



Cite this: *Chem. Commun.*, 2022, 58, 3521

Received 1st December 2021,  
Accepted 14th February 2022

DOI: 10.1039/d1cc06761c

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# Hydride reduction of *o*-(fluorosilyl)benzodifluorides for subsequent C–F transformations†‡

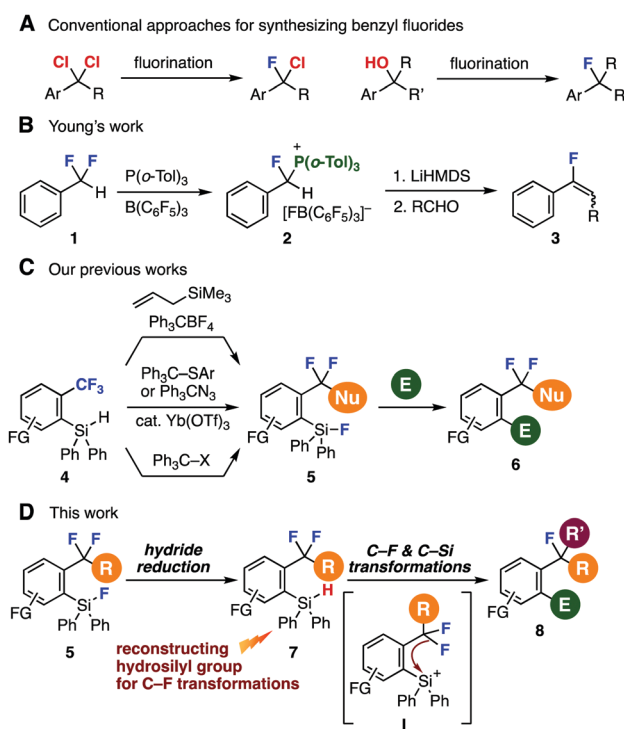
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**An efficient method for sequential C–F transformations of *o*-hydrosilyl-substituted benzotrifluorides is disclosed. A key to the success is hydride reduction of *o*-fluorosilyl-substituted difluoromethylenes prepared by a single C–F transformation of *o*-hydrosilyl-substituted benzotrifluorides. We succeeded in further C–F transformations via hydride abstraction of the resulting *o*-hydrosilyl group, enabling us to synthesize a wide variety of organofluorine compounds.**

Organofluorine compounds are of great importance in broad research fields including pharmaceutical sciences, agrochemistry, and materials chemistry.<sup>1</sup> A wide variety of fluorinating reagents have been developed so far for synthesizing a wide range of organofluorines from halides and alcohols (Fig. 1A).<sup>2</sup> Despite the remarkable improvements in organofluorine chemistry enhancing the availability of organofluorines, it is not easy to synthesize highly functionalized benzyl fluoride derivatives due to the limited fluorination reactions.<sup>3</sup>

Modern studies of selective C–F transformations significantly expanded the accessibility of organofluorines (Fig. 1B and C).<sup>4,5</sup> For example, in 2018, Young and coworkers succeeded in a single C–F transformation of  $\alpha,\alpha$ -difluorotoluene (**1**) with a frustrated Lewis pair between tri(*o*-tolyl)phosphine and tris(pentafluorophenyl)borane realizing facile synthesis of phosphonium salt **2**, which served in the preparation of fluoroalkenes by the Wittig reaction with aldehydes (Fig. 1B).<sup>6</sup> Our

recent achievements from 2016 on single C–F transformations of benzotrifluorides **4** enabled to synthesize difluoromethylenes **5** through hydride abstraction of *o*-hydrosilyl group (Fig. 1C).<sup>7</sup> Herein, we disclose a new method to synthesize highly functionalized benzyl fluorides **8** from *o*-fluorosilyl-substituted difluoromethylenes **5** by C–F and C–Si transformations (Fig. 1D). A key to the success was efficient reconstruction of hydrosilyl group from fluorosilyl groups, which allowed



**Fig. 1** Backgrounds and an abstract of this study. (A) Conventional methods to synthesize benzyl fluorides. (B) Young's work. (C) Our previous studies. (D) This work.

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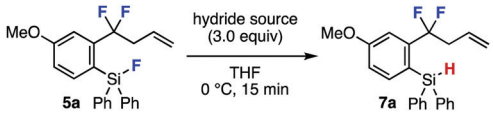
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† Dedicated to Professor Koichi Narasaka with Gratitude on the Occasion of his 77th Birthday (Kiju).

