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Carbanion Chemistry

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Reactivity and Structure Concepts in Organic Chemistry

Volume 17

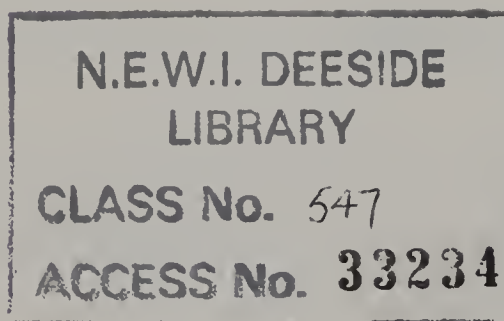
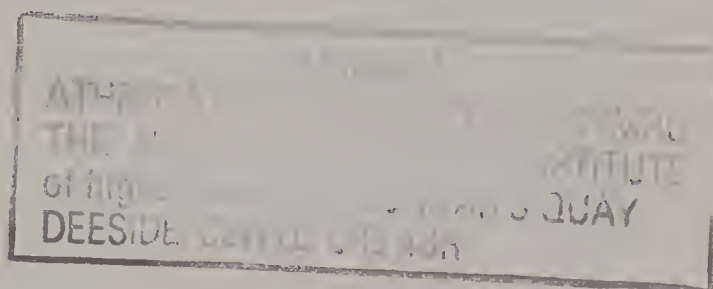
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Preface

This book was prepared with the idea of collecting some of the multitudinous new literature on carbanions and presenting it along with the fundamentals of carbanion chemistry. Some 400 papers from the period 1976 to 1982 have been assimilated into the book along with about an equal number of references (many to reviews) from the earlier literature.

The material is organized under the headings *Structures* (with emphasis on the results of X-ray studies since they unambiguously show the molecular geometry), *Preparations*, and *Reactions*. Reactions, the largest topic, is divided into reactions with electrophiles, eliminations, oxidations, and rearrangements. Under these headings, carbanions without resonance stabilization (σ carbanions) are generally discussed first, and are further subdivided into sp^3 (alkyl) followed by sp^2 (vinyl and aryl) followed by sp (acetylenic); resonance-stabilized (π) hydrocarbon anions such as allyl and benzyl follow; lastly, heteroatom-containing π carbanions such as enolates are considered. Some references to carbanion equivalents are included at the end.

Tucson, Arizona U.S.A.
May 1983

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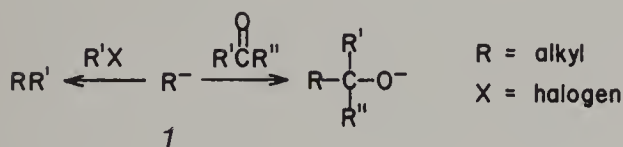
Table of Contents

I. Introduction	1
II. Structures	3
1. Non-delocalized (σ)	3
a. sp^3	3
b. sp^2 and sp	7
2. Delocalized (π)	8
a. Hydrocarbon Anions	8
b. Heteroatom-containing Carbanions	10
III. Preparations	13
1. From Alkyl Halides	13
a. With Metals	13
b. With Organometallics	15
2. From Alkanes by Proton Abstraction	17
a. Acidities of CH Protons	17
b. Base-solvent Systems	21
3. From Unsaturated Compounds	25
a. By Reduction	25
b. By Addition	26
4. From Other Organometallics by Changing the Metal	27
a. With Metals	27
b. With Metal Salts	27
IV. Reactions of σ Carbanions with Electrophiles	29
1. Substitution Reactions of Alkyl (sp^3) Anions	29
2. Addition Reactions of Alkyl (sp^3) Anions	34
3. Vinyl (sp^2), Aryl (sp^2), and Acetylenic (sp) Anions	38
V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles	40
1. Hydrocarbon π Anions	40
2. Enolate Anions	43

a. Substitutions	43
b. Additions	45
3. Other O-Stabilized Monoanions	47
4. O-Stabilized Dianions	50
5. N-stabilized Anions	52
6. S-stabilized Anions	56
VI. Eliminations	57
1. α -Eliminations	57
2. β -Eliminations	58
3. γ -Eliminations	60
4. δ -Eliminations	61
5. Cycloeliminations	61
VII. Oxidations	63
1. Oxidations to Hydroperoxides, Alcohols, and Ketones	63
2. Oxidative Couplings	64
3. Dianion Oxidations	65
VIII. Rearrangements	67
1. Intermolecular Rearrangements	67
2. Intramolecular Additions	68
3. Intramolecular Eliminations	69
4. Sigmatropic Carbanion Rearrangements	70
5. Electrocyclic Carbanion Rearrangements	72
6. Complex Intramolecular Rearrangements	73
IX. Carbanion Equivalents	75
X. Summary	77
XI. References	78
Subject Index	97

I. Introduction

Carbanions (*1*) are among the most important synthetic organic intermediates, largely because of their ability to form carbon-carbon bonds in high yield by reaction with a great variety of electrophiles, e.g., alkyl halides and ketones:



Improved methods permitting the preparation of many new types of carbanions paired with many different metals (and even without counterions!) have been responsible for the spectacular growth of this area since Cram's book appeared in 1965 [1]. The *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry* *weekly* includes many new organometallics, and annually provides surveys of the literature on the organometallics of selected metals.

This book will be limited to relatively "free" carbanions, i.e., those paired with group IA and IIA metals, aluminium, zinc, cadmium, quaternary ammonium ions, and those studied in the gas phase in the absence of counterions. Earlier books in this series discuss organic synthesis by means of transition metal complexes [2, 3].

II. Structures

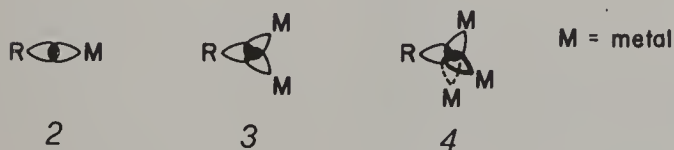
1. Non-delocalized (σ)

a. sp^3

That the charge-bearing carbon atom in simple alkyl anions is sp^3 rather than sp^2 hybridized has been amply demonstrated in the gas phase by photoelectron spectroscopy (methyl carbanion without counterion or solvent [4]), in solution by NMR spectroscopy [5, 6], and in crystals by X-ray studies (monomeric $\text{EtMgBr} \cdot 2 \text{Et}_2\text{O}$ [7], dimeric bicyclo[1.1.0]butan-1-yl lithium \cdot TMEDA [8], tetrameric MeLi [9] and EtLi [10], and hexameric cyclohexyl-lithium $\cdot 1/3$ benzene [11]).

The state of aggregation (monomeric, dimeric, tetrameric, hexameric, or polymeric) depends on the carbanion structure, cation, temperature, and solvent; coordinating solvents such as ethers and tertiary amines tend to break down the larger aggregates into more reactive [12] smaller ones [13, 14]. That these particular aggregates (with structures given below) should represent energy minima is supported by MO calculations [15].

The organometallic bond may be from a carbon to one metal atom (2, simple σ bond), to two metal atoms (3, "3-center 2-electron" bond), or to three metal atoms (4, "4-center 2-electron" bond); 3 and 4 are considered to contain alkyl groups "bridging" between metal atoms. Electron density at the expected position amidst the four atoms has been observed in a high-quality X-ray study [10]. Carbon-metal bond lengths involving bridging carbons are longer than those for 2-center bonds, as can be seen from the entries for K, Rb, Mg, and Al in Table 1. 4-Center bonds are not noticeably different in length than 3-center bonds (see Li entries). Since C—M bonds involving sp^3 , sp^2 , and sp hybridized carbon atoms differ very little in length, they have been lumped together in Table 1.



As can be seen in Table 1, the smaller elements (especially Li) are particularly prone to form stable compounds containing bridging alkyl groups.

Monomers — Crystalline $\text{EtMgBr} \cdot 2 \text{Et}_2\text{O}$ [7] and $\text{Me}_2\text{Mg} \cdot \text{TMEDA}$ [36]

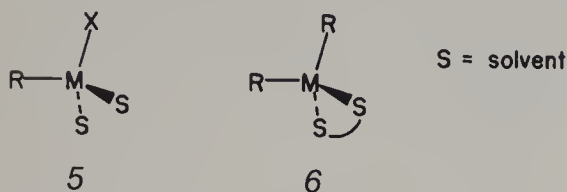
4 **Table 1.** Carbon-Metal Bond Lengths (Å) in Organometallics from X-ray Studies

Metal	Calculated ^a		Observed		
			σ (2-center)	σ (3-center)	σ (4-center) π (shortest only ^b)
Li	2.00		2.19 ^{14a}	2.21–2.28 ^{8,16}	2.18–2.41 ^{9,10,11,17,18} 2.13–2.34 ^{19–27,27a}
Na	2.34		2.49 ²⁸	—	— 2.64–2.83 ^{29,30}
K	2.80		2.55 ²⁸	—	3.22 ³¹ 3.04–3.16 ^{32,33}
Rb	2.93		2.98 ²⁸	—	3.36 ³⁴ —
Cs	3.12		—	—	3.53 ³⁴ —
Be	1.66		—	1.93 ³⁵	—
Mg	2.13		2.09–2.20 ^{7,36–40}	2.22–2.26 ^{40–42}	2.26–2.50 ^{40,43}
Ca	2.51				
Sr	2.68				
Ba	2.75				
Al	2.02		1.95–1.99 ^{44,45}	2.24 ⁴⁴	2.10 ⁴⁵

^a Values calculated by adding the covalent radius of carbon (0.77 Å) to the covalent radius of the metal⁴⁶

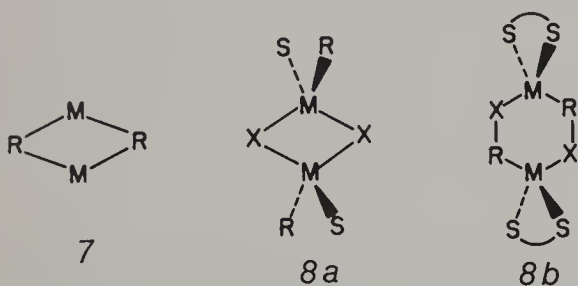
^b Only the shortest metal-carbon distance in each π structure is listed

illustrate this group. They both have tetrahedral arrangements of four groups around their magnesium atoms as depicted for the former (5) and the latter (6), with all bond distances around magnesium being close to calculations from covalent radii.



