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Acylation of Electrophilic Olefins via Decatungstate Photocatalyzed Activation of Aldehydes.

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## **Supporting information**

Photochemical acylation of olefins.

**Procedure A.** A solution (30 ml) of an aldehyde (**1a-f**, 3 mmol, 0.1 M), and an olefin (**2a-f**, 0.1 M) in the presence of 200 mg of TBADT<sup>[S1]</sup> (2×10<sup>-3</sup> M) in MeCN was poured in two quartz tubes and purged for 10 minutes with argon, serum capped and irradiated with six 15-W phosphor-coated lamps (emission centered at 310). The photolyzed solution was concentrated under reduced pressure and the products purified by bulb to bulb distillation.

Synthesis of 2-heptanoyl succinic acid dimethyl ester. (3) From 440  $\mu$ L (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of heptanaldehyde (1a), 370  $\mu$ L (3 mmol) of dimethylmaleate and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 24h. Purification afforded 488 mg of 3, (oil, 63% yield). Spectroscopic data in accordance with literature data. [S2] Anal. Calcd. For  $C_{13}H_{22}O_5$ : C, 60.45; H, 8.58; found: C, 60.2; H, 8.5.

Synthesis of 4-oxo-decanenitrile. (4) From 440  $\mu$ L (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of heptanaldehyde (1a), 200  $\mu$ L (3 mmol) of acrylonitrile and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 24h. Purification afforded 287 mg of 4, (oil, 57% yield). Spectroscopic data in accordance with literature data. [S3] Anal. Calcd. For  $C_{10}H_{17}NO$ : C, 71.81; H, 10.25; found: C, 71.9; H, 10.5.

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**Synthesis of 3-heptanoyl-cyclohexanone.** (5)<sup>[S4]</sup> From 440 μL (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of heptanaldehyde (1a), 300 μL (3 mmol) of 2-cyclohexenone and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 24h. Purification afforded 354 mg of 5, (oil, 56% yield).

**5:** <sup>1</sup>HNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.9 (t, 3H), 1.2-1.3 (m, 6H), 1.5-1.8 (m, 4H), 2.0-2.2 (m, 2H), 2.25-2.6 (m, 6H), 2.8-2.95 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>CNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 13.9 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 22.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 23.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 24.9 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 27.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 28.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 31.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 40.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 41.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 42.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 50.1 (CH), 210.1, 210.7; IR (neat) ν/cm<sup>-1</sup>: 2931, 1712, 1451, 1225. Anal. Calcd. For C<sub>13</sub>H<sub>22</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C, 74.24; H, 10.54; found: C, 74.0; H, 10.7.

**Synthesis of undecane-2,5-dione.** (6) From 440  $\mu$ L (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of heptanaldehyde (1a), 240  $\mu$ L (3 mmol) of 2-butenone and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 24h. Purification afforded 331 mg of 6, (oil, 60% yield). Spectroscopic data in accordance with literature data. [S5] Anal. Calcd. For  $C_{11}H_{20}O_2$ : C, 71.70; H, 10.94; found: C, 71.5; H, 10.7.

Synthesis of 4-oxo-decanoic acid methyl ester. (7) From 440  $\mu$ L (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of heptanaldehyde (1a), 270  $\mu$ L (3 mmol) of methyl acrylate and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 24h. Purification afforded 348 mg of 7, (oil, 58% yield). Spectroscopic data in accordance with literature data. Anal. Calcd. For  $C_{11}H_{20}O_3$ : C, 65.97; H, 10.07; found: C, 65.8; H, 10.0.

Synthesis of 2-(3,3-Dimethyl-butyryl)-succinic acid dimethyl ester. (8) From 400  $\mu$ L (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of 3,3-dimethylbutanal (1b), 370  $\mu$ L (3 mmol) of dimethylmaleate and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 24h. Purification afforded 381 mg of 8, (oil, 52% yield).

8: <sup>1</sup>HNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.95 (s, 9H), 2.5 (m, 2H), 2.7-2.95 (AB part of an ABX system, 2H), 3.6 (s, 3H), 3.65 (s, 3H), 3.8-3.95 (X part of an ABX system, 1H); <sup>13</sup>CNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 29.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 29.9,

31.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 51.6 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 51.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 54.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 55.0 (CH), 168.7, 171.6, 202.7; IR (neat) v/cm<sup>-1</sup>: 2955, 1740, 1263, 1164, 1010; Anal. Calcd. For C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>20</sub>O<sub>5</sub>: C, 59.00; H, 8.25; found: C, 59.0; H, 8.4.