‡ Electronic supplementary information (ESI) available: Experimental procedures, characterization for new compounds including NMR spectra. See DOI: 10.1039/d1cc06761c



Table 1 Screening of the reaction conditions



Entry	Hydride source	Yield (%)
1	LiAlH <sub>4</sub>	Quant <sup>a</sup>
2	NaBH <sub>4</sub>	0
3	i-Bu <sub>2</sub> AlH	0
4	Li[i-Bu <sub>3</sub> BH]	0
5	Li[Et <sub>3</sub> BH]	0

<sup>a</sup> Isolated yield (1.0 mmol scale).

further C–F transformations *via* silyl cation intermediate **I** generated by hydride abstraction.

First, we examined hydride reduction of *o*-fluorosilyl-substituted difluoromethylene **5a** using various metal hydrides (Table 1).<sup>8</sup> As a result, *o*-hydrosilyl-substituted benzodifluoride **7a** was synthesized quantitatively with lithium aluminum hydride (LAH) without damaging labile difluoromethylene moiety<sup>8</sup> and C–Si cleavage (entry 1). In sharp contrast, hydride reduction of fluorosilane **5a** resulted in failure when using sodium borohydride, diisobutylaluminum hydride, lithium triisobutylborohydride, or lithium triethylborohydride due to undesired decomposition (entries 2–5). The efficient LAH reduction of fluorosilane **7a** took place in 1.0 mmol scale, clearly showing the good scalability.

A wide range of *o*-fluorosilyl-substituted benzodifluorides **5** successfully participated in the hydride reduction to afford *o*-(hydrosilyl)benzodifluorides **7** (Fig. 2). For example, hydrosilanes

**7b** and **7c** having electron-rich thienyl and electron-deficient 4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl group, respectively, were efficiently prepared by LAH reduction. Hydride reduction furnishing bromo-substituted silane **7d** also proceeded smoothly leaving the bromo group untouched. The reduction of fluorodimethylsilyl group instead of fluorodiphenylsilyl group proceeded and required longer reaction time affording hydrosilane **7e** in good yield,<sup>9</sup> where the dimethylsilyl group can serve in the C–F transformations.<sup>7a</sup> Furthermore, efficient synthesis of **7f** bearing an acidic allylic proton was achieved without damaging difluoromethylene moiety. We succeeded in the preparation of difluorobenzyl sulfide **7g** and chlorides **7h** and **7i** in good yields. Also, difluorobenzyl bromide **7j** was synthesized in moderate yield. Unfortunately, the synthesis of difluorobenzyl *p*-toluenesulfonate **7k** resulted in failure due to the labile sulfonate ester moiety.

The reconstructed hydrosilyl group of difluoromethylenes served in further C–F transformations (Fig. 3). Indeed, single C–F chlorination of difluoromethylene **7a** with trityl chloride in chlorobenzene and 1,1,1,3,3,3-hexafluoro-2-propanol (HFIP)<sup>10</sup> through benzyl cation intermediate **II** proceeded efficiently to afford highly functionalized benzyl fluoride **8a** in good yield (Fig. 3A).<sup>7c</sup> Various benzyl fluorides **8b–8e** were synthesized through single C–F transformations of difluoromethylenes **7a–7d** having a range of functional groups (Fig. 3B). For instance, C–F chlorination products **8b–8d** were prepared from **7b–7d** with trityl chloride in moderate to good yields without damaging a wide variety of functionalities such as fluoro, chloro, allyl, fluorosilyl, trifluoromethyl, thienyl, and bromo groups. It is worth noting that benzyl chloride **8c** was prepared selectively without C–F chlorination of trifluoromethyl group. Further C–F allylation of benzodifluoride **7a** also took place to afford **8e** in moderate yield.<sup>7a</sup> When we attempted Yb-catalyzed C–F thiolation of benzodifluoride **7a** with 4-tolyl trityl sulfide,<sup>7b</sup> benzyl fluoride **8f** was not obtained, showing the different reactivity of fluorobenzyl cation **II** generated from **7a** to difluorobenzyl cation intermediates in our previous reports.<sup>7</sup> Owing to the great importance of organofluorine chemistry, successes in the synthesis of highly functionalized benzyl fluorides **8a–8e** obviously indicated the significant potential of sequential transformations *via* reconstruction of the hydrosilyl group.

Facile synthesis of  $\alpha,\alpha$ -difluorobenzyl chloride **7h** by a single C–F chlorination and subsequent LAH reduction was achieved from benzotrifluoride **4a** in a one-pot manner *via* removal of solvents under reduced pressure (Fig. 3C). Benzyl fluoride **8a** was prepared in good yield also from  $\alpha,\alpha$ -difluorobenzyl chloride **7h** by a single C–F allylation provably *via*  $\alpha$ -chloro- $\alpha$ -fluorobenzyl cation **III**. Second C–F chlorination took place smoothly to provide  $\alpha,\alpha$ -dichlorobenzyl fluoride **8g** in moderate yield. Moreover, we succeeded in the preparation of benzyl fluoride **8a** from benzotrifluoride **4a** in a three-step, single purification procedure (Fig. 3D). Indeed, C–F allylation of **4a** followed by LAH reduction using the crude product and subsequent C–F chlorination provided benzyl fluoride **8a** in moderate yield.