Dimers — Crystalline bicyclo[1.1.0]butan-1-yllithium · TMEDA [8] and trimethylaluminium [44]; menthyllithium [12] and trimethylaluminium [13] in hydrocarbon solvents illustrate the simplest type. These dimers are held together by two 3-center bonds (3) arranged as in 7; a metal-metal bond is not usually drawn because most of the bond strength is calculated to come from carbon-metal bonding [15]. In the trimethylaluminium dimer, there are two non-bridging methyl groups on each aluminium atom.

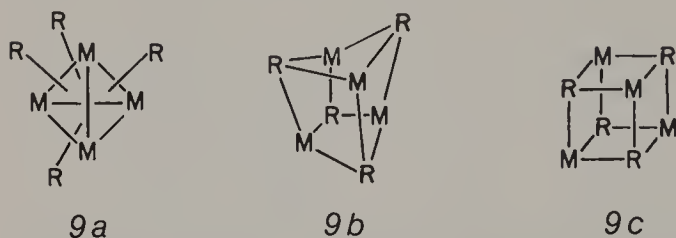
8a, a different type of dimer with bridging *halogens*, is observed for EtMgBr · Et₃N [37] and EtMgBr · *i*-Pr₂O [38]. 8b, with a chair-shaped six-membered ring, represents a further type of dimer; it is exemplified by 2-lithio-2-methyl-1,3-dithiane · TMEDA (X = sulfur covalently bond to the negatively charged carbon) [27a].



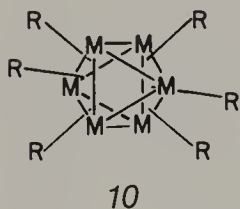
Tetramers — Crystalline MeLi [9], EtLi [10], and MeLi · 1/2 TMEDA [17]; *n*- and *t*-BuLi [13] and Li₃MgMe₅ [13] in hydrocarbon solvents, and MeLi, *n*-BuLi [47], and Li₄Et₃OEt [48] in Et₂O; EtLi in the gas phase [49]. These are held together by four 4-center bonds (4), giving structures 9a which consist of a tetrahedron of metal atoms with a bridging alkyl group at the center of each face. Direct metal-metal bonds are drawn in 9a only to aid in visualizing the structure; representation 9b, in which the atoms strongly bonded to one another are connected, shows that this structure can be thought of as a cube (9c) in which 4 non-adjacent corners have been pulled together. Donor atoms such as O, N, S, and P can coordinate with the metal atoms at the tetrahedron corners without disrupting the tetrameric structure [14, 50]; not surprisingly, for steric reasons *t*-butyllithium₄ is not solvated appreciably [14]. In the Li₃MgMe₅ structure, there is a methyl group attached at the magnesium corner of the tetrahedron [13]. Li₄Et₃OEt presumably has OEt

II. Structures

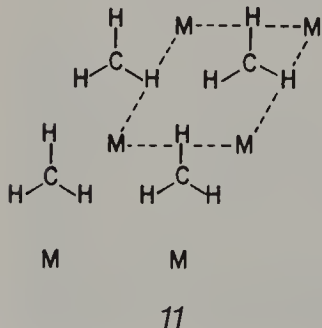
replacing an Et on a face [48]. The stability of these tetramers is illustrated by their survival in the presence of the strongly chelating ligand TMEDA, which in $(\text{MeLi})_4(\text{TMEDA})_2$ crystals forms not rings but linear bridges between tetramers via N—Li bonds [17].



Hexamers — Crystalline cyclohexyllithium₆ · benzene₂ [11]; EtLi and *n*-BuLi in hydrocarbon solvents [13]; EtLi in the gas phase [49]. The X-ray study of the former shows these structures to be of type 10, with a core consisting of a distorted octahedron of metal atoms. Note that two opposite triangular M₃ faces (near and far in 10) bear no alkyl groups; in the X-ray study the Li—Li distances in these triangles were 3.0 Å, whereas the other Li—Li distances were only 2.4 Å (compared to 2.4–2.6 Å in tetramers [9, 10, 17], 2.7 Å in a dimer [8], and 2.5 Å in Li metal [46]). These bond lengths help to show that the hexamers are held together by six 4-center bonds (4); again, the direct metal-metal bonds are drawn for visualization only, and solvation of the metal atoms at the corners can occur [14].



Polymers — Crystalline MeK [31], MeRb and MeCs [34], Me₂Be [35], Me₂Mg [41], and Et₂Mg [42]. The first three are insoluble substances consisting of alternating sheets of alkali metal cations and methyl anions, arranged as in 11 (viewed ⊥ to sheets). Metal atoms in all sheets are directly above one another, but carbanions in every other carbanion layer are displaced so that carbons are very close to the hydrogens of the layer above and below.



The carbons are believed to be sp^3 hybridized from IR and weak X-ray evidence; a neutron diffraction study would be helpful. 4-Center bonds (4) are thus apparently used.

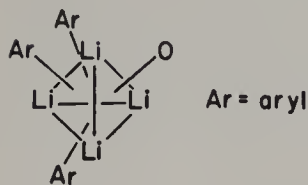
The alkaline earth alkyls in this class [35, 41, 42] are linear polymers of the type 12, with a line of metal atoms held together by alkyl groups bridging *via* 3-center bonds as in certain dimers (7). The alkyl groups are arranged approximately tetrahedrally about the metal atoms.



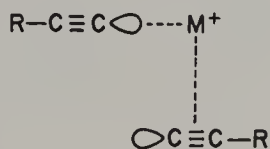
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b. sp^2 and sp

Other carbanions in which the negative charge is not delocalized by resonance over several atoms are the vinyl and aryl anions, with an electron pair localized in an sp^2 orbital, and cyanide ion and the acetylenic anions, with an electron pair localized in an sp orbital. $\Phi\text{MgBr} \cdot 2 \text{Et}_2\text{O}$ [39] and $\cdot 2 \text{THF}$ [51] are monomeric in the solid state, with structures like $\text{EtMgBr} \cdot 2 \text{Et}_2\text{O}$ (5) [39]. Crystalline phenyllithium $\cdot \text{TMEDA}$ has a dimeric structure similar to that of the sp^3 dimers 4 [16]; presumably the same type of dimer is present in phenyllithium in ether solution [47]. An X-ray study shows (2,6-dimethoxyphenyllithium) $_6 \cdot \text{Li}_2\text{O}$ to consist of two approximately tetrahedral Li_4 clusters with aryl groups at three faces connected *via* an oxide ion at the fourth; one such cluster is depicted in 13 [18]. The C—Li bond lengths in this aryllithium dimer and tetramer are similar to those in the alkyllithiums. X-ray studies on ethynylsodium, -potassium, and -rubidium, and 1-propynylsodium and -potassium show metal-carbon distances involving σ -bonding to an sp orbital; there is also some interaction (at a greater distance) between the metal atom and an acetylenic π bond as shown in 14 [28].



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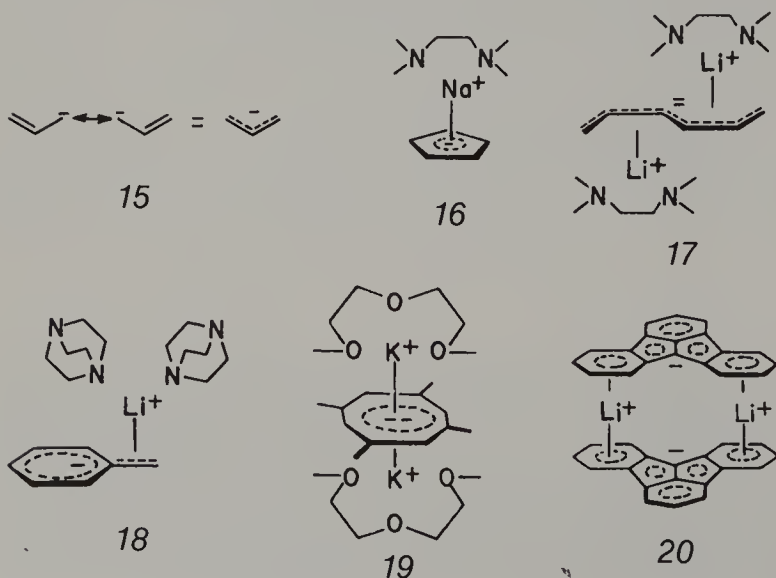
The configurational stabilities of lithium and magnesium salts of alkyl anions (sp^3 , *optical* isomerization at the charge-bearing carbon) and vinyl anions (sp^2 , *geometric* isomerization about the double bond) have been examined in a few cases, with the general finding of low barriers in the former [5] and high [52, 53] but not insurmountable [54] barriers in the latter. Cyclopropyl anions, which are in between sp^2 and sp^3 in hybridization, have high

barriers to inversion [55, 56]. The barriers are generally much higher in non-polar solvents [53]. Some studies of the exchange rates between the various aggregated forms have been made [13].