**Synthesis of 3-(3-phenyl-propionyl)-cyclohexanone.** (9) From 400 μL (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of 3-phenylpropanal (1c), 300 μL (3 mmol) of 2-cyclohexenone and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 24h. Purification afforded 415 mg of 9, (oil, 60% yield).

**9:** <sup>1</sup>H NMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.55-1.80 (m, 2H), 1.95-2.10 (m, 2H), 2.2-2.6 (m, 4H), 2.7-3.0 (m, 5H), 7.1-7.3 (m, 5H); <sup>13</sup>CNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 24.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 27.0 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 29.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 40.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 42.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 42.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 50.2 (CH), 126.1 (CH), 128.2 (CH), 128.4 (CH), 140.4, 209.2, 209.4; IR (neat) ν/cm<sup>-1</sup>: 3028, 2943, 1711, 1604, 751, 701. Anal. Calcd. For C<sub>15</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C, 78.23; H, 7.88; found: C, 78.3; H, 7.9.

Synthesis of 3-cyclohexanecarbonyl-cyclopentanone (12) and 3-cyclohexyl-cyclopentanone (13)<sup>[S6]</sup> From 240  $\mu$ L (0.1 M, 2 mmol) of cyclohexancarboxyaldehyde (1e), 165  $\mu$ L (2 mmol) of 2-cyclopentenone and 130 mg of TBADT in 20 mL of MeCN irradiated for 7h. Purification by column chromatography ( from cyclohexane:ethyl acetate 98:2 to 96:4 as the eluant) afforded 149 mg of 12, (oil, 45% yield) and 83 mg of 13, (oil, 25% yield).

**12**: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 1.1-1.5 (m, 6H), 1.55-2.05 (m, 6H), 2.1-2.6 (m, 5H), 3.3-3.5 (m, 1H); <sup>13</sup>CNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 25.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 25.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 25.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 26.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 28.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 28.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 37.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 40.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 45.7 (CH), 49.9 (CH), 213.8 (CO), 216.9 (CO); IR (neat) v/cm<sup>-1</sup>: 2930, 2854, 1744, 1702, 732; Anal. Calcd. For C<sub>12</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O<sub>2</sub>: C, 74.19; H, 9.34; found: C, 74.1; H, 9.2.

13: Spectroscopic data in accordance with literature data. [S6] Anal. Calcd. For  $C_{11}H_{18}O$ : C, 79.46; H, 10.91; found: C, 79.4; H, 10.8.

The same reaction carried out in capped test tubes immersed in a cooling bath at -20 °C by using a 125 W high-pressure mercury arc through Pyrex as an external source yielded after 7h of irradiation compounds 12 (46%) and 13 (< 1%) as determined by GC technique.

**Synthesis of 2-***t***-butyl-succinic acid dimethyl ester. (14)** From 325 μL (0.1 M, 3 mmol) of pivalaldehyde (**1f**), 370 μL (3 mmol) of dimethylmaleate and 200 mg of TBADT in 30 mL of MeCN irradiated for 48h. Purification afforded 422 mg of **14**, (oil, 70% yield). Spectroscopic data in accordance with literature data. [S7] Anal. Calcd. For C<sub>10</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O<sub>4</sub>: C, 59.39; H, 8.97; found: C, 59.2; H, 9.0.

**Procedure B.** A solution of the aldehyde (0.1 M) and the olefin (0.1 M) in the presence of TBADT (2×10<sup>-3</sup> M) was irradiated in an immersion-well apparatus by using a 125 W high-pressure mercury arc through Pyrex, while maintaining a nitrogen flux. The end products were separated by column chromatography (cyclohexane/ethyl acetate as eluants).