Succeeding transformations of highly functionalized benzyl fluoride **8a** realized facile synthesis of organofluorines

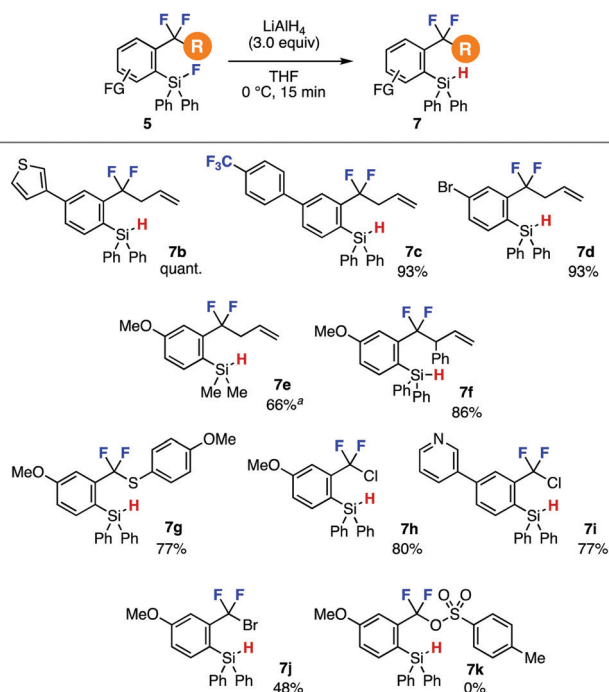


Fig. 2 Syntheses of *o*-(hydrosilyl)benzodifluorides **7**. See the ESI† for details. <sup>a</sup>The reaction time was 2 h.



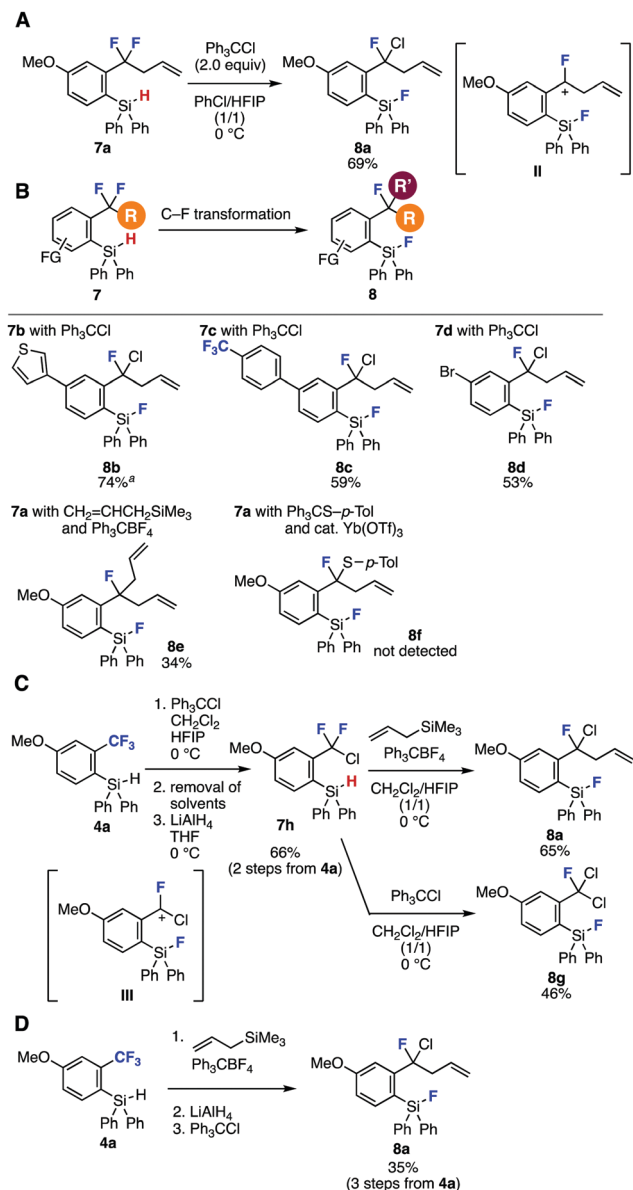


Fig. 3 Transformations of *o*-(hydrosilyl)benzodifluorides **7**. See the ESI† for details. Isolated yields are shown otherwise noted. <sup>a</sup>NMR yield. (A) C–F chlorination of **7a**. (B) Scope of benzyl fluoride synthesis. (C) Sequential C–F transformations of **4a** via difluorobenzyl chloride **7h**. (D) C–F transformations of **4a** with a single silica-gel column chromatography purification.