2. Delocalized (π)

a. Hydrocarbon Anions

Delocalization of negative charge over two or more atoms through resonance as in allyl anion **15** has an enormous stabilizing effect, especially in the gas phase without a counterion [57]. Many X-ray studies on metal salts of such carbanions show them to consist of contact ion pairs, with the carbons in the π systems sp^2 hybridized and coplanar or roughly coplanar, and the metal atoms usually positioned above one or several of the most negatively charged carbons; examples are cyclopentadienylsodium \cdot TMEDA (**16**) [29], cyclopentadienylmagnesium bromide \cdot TMEDA [43], $[\text{Me}_5\text{CpAlMeCl}]_2$ [45], hexatriene dianion dilithium \cdot 2 TMEDA (**17**) [19], benzyllithium \cdot triethylenediamine **18** [20], 1,3,5,7-tetramethylcyclooctatetraene dianion dipotassium \cdot 2 diglyme **19** [32], indenyllithium \cdot TMEDA [21], bis(indenyl)magnesium [40], naphthalene dianion dilithium \cdot 2 TMEDA [22], acenaphthene dianion dilithium \cdot 2 TMEDA [23], fluorenyllithium \cdot 2 quinuclidine [24], fluorenyl-potassium \cdot TMEDA [33], anthracene dianion dilithium \cdot 2 TMEDA [25], triphenylmethyllithium \cdot TMEDA [26], triphenylmethylsodium \cdot TMEDA [30], **20** [27], and phthalocyanine dianion dipotassium \cdot 2 diglyme and \cdot 2(18-crown-6) [58]. The shortest carbon-metal distances (Table 1) in these π -carbanions are greater than for 2-center bonds, and about the same as for 3- and 4-center bonds. The π -carbanions have longer distances than the 3-center bond examples with Mg [40], but the shortest C—Li distance observed so far is in a π case: 2.13 Å in acenaphthene dianion dilithium \cdot 2 TMEDA [23].

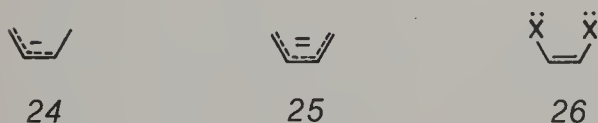


UV-visible [59, 60], infrared-Raman [61], and NMR [62–64] studies indicate that in solution contact ion pairs again predominate for metal salts of π -carbanions, except for highly delocalized carbanions (e.g., fluorenyl) which exist as solvent separated ion pairs in strongly cation-solvating solvents like DMSO. The behavior of the carbanion in solvent separated ion pairs is (as expected) cation independent, but in contact ion pairs the geometry, solubility, and reactivity of the carbanion are often very cation dependent. For example, whereas pentadienyllithium (21) is mostly W-shaped in THF solution and gives largely reaction products with *trans* double bonds, pentadienylpotassium (22) is U-shaped (giving better coordination to the large cation) and gives products with *cis* double bonds [65]. A dimeric cyclohexadienyllithium derivative has been shown by ^7Li and ^{13}C NMR to have the “triple ion”-containing sandwich structure 23 [64].



Certain allylmagnesium compounds apparently prefer covalent σ structures to ion-paired π structures, at least under some conditions [67].

Rotation barriers in allyl and pentadienyl anions in solution are 10–25 Kcal/mole, depending on substituents and conditions [67–69]; rotations about the *inner* C—C bonds in pentadienyl anions equilibrate the U, sickle, and W shapes and are generally faster than rotations about the outer C—C bonds. Alkyl substituents on C-1 of an allyl or pentadienyl group in solution prefer the *cis* position (24) [70, 71], presumably because of their hyperconjugative resemblance to butadiene dianion (25) [72–74]. The latter dianion has not conclusively been demonstrated to prefer the *cis* shape shown, but many substances with isoelectronic π systems (e.g., 26, X = halogen) *have*, and dianion 15 has been shown to have this sort of shape in solution [72] as well as in the solid state [19]. The greater stability of the *cis* isomer in all of these cases is presumably due to favorable 1,4 overlap in the HOMO [75, 76]. Surprisingly, in the gas phase without counterions, the *trans* forms of 1-alkylallyl anions appear to be more stable [77].



Rotation barriers in these π anions (and in their heteroatom-containing analogs discussed in the next section [78]) are higher as the alkali metal size increases [68, 78, 79]; this may be due to the greater ability of the smaller cations to form a σ bond at one carbon long enough to permit rotation about

II. Structures

resulting C—C single bonds [79, 80]. Traces of oxygen efficiently catalyze bond rotation in allyl anions, probably by electron transfer to allyl radicals, in which the barriers are much reduced [71].

Monoanions of type (27) with two sp carbons in line with an sp² carbon form very readily from allenes and non-terminal acetylenes [81].

Some highly lithiated polymeric species of unknown structure have been prepared which presumably contain some combination of σ and π carbon-lithium bonds [82–84]. An example is C₃Li₄, prepared by perlithiating methylacetylene. It is possible that it contains structure 28, with two σ and two π C—Li bonds and an arrangement of three sp hybridized carbons in a line which is found in “sesquiacetylenic” dianions [85]. By observing their thermal interconversions at 220 °C, the stability order (C₂Li₂)_n > (C₃Li₄)_n > (C₂Li₄)_n > (CLi₄)_n has been established [84]. It would be helpful to have X-ray results on some of these substances to clarify their structures.



27



28

b. Heteroatom-containing Carbanions

Enolate ions (29) are the most important members of this large class. Although the negative charge is largely on oxygen with resulting high rotation barriers about the adjacent carbon-carbon \sim double bond, NMR studies show that *some* negative charge resides on the α -carbon [86–88]. It has been calculated that while monomeric π -bonded allyllithium is more stable than σ -bonded by 16 Kcal/mole, lithium enamine 30 is only 4 Kcal/mole more stable π -bonded than σ -bonded (Li to N) and lithium enolate (29) is 7 Kcal/mole more stable σ -bonded with the lithium coordinated to oxygen and 176° away from the nearest carbon [89]. It should be noted, however, that enolates are often aggregated, especially in non-polar solvents (see below), and these calculations for monomeric species thus may not be completely relevant. The higher carbon-carbon bond orders in 30 and especially 29 are evidenced by higher rotation barriers about these bonds: \sim 11 Kcal/mole in 15, \sim 18 Kcal/mole in 30, \sim 21 Kcal/mole in 29 [90].



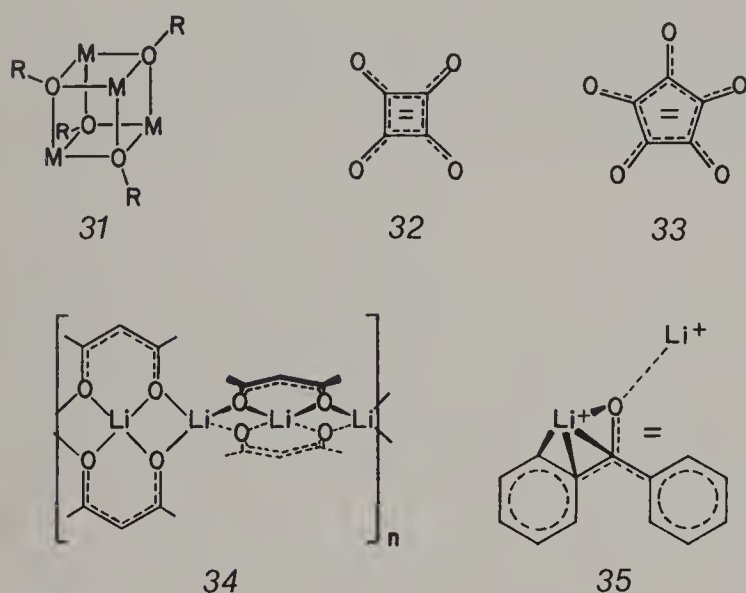
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The X-ray studies on salts of heteroatom-containing π -carbanions include lithium 3,3-dimethyl-1-buten-2-olate \cdot THF and lithium cyclopentenolate \cdot THF (31) [90a, 90b], dipotassium squarate \cdot H₂O (32) [91] and its tetrathio analog [92], diammonium croconate (33) [93], several metal enolates

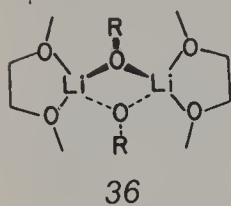
of β -diketones (e.g. 34 [94]; also [95, 96]), and benzophenone dianion dilithium \cdot TMEDA \cdot THF (35) [97]. These studies generally reveal highly symmetrical highly delocalized π systems with almost all of the negative charge on oxygen or sulfur, and the cations coordinating with oxygen or sulfur only. This coordination is most often with unshared (n) electron pairs on the heteroatoms rather than with the π system; e.g., lithium acetylacetonate (34) has the linear polymeric structure depicted, with lithiums alternately approximating tetrahedral and square planar coordination to four oxygens *via* n-electrons. In the simple enolate tetramers 31, which resemble the alkyl-lithium tetramers 9, the fourth coordination position of lithium is occupied by a THF molecule in each case, and the bond lengths are similar to those found in enol ethers [90 a]. In dianion 35, on the other hand, there is considerable negative charge on carbon (there are two negative charges and only one oxygen), and while one Li^+ is in the plane n-coordinated with oxygen, the other lies above the π cloud in the location shown, giving a shortest C—Li distance of 2.24 Å. The C—O bond in this substance is 1.41 Å long, as expected from its lowered bond order compared to benzophenone.



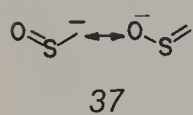
Simple enolates and phenolates may be free ions in highly ionizing solvents, but they are ion paired in other solvents and aggregated, especially in non-polar solvents [86]. The lithium enolate of isobutyrophenone has been shown to be tetrameric in dioxolane solution, no doubt with structure 31 [98]. In 1,2-dimethoxyethane, there is 15% tetramer and 85% of a dimeric structure, presumably 36, analogous to the alkylmetal dimers 7. Added LiCl converts both tetramer 31 and dimer 36 into a structure like 31 but with Cl^- replacing OR at one corner. Addition of a cryptand with a strong affinity for Li^+ gives a monomeric enolate ion with much more negative charge on carbon as evidenced by an upfield shift in the ^{13}C NMR of 8 ppm for the charge-bearing carbon atom. *Potassium* enolates are probably *not* tetrameric [90 b].

