



A Publication
of Reliable Methods
for the Preparation
of Organic Compounds

Working with Hazardous Chemicals

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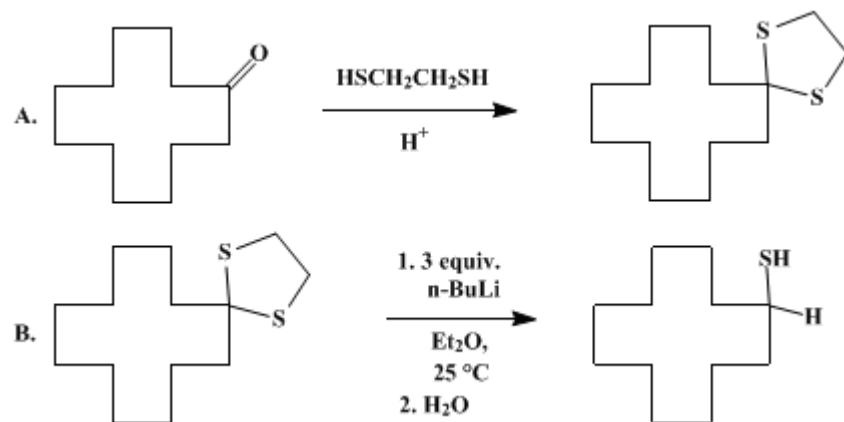
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These paragraphs were added in September 2014. The statements above do not supersede any specific hazard caution notes and safety instructions included in the procedure.

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MERCAPTANS FROM THIOKETALS: CYCLODODECYL MERCAPTAN



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1. Procedure

Caution! This procedure should be carried out in an efficient hood to prevent exposure to alkane thiols.

A. *1,4-Dithiaspiro[4.11]hexadecane*. A mixture of 46.5 g (0.26 mol) of *cyclododecanone* (Note 1), 24.1 g (21.5 mL, 0.26 mol) of *1,2-ethanedithiol* (Note 1), and 0.75 g (0.004 mol) of *p-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate* (Note 2), in 200 mL of *toluene* (Note 3) is placed in a 500-mL, three-necked reaction flask equipped for reflux under a water separator.² The mixture is heated at reflux for several hours until the theoretical amount of water (0.26 mol = 4.6 mL) has collected in the Dean-Stark trap. The reaction mixture is cooled and transferred to a separatory funnel. The mixture is washed with water, the *toluene* is removed on a rotary evaporator, and the residue is placed under reduced pressure (< 0.1 mm) for several hours to remove traces of solvent. Approximately 66 g (99%) of a white solid is recovered (0.26 mol, mp 84–86°C). The crude material is pure by GLC and TLC, and is used in the next step with no further purification.

B. *Cyclododecyl mercaptan*. In a 1-L, three-necked, round-bottomed flask equipped with a mechanical stirrer and nitrogen inlet and outlet stopcocks are placed 25.8 g (0.10 mol) of *1,4-dithiaspiro [4.11]hexadecane* and 300 mL of *ether*, freshly distilled from *sodium*. The mixture is purged with *nitrogen*, cooled to 0°C with an ice bath, and 125 mL (0.30 mol, 2.4 M in *hexane*) of *butyllithium* is added by syringe (Note 4), (Note 5) under a slow flow of *nitrogen*. The light-yellow mixture is then allowed to warm to room temperature and stirred overnight with nitrogen stopcocks closed (Note 6). The reaction mixture is cooled to 0°C and 50 mL of water is added slowly and very carefully (Note 7). The resulting light brown solution is poured into 200 mL of water in a separatory funnel and, after shaking, the organic layer is separated. The solution is dried over MgSO_4 , concentrated (aspirator), and distilled through a 10-cm Vigreux column at 103–108°C (1 mm) to give 17.2–17.9 g (86–90%) of pure *cyclododecyl mercaptan* (Note 8), (Note 9). A small forerun, bp < 95°C, (ca. 2 mL) is discarded.

2. Notes

1. The submitters used *cyclododecanone* and *1,2-ethanedithiol* obtained from Aldrich Chemical Company, Inc.
2. The submitters used *p-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate* from MCB, Inc.
3. The submitters used *benzene* in place of *toluene*.
4. The submitters used *butyllithium* from Alfa Products, Ventron Corporation.

