $J = 7.1$ Hz; 4H).

^{13}C NMR (101 MHz, CDCl_3) δ 169.2, 137.0, 128.7 (2C), 128.1 (2C), 128.1, 127.8, 125.3, 108.3, 106.8, 82.2, 62.2, 54.7, 35.8, 13.8.

HRMS (ESI): m/z $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ calcd for $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{19}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$: 303.1345; found: 303.1350.

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^1H , ^{13}C spectra of Friedel-Crafts products.