II. Structures

Alkali metal enolates form equimolar complexes with alkali metal alkoxides [99].

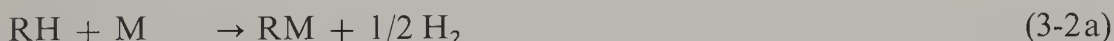


It has been deduced from NMR studies that α -lithiosulfoxides (37) have an sp^2 hybridized charge-bearing carbon atom, suggesting resonance stabilization of the type shown [100].



III. Preparations

The major methods for preparing carbanions are shown in reactions (3-1) to (3-5). *Unstabilized* carbanions (e.g., simple alkyl, aryl, and vinyl anions) are usually prepared from the corresponding halide by reaction with a metal (3-1a) or an organometallic reagent (3-1b). *Resonance* and *inductively-stabilized* carbanions are more often made from an appropriate precursor RH, with the proton being abstracted by a metal (3-2a) or a basic metal salt (3-2b). Certain alkenes add metals to give dicarbanions (3-3a), and metal salts to give monocarbanions (3-3b). The metal can sometimes be changed in an organometallic by reaction with the desired metal (3-4a) or one of its salts (3-4b). Carbanion rearrangements (3-5), useful for preparing certain carbanions, are discussed in Chapter VIII and the other methods are described in the present chapter in the order indicated below.



1. From Alkyl Halides

a. With Metals (3-1 a)

Magnesium, lithium, zinc, sodium and potassium metals all readily reduce organic halides to metal salts of carbanions. The first three are the most commonly used, since sodium and potassium generally give more coupling products (Wurtz reaction) than carbanion.

III. Preparations

Grignard reagent preparations (3-6) are the best known examples of this general type of reaction ($X = \text{Cl}, \text{Br}, \text{or I}$). Ethers are usually required as solvents. Diethyl ether is most often employed, but for more sluggish reactions the better coordinating tetrahydrofuran or the much higher boiling di-*n*-butyl ether and glymes are utilized. Reactivity of RX decreases in the order $\text{RI} > \text{RBr} > \text{RCl}$, and alkyl halides are more reactive than aryl halides.



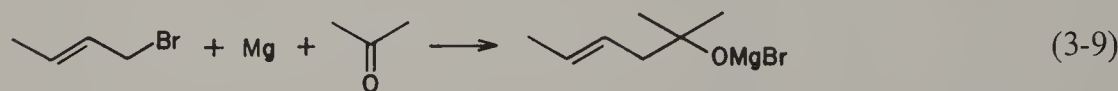
Grignard reagent preparations are sometimes difficult to get started: often a small amount of iodine, 1,2-dibromoethane, or some other very reactive alkyl halide is added to initiate reaction [101]. Ultrasounds have recently been reported to initiate Grignard reactions, even in wet commercial grade THF [102]. Magnesium metal formed *in situ* from MgCl_2 and K ("Rieke" Mg) enables facile low temperature preparation of even aryl Grignard reagents [103].

Intermolecular [104] and intramolecular [105] trapping experiments as well as CIDNP results [106] indicate that Grignard reagents are formed through alkyl radical intermediates.

The "Schlenk" equilibrium (3-7) [107] can be driven to the right by adding dioxane, which precipitates MgX_2 and leaves a solution of dialkyl- or diaryl-magnesium [108].



Attempts to prepare allylic and benzylic Grignard reagents in the usual way leads to Wurtz type coupling products (3-8) [109, 110], but by careful control of reaction conditions allylic and benzylic Grignard reagents have been successfully prepared [111]. Coupling can sometimes be avoided by preparing the Grignard reagent in the presence of the desired electrophile (the "Barbier" reaction (3-9) [112]), or by using "Rieke" magnesium [113].



Grignard-like reagents can also be prepared from compounds other than alkyl halides. For example, reaction of dimethyl sulfate and magnesium yields such a reagent (3-10) [114]. Also, at elevated temperatures THF is reported to react with "Rieke" magnesium to give insertion into the carbon oxygen bond (3-11) [115].



Calcium [116], strontium [117] and barium [117] are of much less importance than magnesium. They react similarly (e.g., (3-12)) but give greater amounts of coupling, which is minimized by running the reactions below room temperature.



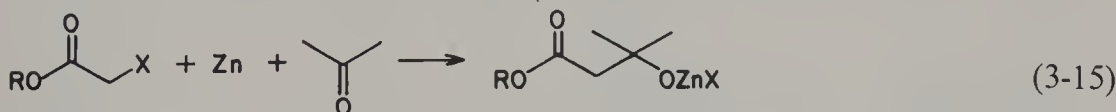
Lithium reacts readily with alkyl and aryl halides without ether solvents but both alkanes and ethers are commonly employed as solvents [118]. Organolithiums are generally created from the chloride or bromide, as alkyl iodides tend to give more coupling products [119]. Trace impurities of sodium in the lithium are necessary for the formation of organolithium reagents [120], and for the preparation of *t*-butyllithium, a copper powder coating on the lithium has been recommended [54].

Preparation of allyl- and benzyllithium by this route leads to coupling [110], but allyllithium is readily produced by reduction of allyl phenyl ether with lithium metal (3-13) [121]. Organolithiums can be prepared by analogous reduction of alkyl phenyl sulfides [122, 123]; α -lithioethers have been made in this way using Li naphthalenide (3-14) [124].



Amyl- and phenylsodium are made by slow addition of the corresponding chloride to sodium dispersion at low temperatures (to reduce coupling) [125]; phenylpotassium is made similarly in quantitative yield [126]. Sodium and potassium also reduce aryl alkyl ethers to the corresponding alkylalkali [127, 128].

The Reformatsky reaction of an α -haloester with zinc forms an intermediate organozinc reagent which reacts in situ with an electrophile (3-15) [129]. This reaction has recently been shown to proceed analogously starting with α -halocarboxylate salts [130]. The yields in the Reformatsky reaction are generally better with bromides than with chlorides. Allylic halides can be employed [131]. Alkyl- and arylzinc compounds, with reactivities comparable to Grignard reagents, can be synthesized from "Rieke" zinc and the corresponding alkyl or aryl halide [132].



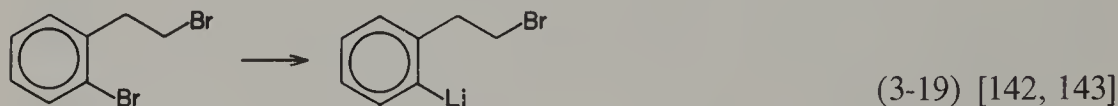
b. With Organometallics (3-1 b)

Metal-halogen interchanges are used primarily to prepare organolithium compounds from alkyl and aryl halides; they often give better yields than

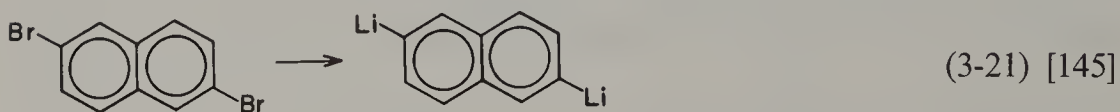
III. Preparations

reactions of the halides with lithium metal due to less side reactions [133]. In general the rates decrease in the series $I > Br > Cl \gg F$. The reactions are equilibrium processes favoring the more stable carbanion [134]. They are performed at or below room temperature in hydrocarbon solvents or (more rapidly) in ethers [135]. Concerted mechanisms have been postulated due to the observed second order kinetics and salt effect [134]. CIDNP experiments on the reaction of alkyllithiums with alkyl and aryl halides indicate the presence of radical intermediates [136, 137].

This method is used frequently to prepare vinylolithiums (3-16 to 3-18) and aryllithiums (3-19, 3-20) from alkyllithiums; each of these reactions used *n*- or *t*-butyllithium in THF or Et_2O at -70 to -100 °C. Reactions (3-18 to 3-20) show that carbanions can be prepared by this method even in the presence of functional groups which readily react with carbanions at room temperature. In (3-18), when the chloride was used instead of the bromide, the Si—O bond was cleaved.



Many dicarbanions have been made this way as well (3-21, 3-22).



2. From Alkanes by Proton Abstraction (3-2)

a. Acidities of CH Protons

Deprotonation is the method used most often for the preparation of resonance- and inductively-stabilized carbanions; it is thus important to know the acidities of substances containing various types of CH bonds [147]. Several thermodynamic acidity scales have been offered, such as Cram's MSAD scale (McEwen-Streitwieser-Applequist-Dessy) [1], which includes measurements made in various solvents, and Bordwell's scale (Table 2) of values in DMSO. Such scales provide a basis for choosing an appropriate base for a particular CH acid. For example, from the last two entries in Table 2, if kinetics permit, it should be possible to abstract a proton from dimethyl sulfide with an alkylolithium; this has been shown to be the case [162].