5. The reaction also occurs well with only 2 mol of **butyllithium**, but traces of starting material remain.
6. The reaction is complete in about 6 hr.
7. *Caution! Quenching of excess butyllithium is exothermic.*
8. By GLC analysis, the distilled **cyclododecyl mercaptan** is >95% pure. Sometimes the product is pale pink.
9. The distilled **cyclododecyl mercaptan** has the following spectral data: ^1H NMR (CCl_4) δ : 1.1 (d, 1 H, $J = 6$, S-H), 1.32 (broad s, 20 H), 1.64–1.82 (m, 2 H), 2.81 (m, 1 H, CHSH); IR (neat, μ) 3.4, 6.82, 6.94. Anal. calcd. for $\text{C}_{12}\text{H}_{24}\text{S}$: C, 71.93; H, 12.07; S, 16.00. Found: C, 71.83; H, 12.19; S, 16.03.

3. Discussion

Mercaptans are generally prepared by displacement reactions.³ However, secondary or hindered mercaptans are more difficult to obtain. The dithiolane cleavage reaction⁴ is a convenient "in situ" generation of thioketones which are known to be reduced⁵ with **butyllithium** to secondary mercaptans by β -hydrogen transfer. Table I shows a number of mercaptans prepared from *saturated* thioketals in 78–90% yields. The aryl example gives lower yields partly because of ring metalation.

TABLE I
MERCAPTANS FROM ETHYLENE THIOKETAL CLEAVAGE/REDUCTION

Ketone Thioketal	Bp/mp (°C)	Yield (%)
Cyclododecanone	103–108 (1 mm)	90
4- <i>tert</i> -Butylcyclohexanone	~100 (0.5 mm)	90 ^a
2-Adamantanone	mp 139–142	79
4-Heptanone	127–135 (760)	81
Acetophenone	70–75 (0.5 mm)	36 ^b
Cyclohexanone	130–140 (760)	78 ^c
Estrone	mp 170–175	90 ^d
Pregnenolone	mp 108–113	65 ^d
Undecan-5-one	110–120 (0.3 mm)	93

^a Axial: equatorial ratio, 2:1.

^b By extraction into KOH (purity = 85–93%).

^c Distillation could not cleanly separate thiol from **octane** (formed from the **butyllithium**).

^d Mixture of isomers.

References and Notes

1. Department of Chemistry, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405. Present address: Department of Chemistry, New York University, New York, NY 10003.
2. Jones, R. H.; Lukes, G. E.; Basher, J. T. U.S. Patent No. 2,690,988 (1954); *Chem. Abstr.* **1955**, *49*, 9868d.
3. Klayman, D. L.; Shine, R. J.; Bower, J. D. *J. Org. Chem.* **1972**, *37*, 1532.
4. Wilson, S. R.; Georgiadis, G. M.; Khatri, H. N.; Bartmess, J. E. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1980**, *102*, 3577.
5. Rautenstrauch, V. *Helv. Chim. Acta* **1974**, *57*, 496; Ohno, A.; Yamabe, T.; Nagata, S. *Bull. Chem. Soc. Jpn.* **1975**, *48*, 3718.

Appendix
Chemical Abstracts Nomenclature (Collective Index Number);

(Registry Number)

Benzene (71-43-2)

ether (60-29-7)

Cyclohexanone (108-94-1)

nitrogen (7727-37-9)

Acetophenone (98-86-2)

toluene (108-88-3)

sodium (13966-32-0)

butyllithium (109-72-8)

octane (111-65-9)

hexane (110-54-3)

1,2-ethanedithiol (540-63-6)

4-Heptanone (123-19-3)

cyclododecanone (830-13-7)

2-adamantanone (700-58-3)

4-tert-Butylcyclohexanone (98-53-3)

Cyclododecyl mercaptan (7447-11-2)

1,4-Dithiaspiro[4.11]hexadecane (16775-67-0)

Ketone Thioketal

Estrone

Pregnenolone

Undecan-5-one (33083-83-9)

p-toluenesulfonic acid monohydrate (6192-52-5)