Synthesis of 2-(2-ethyl-butyryl)-succinic acid dimethyl ester (10) and 2-(1-ethylpropyl)-succinic acid dimethyl ester. (11) A solution of 910  $\mu$ L (0.1 M, 7 mmol) of 2-ethylbutyrraldehyde (1d), 860  $\mu$ L (7 mmol) of dimethylmaleate and 465 mg of TBADT in 70 mL of MeCN was irradiated for 9h. After evaporation of the solvent, the residue was purified by column chromatography (cyclohexane:ethyl acetate 95:5 as the eluant) yielding 256 mg of 10 (15%, oil) and 514 mg of 11 (34%, oil).

**10**: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.8 (t, 3H), 0.9 (t, 3H), 1.3-1.55 (m, 2H), 1.55-1.75 (m, 2H), 2.65-2.75 (m, 1H), 2.8 (t, *J* = 7 Hz, 2H), 3.6 (s, 3H), 3.7 (s, 3H), 4.1 (t, *J* = 7 Hz, 1H); <sup>13</sup>CNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 12.5 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 12.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 24.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 25.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 33.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 53.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 53.8 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 55.3 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 55.6

(CH), 170.0, 172.9, 207.6. IR (neat)  $v/cm^{-1}$ : 2965, 1743, 1710, 1267, 1016. Anal. Calcd. For  $C_{11}H_{20}O_5$ : C, 59.00; H, 8.25; found: C, 58.9; H, 8.1.

**11**: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 0.9 (2t, 6H), 1.15-1.45 (m, 4H), 1.5-1.6 (m, 1H), 2.25-2.4 (A part of an ABX system, 1H), 2.65-2.8 (B part of an ABX system, 1H), 2.95-3.01 (X part of an ABX system, 1H), 3.65 (2s, 6H); <sup>13</sup>CNMR (δ, CDCl<sub>3</sub>): 11.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 11.6 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 23.1 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 23.5 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 31.9 (CH), 42.8 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 43.1 (CH), 51.5 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 51.6 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 173.0, 175.2; IR (neat) v/cm<sup>-1</sup>: 2963, 1739, 1167. Anal. Calcd. For C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>20</sub>O<sub>4</sub>: C, 61.09; H, 9.32; found: C, 61.1; H, 9.4.

The same reaction carried out in capped test tubes immersed in a cooling bath at -20 °C by using a 125 W high-pressure mercury arc through Pyrex as an external source yielded after 7h of irradiation compounds **10** (40%) and **11** (5%) as determined by GC technique.

Photochemical reaction between pivalaldehyde (1f) and dimethyl maleate (2a) at -50 °C. A solution of 1f (0.1 M), and 2a (0.1 M) in the presence of TBADT (2×10<sup>-3</sup> M) was irradiated for 6h in capped test tubes immersed in a cooling bath at -50 °C by using a 125 W high-pressure mercury arc through Pyrex as an external source. Accordingly, succinate 14 (48%) and the ketoester 15 (16%) was formed as determined by GC by comparison with authentic samples (see below for the synthesis of 15).

Synthesis of 2-(2,2-dimethyl-propionyl)-succinic acid dimethyl ester. (15) A mixture of 1 mL of methyl-4,4-dimethyl-oxopentanoate and 0.6 mL of methylbromoacetate was added dropwise to a solution of sodium methylate in MeOH. The resulting solution was heated overnight under reflux under stirring, cooled and poured in water and then extracted with ether (4×25 mL). The organic phase was then washed with water (3×10 mL) and dried over MgSO<sub>4</sub>. The title compound (740 mg, 51% yield) was isolated by column chromatography (cyclohexane:ethyl acetate from 98:2 to 94:6 as the eluant) as an oil.

- **15**: <sup>1</sup>H NMR (δ, CD<sub>3</sub>COCD<sub>3</sub>): 1.2 (s, 9H), 2.5-3.0 (AB part of an ABX system, 2H), 3.6 (s, 3H), 3.7 (s, 3H) 4.4- 4.5 (X part of an ABX system, 1H); <sup>13</sup>CNMR (δ,CD<sub>3</sub>COCD<sub>3</sub>): 27.0 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 34.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 46.1, 49.2 (CH), 52.4 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 53,1 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 170.3, 172.3, 209.9 (CO); IR (neat) v/cm<sup>-1</sup>: 2957, 1740, 1709, 1232, 1163; Anal. Calcd. For C<sub>11</sub>H<sub>18</sub>O<sub>5</sub>: C, 57.38; H, 7.88; found: C, 57.4; H, 7.9.
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