Table 2. Bordwell's Acidities of Carbon Acids in DMSO

Acid	pKa	ref	Acid	pKa	ref
$\Phi\text{CH}(\text{CN})_2$	4.2	148	$\Phi\text{SO}_2\text{Me}$	29.0	150
$\Phi\text{CO}_2\text{H}$	11.0	149	MeOH	29.0	152
$\text{CH}_2(\text{CN})_2$	11.1	148	$(\Phi_2\text{P})_2\text{CH}_2$	29.9	154
$\text{MeCH}(\text{CN})_2$	12.4	150	MeCO_2Et	30–31 ^b	157
$(\text{MeCO})_2\text{CH}_2$	13.3	148	$\Phi_3\text{CH}$	30.6	151
$\overline{\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SO}_2\text{CH}_2}$			$(\Phi\text{S})_2\text{CH}_2$	30.8	154
	15.5	148	$\Phi\text{SO}_2\text{Et}$	31.0	150
$(\text{MeO}_2\text{C})_2\text{CH}_2$	15.7	149	Me_2SO_2	31.1	155
EtNO_2	16.7	150	$\overline{\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{SCH}_2\text{SCH}_2}$	31.1 ^a	158
MeNO_2	17.2	150	MeCN	31.3	155
cyclopentadiene	18.0	151	H_2O	31.4	152
ΦOH	18.2	152	$\Phi_2\text{CH}_2$	32.1	151
indene	20.1	153	Me_3COH	32.2	152
<i>p</i> -nitrotoluene	20.5	149	O		
thiourea	21.1	149			
$\Phi\text{CH}_2\text{CN}$	21.9	149	ΦSMe	33 ^b	159
fluorene	22.6	149			
$(\Phi\text{S})_3\text{CH}$	22.5	154	NMe		
ΦCOEt	24.4	150	Me_2SO	35.1	155
ΦCOMe	24.7	150	H_2	36 ^{a, b}	160
MeCONH_2	25.5	150	NH_3	41 ^b	151
cyclohexanone	26.4	149	ΦMe	42 ^b	161
Me_2CO	26.5	155	propene	43 ^a	158
urea	26.9	149	pyrrolidine	44 ^b	151
$\Phi\text{C}\equiv\text{CH}$	28.7	156	ΦSMe	49 ^b	149
			CH_4	55 ^b	151

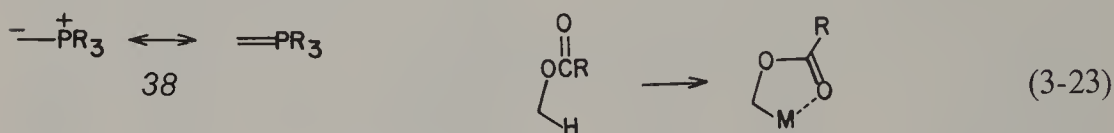
^a Solvent other than DMSO

^b Estimated

III. Preparations

Aromaticity can be important in stabilizing carbanions, as illustrated by the very low pK_a of cyclopentadiene; its conjugate base, cyclopentadienyl anion, has been estimated to have 24–27 Kcal/mole of aromatic stabilization [151]. Homoaromaticity appears not to be very important in homocyclopentadienyl anions [163, 164], but does help to stabilize homocyclooctatetraene dianions, which form easily and exhibit large ring currents [165, 166]; calculations indicate that it should not be as important in anions as in cations [167].

From Table 2, an ordering of the ability of groups to stabilize a negative charge on an adjacent carbon atom can be obtained: $-\text{NO}_2 > -(\text{C}=\text{O})\text{R} > -(\text{C}=\text{O})\text{OR} > -\text{CN} \sim -(\text{SO}_2)\text{R} > -(\text{SO})\text{R} > -\Phi > -\text{SR}$. The most strongly stabilizing groups act primarily by resonance; all on this list do except for $-\text{SR}$, which stabilizes by polarization [158] and possibly $-(\text{SO}_2)\text{R}$ and $-(\text{SO})\text{R}$ (the latter has an sp^2 hybridized S, which suggests a contribution from resonance stabilization [168]). Ylides (38) [169, 170] are stabilized partly through resonance and partly through inductive effects. Certain groups such as $-\text{O}(\text{C}=\text{O})\text{R}$ stabilize partly through inductive effects and partly through chelation (3-23) [171].



α -Alkyl groups destabilize simple alkyl, nitrile, and sulfone anions, but stabilize enolates and nitroates; these are complex blends of hyperconjugative, steric, and polarizability effects [150] but can be rationalized at least partially on the basis that in enolates and nitroates, the negative charge is very heavily on oxygen rather than carbon, and in enolates and nitroates the methyl group is essentially on a double bond; methyl groups are known to stabilize double bonds.

Almost any type of non-metal atom bonded to a carbon atom will make a proton attached to that carbon acidic enough to be abstracted by very strong bases such as butyllithium to give an essentially σ carbanion. Examples in which the metallation is selective enough to be useful include the following groupings attached to the CH: $-\text{SiR}_3$ [172, 173], $-\text{NRCH}=\text{NR}$ [174], $-\text{NR}(\text{C}=\text{O})\text{OAr}$ [175, 176], $-\text{NR}(\text{P}=\text{O})\text{NR}_2$ [177], $-\overset{+}{\text{N}}\equiv\text{C}^-$ [178, 179], $-\text{PAr}_2$ [180], $-\overset{+}{\text{P}}\text{R}_3$ [169, 170], $-(\text{P}=\text{S})\text{Me}\Phi$ [181], $-\text{O}(\text{C}=\text{O})\text{Ar}$ [176, 182, 183], $-\overset{+}{\text{S}}\text{R}_2$ [184, 185], $-\text{S}(\text{C}=\text{S})\text{NR}_2$ [186], $-(\text{S}=\text{NTs})\text{R}$ [187, 188], and $-\text{Se}\Phi$ [189, 190].

That two stabilizing groups are better than one is evident from the acidities in Table 2. The many combinations of two such activating groupings which have been successfully employed to make σ carbanions include: 2-SiMe₃ [191], $-\text{SiMe}_3$ and $-\text{OMe}$ [192], $-\text{SiMe}_3$ and $-\text{S}\Phi$ [193], $-\text{SiMe}_3$ and $-\text{Se}\Phi$ [194], $-\text{SiMe}_3$ and $-\text{Cl}$ [195, 196], 2-P Φ_2 [154], $-(\text{P}=\text{O})\Phi_2$ and $-\text{NR}_2$ [197], $-(\text{P}=\text{O})\Phi_2$ and $-\text{OR}$ [198], $-(\text{P}=\text{O})\Phi_2$ and $-\text{S}\Phi$ [199],

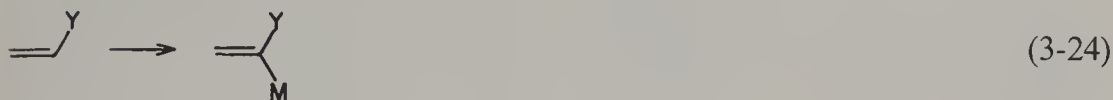
2. From Alkanes by Proton Abstraction (3-2)

—(P=O)(OEt)₂ and —Cl [200], 2—OR [201], 2—SR [154, 158, 201, 202], —SR and —S(O₂)— [203], —S(O)— and —Cl [204], and 2—Cl [205].

A few cases of three such stabilizing groups are known: 3—SiMe₃ [191], 3—S Φ [154, 206] and 3—Cl [207].

From the table it is evident that carbanions increase in stability with an increase in the amount of s character at the carbanion center such that $sp > sp^2 > sp^3$. Equilibrium acidity measurements indicate the following expanded order for various types of sp^2 and sp^3 groupings: phenyl > vinyl > cyclopropyl > methyl > ethyl > isopropyl > *t*-butyl [208]. Cyclopropanes owe their enhanced acidity to the increase in s character in their CH bonds relative to simple alkanes [209].

Heteroatom-containing groupings can control which proton is removed from an alkene (3-24) [171]. Examples are known where Y = —NR₂ [210, 211], —N⁺≡C[−] [212], —OR [213], —SR [214], and —Cl [171].



Activation of a CH bond in an aromatic ring by a heteroatom, leading to ortho-metallation, has become increasingly important for the preparation of substituted arenes [171]. If the heteroatom is in the aromatic ring (3-25, Y = NR, O, or S) [215—217] it stabilizes largely through its inductive effect. Two heteroatoms are better than one (3-26) [216], and polymetallation is possible (3-27); furan and thiophene give only the dimetallation product shown, whereas N-methylpyrrole gives also the 2,4-dimetallation product. Pyridines usually undergo addition faster than metallation, so metallated pyridines are made in other ways such as from the corresponding aryl halide by halogen exchange (3-1 b).



Alternatively, the heteroatom can be attached directly to the ring (3-28) [171, 218—222], again acting by induction and perhaps partly through complexation with the metal. Virtually any non-metal atom possessing an unshared pair of electrons (including halogens) will direct the metallation *ortho*. Or, the heteroatom can be further out in the chain, as in (3-29) [171, 218—220, 223—234], in which case complexation with the metal rather than an inductive effect controls the reaction. Among groupings used to activate

III. Preparations

for and direct metallation to an ortho position on an aromatic ring, amides and sulfonamides are better than methoxy, carboxy, and N,N-dimethylamino [218–220].



The *rate* of ionization (kinetic acidity) can play an important role in deprotonations since kinetic acidities only roughly parallel thermodynamic acidities. Kinetic acidities measured by a variety of techniques have recently been compiled for many C—H acids [235]. Carbon acids ionize much more slowly than oxygen and nitrogen acids of comparable thermodynamic acidity, presumably because C—H bonds are not so favorably polarized for attack by base as are OH and NH bonds. Among carbon acids, α -protons in nitriles ionized faster than expected, and α -protons in nitro compounds ionized slower.

In the generation of enolates from ketones, weaker bases, aprotic solvents, lower temperatures and excess base favor kinetic deprotonations, while strong bases, protic solvents and excess carbonyl precursor favor the equilibrium products [236]. Generally the more highly substituted enolate is the equilibrium product whereas kinetic control favors deprotonation at the less hindered site, yielding the less substituted enolate [236, 237].

Among alkyllithiums, lesser aggregation is probably responsible for *sec*-BuLi reacting 24 times faster than *n*-BuLi; menthyllithium, which exists in dimeric form, is still faster [12].