involving 1-aryl-1-fluoro-1,3-butadiene **10a** (Fig. 4A). For example, silver mediated C–Si bromination<sup>11</sup> of fluorosilane **8a** furnished bromide **9a** in moderate yields leaving various reactive functional groups intact (Fig. 4A, upper). Treatment of **9a** with cesium carbonate in dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) at 120 °C provided 1,3-butadiene **10a** in high yield with good *Z* selectivity.<sup>12</sup> Although 1,3-butadiene **10a** was found to be labile under various conditions such as acidic or basic aqueous conditions, it is worthy to note that 1,3-butadiene **10a** was synthesized by heating **9a** in DMSO in the presences of cesium carbonate in high yield.<sup>13</sup> In contrast, no diene formation was observed when boiling benzyl fluoride **9a** in the presence of

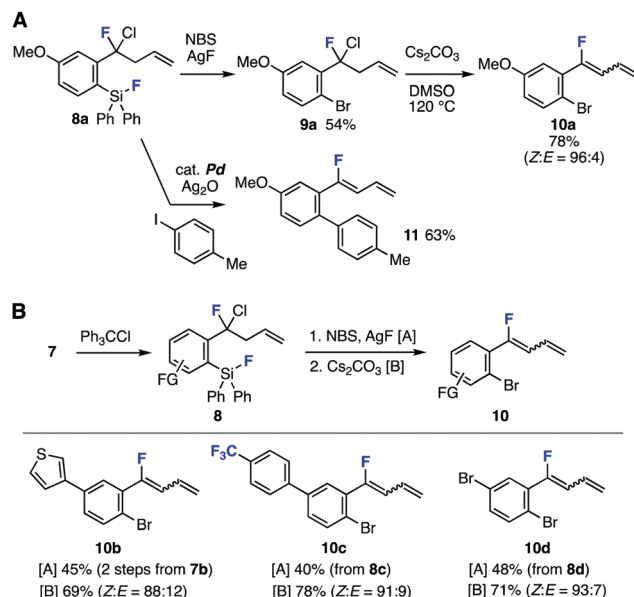


Fig. 4 Transformations of benzyl fluorides **8**. (A) Synthesis of various organofluorines from **8a**. (B) Fluorobutadiene synthesis.

cesium carbonate in toluene. When we treated *o*-fluorosilyl-substituted benzyl fluoride **8a** with 4-iodotoluene in the presence of silver oxide and a catalytic amount of palladium catalyst, biaryl **11** was obtained in good yield *via* the Hiyama cross-coupling and dehydrochlorination (Fig. 4A, lower).<sup>14</sup>

A range of 1-aryl-1-fluoro-1,3-butadiens **10b–10d** were successfully prepared from **8b–8d** by C–Si bromination and following 1,3-butadiene formation (Fig. 4B). Desilylbromination of benzyl fluoride **8b** prepared by C–F chlorination of difluoromethylene **7b** and following dehydrochlorination furnished thienyl-substituted 1-fluoro-1,3-butadiene **10b**. Also, fluorobutadienes **10c** and **10d** were successfully synthesized from difluoromethylenes **7c** and **7d** having electron-deficient aromatic ring and transformable bromo group, respectively, in good yields. Since 1,3-butadienes are versatile building blocks in synthetic organic chemistry,<sup>15</sup> this unique method to prepare functionalized fluorobutadienes will serve to synthesize a broad range of organofluorines.

In summary, we accomplished the synthesis of a wide variety of organofluorines through LAH reduction of *o*-(fluorosilyl)benzodifluorides. A broad range of benzyl fluorides and 1-aryl-1-fluoro-1,3-butadienes were successfully prepared by C–F transformations of *o*-(fluorosilyl)benzodifluorides and following transformations. Further studies such as diversifications of 1-aryl-1-fluoro-1,3-butadienes are ongoing in our laboratory.

The authors thank Dr Yuki Sakata at Tokyo Medical and Dental University for HRMS analyses. This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP19K05451 (C; S. Y.); the Naito Foundation (S. Y.); the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) under Grant Number JP21am0101098 (Platform Project for Supporting Drug Discovery and Life Science Research, BINDS); and the Cooperative Research Project of Research Center for Biomedical Engineering.



## Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts to declare.

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