Development of high-pressure mass spectrometry, flowing afterglow and ion cyclotron resonance spectroscopy has permitted the measurement of gas phase acidities of C—H acids *without cations or solvents* [238]. Comparison with solution acidities shows the stabilizing effects in carbanions of counterion effects [239] and solvation energies [240] to be on the order of 50–90 Kcal/mole. Rather than as pKa's, gas phase acidities are usually expressed in terms of proton affinity of the anion in Kcal/mole (Table 3). They can be calculated by summing the energy required for *homolytic* dissociation of the acid, the electron affinity of the resulting radical, and the ionization potential of a hydrogen atom (313.6 Kcal/mole). Comparing Tables 2 and 3, some striking differences become apparent. Delocalization plays an extra important role in the gas phase, where toluene is more acidic than water, and fluorene (charge delocalized over more atoms) is more acidic than cyclopentadiene. In the gas phase, *t*-butanol is more acidic than methanol, reversing the trend found in solution. As in solution acidities, the role of alkyl substituents is

complicated, although generally α -alkyl groups stabilize negative charge in the gas phase; apparently alkyl groups can stabilize a charge of either sign by polarizing as needed.

Table 3. Gas Phase Acidities of Carbon Acids

Acid	ΔH° , Kcal/mole	ref	Acid	ΔH° , Kcal/mole	ref
CF ₃ CO ₂ H	322.7	241	Me ₂ CO	370.0	241
HCl	333.6	241	MeCO ₂ Me	371.0	242
CH ₂ (CN) ₂	336.0	241	HF	371.5	242
Φ CO ₂ H	338.8	241	Me ₃ COH	373.3	242
(MeCO) ₂ CH ₂	343.7	241	MeCONMe ₂	373.5	242
succinimide	345.4	241	MeCN	373.5	241
(EtO ₂ C) ₂ CH ₂	348.3	241	Me ₂ SO	374.6	241
MeCO ₂ H	348.5	241	HC \equiv CH	375.4	242
Φ OH	349.8	241	CF ₃ H	375.6	242
Φ CH ₂ CN	351.9	241	EtOH	376.1	242
H ₂ S	352.0	241	Φ - <i>i</i> -Pr	377.5	242
<i>p</i> -nitrotoluene	353.1	241	Φ Et	378.3	242
fluorene	353.3	241	Φ Me	379.0	242
cyclopentadiene	355.5	241	MeOH	379.2	242
Me ₂ CHNO ₂	356.6	241	propene	390.8	243
EtNO ₂	357.3	241	H ₂ O	390.8	244
MeNO ₂	357.6	241	benzene	397.0	244
Φ ₂ CH ₂	364.5	242	NH ₃	399.6	244
Me ₂ SO ₂	366.4	241	H ₂	400.6	244
MeCHO	367.0	241	CH ₄	416.6	244

Since most of the calculations which have been done on carbanion stabilities do not include solvent and cation effects, they generally agree better with gas phase acidity measurements than with solution phase acidities [245–248]; these calculations include many delocalized dicarbanions [248].

b. Base-solvent Systems

That a great variety of base-solvent systems have been used to abstract protons in carbanion-generating reactions is not surprising in view of the tremendous range of acidities of C—H compounds. The range of pK_a's of such compounds is even larger than the 4 to 55 indicated in Table 2, for CH(NO₂)₃ is more acidic than any compound in Table 2, and other alkanes are somewhat less acidic than methane. As can be seen from Table 2, hydroxide and *t*-butoxide are strong enough in DMSO to abstract the most acidic proton from most of the compounds in Table 2. Stronger bases like alkylolithiums are required to abstract an allylic proton from propene or a benzylic proton from toluene to produce an allyl or benzyl anion in *high* concentration, but weaker

III. Preparations

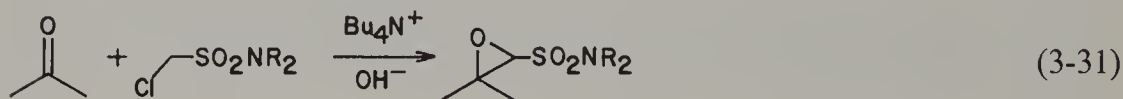
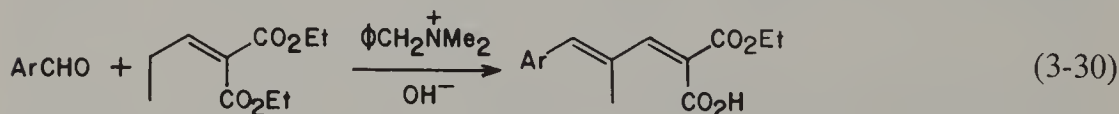
bases like KO-*t*-Bu will pull off such protons to provide *low* concentrations of such anions for double bond isomerizations or deuterium exchange reactions.

The *counterion* makes some difference, as indicated by a factor of 10^3 in the rates of alkene isomerization in DMSO with KO-*t*-Bu being faster than LiO-*t*-Bu; the latter is probably more covalent [249].

The *solvent* can have an enormous effect on the reaction, especially when the comparison is between a hydroxylic solvent and one of the non-hydroxylic solvents (e.g., DMSO) which increase basicity by efficiently solvating cations but not anions. Thus KO-*t*-Bu in DMSO is 10^{14} more basic alcohol-free than in the presence of 5% of *t*-BuOH [250]! Such solvents, with their rate factors for a KO-*t*-Bu catalyzed alkene isomerization relative to diglyme, include DMSO (1580), hexamethylphosphoramide (HMPA, 465) N-methylpyrrolidone (NMP, 300), and dimethylformamide (DMF, rate about the same as NMP) [249]. Thus DMSO is kinetically fast, but its relatively high thermodynamic acidity renders it unsuitable for very strong bases such as metal amides; HMPA is the solvent of choice for these bases. Among the less active solvents which have been used are alcohols, water, ethers, and hydrocarbons.

Base-solvent systems will now be illustrated, starting with some relatively weak bases and finishing with the most powerful ones.

Classical base-catalyzed aldol condensations often employ hydroxide in water or alcohols to generate low concentrations of enolate ions [251]. Quaternary ammonium hydroxides have recently found use as bases in phase transfer systems [252, 253], permitting such reactions as Stobbe (3-30) [254] and Darzens condensations (3-31) [255] under simple, convenient conditions.

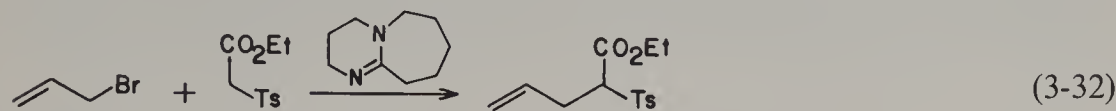


Alkoxides are widely used to generate carbanions in high concentration in malonic, cyanoacetic and acetoacetic ester syntheses, and Dieckmann, Stobbe and Darzens ester condensations. Especially useful is potassium *t*-butoxide [256]; being tertiary, it is a stronger base than primary and secondary alkoxides, and also is incapable of hydride transfer reactions which can lower yields significantly when these other alkoxides are used. Potassium *t*-butoxide in DMSO will readily deprotonate ketones, partially deprotonate esters, and can be used to generate allylic and benzylic carbanions in very low but often useful concentrations.

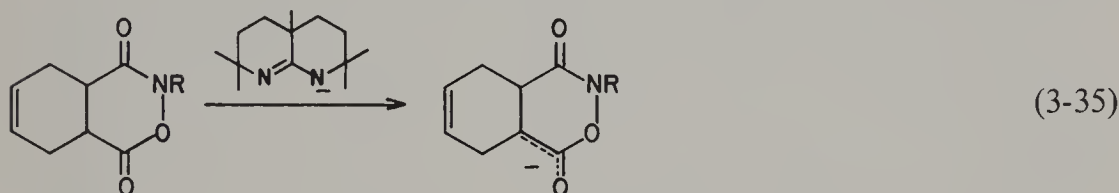
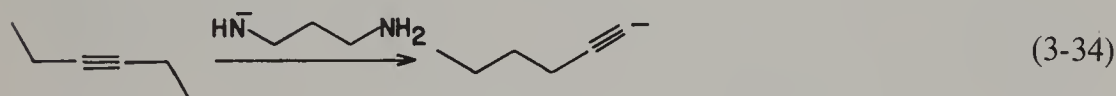
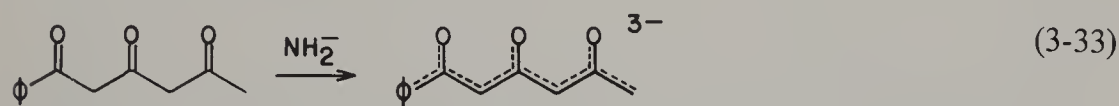
There are a variety of non-nucleophilic hindered amines capable of generating carbanions in low concentration. 1,8-Diazabicyclo[5.4.0]-7-unde-

2. From Alkanes by Proton Abstraction (3-2)

cene (DBU) is one of the most popular, being used in the alkylation and acylation of active methylenes (3-32) [257, 258].



Lithium, sodium and potassium amides in liquid ammonia are powerful bases capable of generating dicarbanions from β -diketones [259] and higher carbanions from higher ketones (3-33) [260]. Such bases have been used for isomerizing alkynes (3-34) [261], and for deuterium exchange of hydrocarbons [262]. Lithium diisopropylamide (LDA), generated in situ from *n*-butyllithium and diisopropylamine, is the most common hindered amide used to prepare enolates in high concentration. Lithium 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidide (LiTMP), lithium dicyclohexylamide and lithium hexamethyldisilamide are more sterically hindered and often can be employed when LDA fails [263]. The lithium amidine salt of 3,3,6,9,9-pentamethyl-2,10-diazabicyclo[4.4.0]dec-1-ene has proven useful in the preparation of lithium enolates where other hindered amides failed (3-35) [264].



Sodium and potassium hydride are used for generating enolate anions for alkylations and for Dieckmann condensations [265, 266]. Sodium hydride in DMSO produces the dimsyl anion which is a convenient base [267].

The alkali metals themselves are sometimes used for the metallation of very acidic hydrocarbons such as cyclopentadiene and terminal acetylenes [268]; with many compounds such as aldehydes and ketones, reduction (see next section) becomes the main reaction. Sodium and potassium on charcoal, graphite and alumina have recently been employed in the metallation and alkylation of ketones, nitriles and esters [269–271].

Deprotonation of very weakly acidic C—H acids is usually accomplished by metallation with organolithium and organosodium compounds [272–274]. Direct metallation of acidic C—H bonds is often impossible with these organometallics due to their ready addition to groups such as carbonyls.

III. Preparations

Metallations can be carried out in hydrocarbon solvents, but activating solvents such as ethers or tertiary amines which help peptize the organo-metallic reagent are usually used. For example, *n*-butyllithium/THF allowed preparation of pentadienyllithium from 1,4-pentadiene (3-36); no reaction occurred in hexane [275].



Tetramethylethylenediamine (TMEDA) has an even more dramatic effect in activating alkylolithiums and alkylsodiums [276–278], though its “bite” is apparently too small for a potassium ion [33]. *n*-Butyllithium/TMEDA smoothly metallates propene and isobutylene [279], even dimetallating the latter [72, 280]. This base system when given a choice among allyl anions yields predominantly the least substituted one (3-37) [281].



It has been demonstrated that the *kinetic* product in metallation of certain substituted olefins and alkylbenzenes with organosodiums and potassiums is metallated at an sp^2 carbon; this rearranges to the thermodynamically more stable (resonance-stabilized) allyl or benzyl anion [282, 283].

Activation of alkylolithiums can also be achieved by addition of alkoxides, especially potassium *t*-butoxide [284–288]. This base system is less nucleophilic than *n*-butyllithium/TMEDA, allowing preparation of carbanions from *conjugated* dienes (3-38) [288]. The much less soluble potassium salt usually precipitates from solution, and the lithium *t*-butoxide may be removed by filtration or decantation. The insolubility of the potassium salt can be an advantage in preserving stereochemistry, as has been done with crotyl anions [289].



Trimethylsilylmethylpotassium has been found to be a superior metallating agent which is similar in behavior to the potassium *t*-butoxide/*n*-butyllithium base system [287, 290].

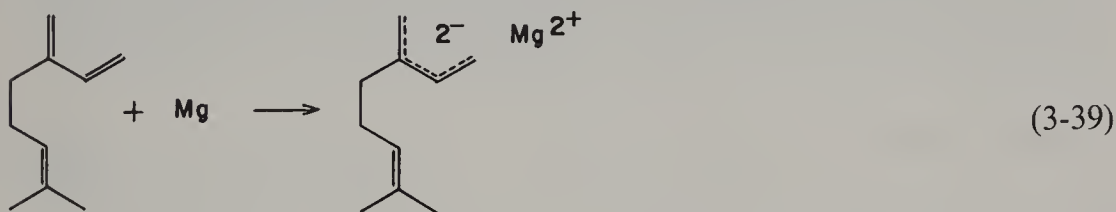
These organometallic reagents being very reactive and highly aggregated pose problems in finding appropriate solvents. Diethyl ether, tetrahydrofuran, HMPA, and TMEDA are all commonly used but all do eventually react with organometallics such as *n*-butyllithium [177, 210, 291–293].

Because metallating agents react very readily with air and water, many methods have been devised for the determination of the concentration of the base. The newer methods titrate the organometallic with a diprotic C—H acid which gives a visible end point when one equivalent of base has been added and the highly colored dianion starts to form [294, 295].

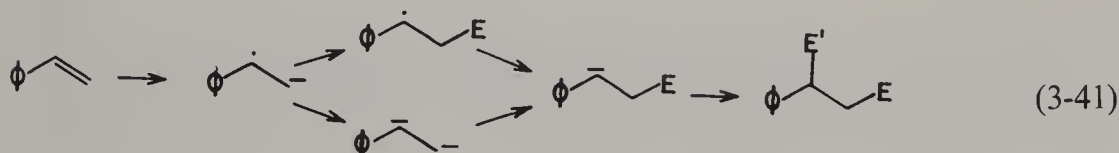
3. From Unsaturated Compounds

a. By Reduction (3-3a)

Many types of unsaturated compounds have been two-electron reduced with active metals or electrochemically to form dicarbanions (3-3a). The anion radical from one-electron transfer is a presumed (or in some cases, demonstrated) intermediate. Simple alkenes do not have sufficiently stable dianions to undergo this reaction, but many of their conjugated derivatives do. For example, cyclooctatetraene (antiaromatic) with any of the alkali metals yields cyclooctatetraene dianion (aromatic) [296, 297]. Benzene (aromatic) does *not* yield its antiaromatic dianion, and naphthalene reduces only to its anion radical (its dianion may be prepared by a deprotonation route [22]), but anthracene and most other polycyclic aromatics readily reduce to the corresponding dianions [298]. 1,3-Dienes are reduced by magnesium to butadiene dianions (e.g., 3-39), which have found use in terpene synthesis [299–302]. When 1,3-pentadiene is reduced with alkali metals, the anion radical dimerizes to give a bis-allyl anion which abstracts protons from two 1,3-pentadiene molecules, yielding two pentadienyl anions and a mixture of C₁₀H₁₈ dienes (3-40); this reaction provides an economical route to certain pentadienyl anions from 1,3-dienes and an alkali metal [303].



Electrochemical methods have been used to “reductively acylate” olefin derivatives such as α,β -unsaturated esters [304, 305] and styrenes (e.g., 3-41) [306] via the corresponding anion radicals and perhaps dianions to various acyl and diacyl derivatives. E can be —CHO (from DMF) or —(CO)R (from Ac₂O or RCN).



III. Preparations

There are several examples of the reduction of σ bonds as in (3-42) [132] to give stabilized carbanions; such reactions probably occur by cleavage of the carbon-carbon bond in the intermediate anion radical to give anion and radical, followed by reduction of the latter to give a second anion.

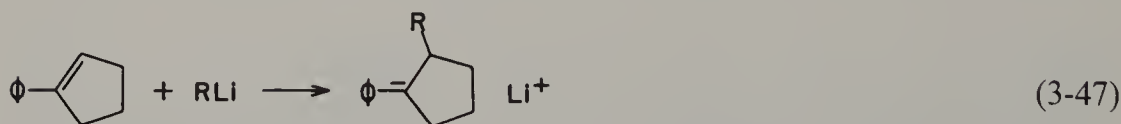


b. By Addition (3-3b)

The Michael (3-43) [307], Meisenheimer (3-44) [308], and Chichibabin reactions (3-45) [309] are common examples of this method of carbanion generation, which is only successful for stabilized carbanions.



This method has been applied to formation of enamines (3-46) [310, 312], benzylic anions (3-47) [313], and pentadienyl anions (3-48) [314]. Anionic polymerization proceeds through a propagation step of this type [315].

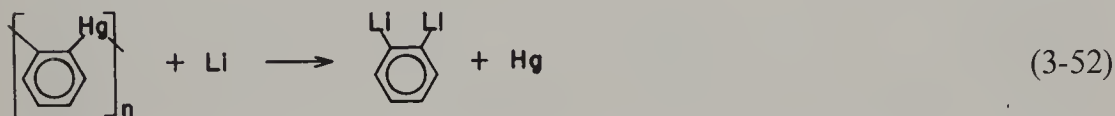
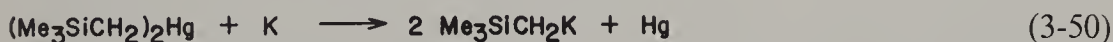
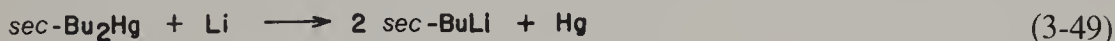


Enolate anions resulting from the conjugate addition of organocuprates to α,β -unsaturated carbonyls are recognized as valuable intermediates in natural product synthesis [316, 317].

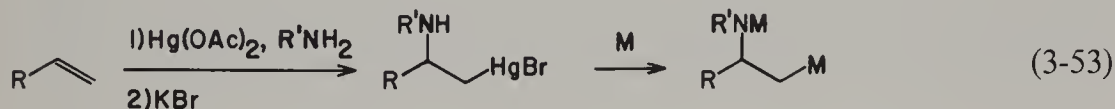
4. From Other Organometallics by Changing the Metal

a. With Metals (3-4a)

The most common transmetallation reactions involve organotin and mercury compounds, but analogous reactions for silicon and lead are known. Metal-metal exchange is used especially when halide — free carbanions are wanted. Reactions of type (3-4a) are slow and reversible, and M must be more electro-negative than M' for the reaction to proceed [318]. For example, reduction of an organomercurial with an alkali metal [319] can be used to obtain unstabilized (3-49 [320]), stabilized (3-50 [321] and 3-51 [322]), and dicarbanions (3-52 [323]).

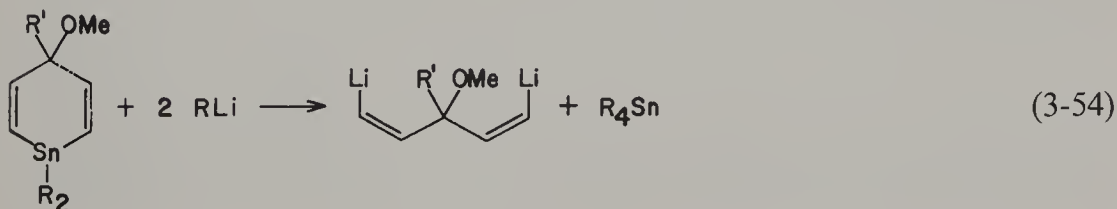


This reaction has recently been used in the conversion of primary alkenes to carbanions through mercurated intermediates (3-53) [324, 325]. Alcohols could be used in place of primary amines.



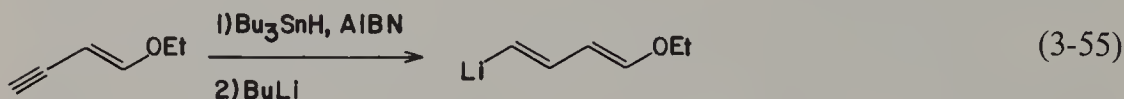
b. With Metal Salts (3-4b)

Transmetallation of organotin compounds with organolithiums is a useful example of (3-4b). This reaction is an equilibrium which is driven by formation of the more stable carbanion or by precipitation of one of the products [326]. Vinyl lithium [327], many substituted allyllithiums [328–330], and dicarbanions (3-54) [331] have been made by this route.

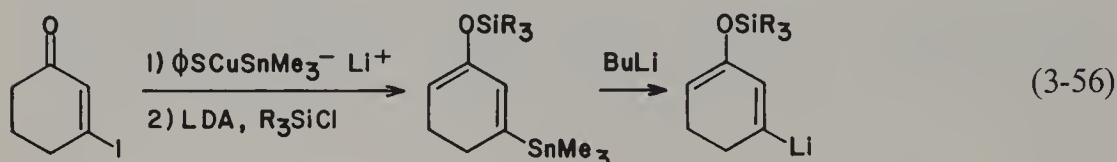


III. Preparations

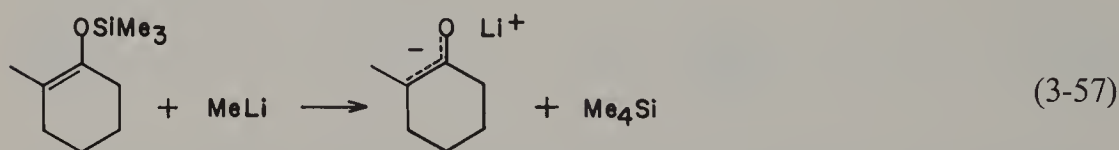
Alkenyllithiums are conveniently derived from alkenyltin reagents which are readily made by hydrostannation of substituted alkynes (3-55) [332–334].



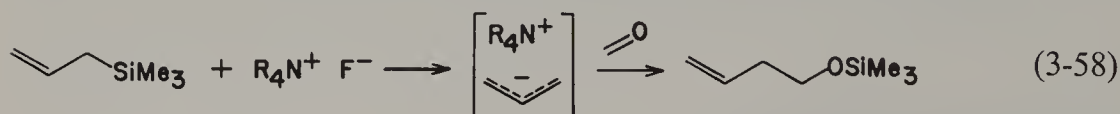
Alkenyltin compounds are recognized in organic synthesis as latent carbanion equivalents (3-56) [335].



This same type of reaction is employed for regiospecific generation of enolate anions from the corresponding trimethylsilyl vinyl ether and methyl-lithium (3-57) [336].



Allyl anions with quaternary ammonium counterions can be generated and reacted *in situ* with aldehydes and ketones (3-58) [337–339]. This reaction is initiated by the formation of Me_3SiF , and made possible by the great stability of the Si—F bond. The allyl anion does not build up in very high concentration, but is trapped as it adds to aldehydes and ketones.



IV. Reactions of σ Carbanions with Electrophiles

These reactions, summarized in Table 4, have been divided into substitutions (4-1 to 4-21) and additions (4-22 to 4-31). In the former, a leaving group Y^- usually departs as a bond is formed between R and some non-metallic (4-1 to 4-20) or metallic (4-21) element. Virtually all of the elements except the noble gases can be bonded to carbon in this way. Y^- is most often a halide ion, but many other groupings such as sulfonates, sulfates, and alkoxides have been used. The additions to double and triple bonds form a bond between R and C, N, O, or S, with the resulting anion usually picking up a proton as in (4-22 to 4-24). It should be noted that all of these reactions are limited in scope in that certain other groupings which react readily with carbanions cannot be present, and many have other limitations. In some cases, R' can be an aromatic group or a hydrogen, and in others, it cannot.

1. Substitution Reactions of Alkyl (sp^3) Anions

Abstraction of a proton by an organometallic (reaction 4-1) is an extremely important reaction, as such substances as the butyllithiums are among the most readily available very strong bases and thus are used to generate many other anions, as described in Chapter III. The reaction can also be used to make specifically deuterated hydrocarbons; e.g., the most convenient way to generate CH_3D is to add D_2O (slowly!) in an ether to CH_3Li or CH_3MgI in ether.

Alkylboranes can be produced by (4-2), usually as an intermediate step in converting a carbanion to the corresponding alcohol. Either a dialkoxy-fluoroborane [340] or a trialkoxyborane [341] can be used. Reactions of more complicated carbanions with alkylboranes may be followed by rearrangement of an alkyl group from boron to carbon [342, 343].

One of the most important carbon-carbon bond-forming reactions consists of a carbanion coupling with an alkyl halide (4-3). The use of copper-lithium reagents R_2CuLi , readily prepared from the alkyllithium and cuprous chloride, bromide, or iodide, gives high yields of many unsymmetrical alkanes in cases where the yield directly from the alkyllithium or alkylsodium (Wurtz reaction) is low [344].

A variety of heterocuprates $RCuYLi$ have been used to make more efficient use of R groups; $Y = S\Phi_2$ gives a relatively stable reagent [345]. The mechanism may be simple S_N2 , or, especially with very basic carbanions,

IV. Reactions of σ Carbanions with Electrophiles

Table 4. Reactions of Carbanions R^- with Electrophiles

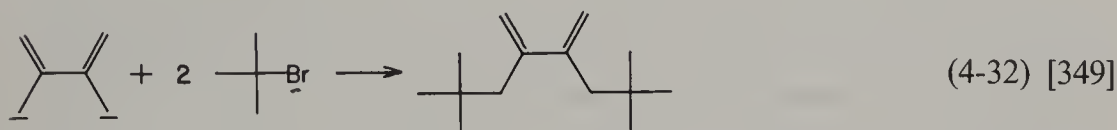
Substitutions			Additions		
YH^a	$R^- \rightarrow RH$	4-1	$\begin{array}{c} \\ C=CW^b \\ \end{array}$	$R^- \rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC-CHW \\ \end{array}$	4-22
$YB(OR')_2$	$\rightarrow RB(OR')_2$	4-2	$-C\equiv C-$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC=CH \\ \end{array}$	4-23
YR'	$\rightarrow RR'$	4-3	$\begin{array}{c} \\ C=N \\ \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC-NH \\ \end{array}$	4-24
$\begin{array}{c} \quad \quad \\ C=C-CY \\ \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \quad \quad \\ RC-C=C \\ \end{array}$	4-4	$\begin{array}{c} \\ C=N^+ \\ \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC-N \\ \end{array}$	4-25
$-C\equiv C-\begin{array}{c} \\ CY \\ \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC=C=C \\ \end{array}$	4-5	$-C\equiv N$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC=NH \\ \end{array}$	4-26
$\begin{array}{c} >C-C< \\ \quad \\ O \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \quad \\ RC-COH \\ \end{array}$	4-6	$\begin{array}{c} \\ C=O \\ \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC-OH \\ \end{array}$	4-27
$\begin{array}{c} \\ YC=C \\ \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC=C \\ \end{array}$	4-7	$O=C=O$	$\rightarrow RCO_2H$	4-28
$\begin{array}{c} \\ C=C=CY \\ \end{array}$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC-C\equiv C- \\ \end{array}$	4-8	$C\equiv O$	$\rightarrow R_2C=O$	4-29
YAr	$\rightarrow RAr$	4-9	$S=CSR'$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RSCHSR' \\ \end{array}$	4-30
$YC=O$	$\rightarrow \begin{array}{c} \\ RC=O \\ \end{array}$	4-10	$S=C=S$	$\rightarrow RCS_2H$	4-31
$YC\equiv N$	$\rightarrow RC\equiv N$	4-11			
$YSiR'_3$	$\rightarrow RSiR'_3$	4-12			
YNR'_2	$\rightarrow RNR'_2$	4-13			
YNO_2	$\rightarrow RNO_2$	4-14			
YPR'_2	$\rightarrow RPR'_2$	4-15			
O_2	\rightarrow (see Chapter VIII)	4-16			
S_8	$\rightarrow RS^-$	4-17			
YSR'	$\rightarrow RSR'$	4-18			
YSO_2R'	$\rightarrow RSO_2R'$	4-19			
YX	$\rightarrow RX$	4-20			
YM	$\rightarrow RM$	4-21			

^a Y = leaving group, most often halide

^b W = carbanion-stabilizing group

may involve single electron transfer (SET) from the carbanion to the alkyl halide, giving an alkyl radical and an anion radical which very rapidly decomposes into a halide ion and an alkyl radical; the alkyl radicals can join as desired or give disproportionation or symmetrical coupling products. Bordwell has noted that "the more strongly basic the carbanion, the greater the likelihood that it will react by an electron-transfer pathway rather than an S_N2 pathway" [346]. The reactions of Grignard reagents with alkyl halides are also promoted by the addition of cuprous halides and amines or phosphates [347, 348].

Surprisingly, even tertiary halides like *t*-butyl bromide can be reacted with some carbanions, e.g., as in (4-32), to give coupling products [349a-e]; very likely this sort of reaction goes by an electron transfer mechanism (probably $S_{RN}1$).



Heteroatoms are often included in carbanions to guide an alkylation (or other reaction) to a desired position and then removed. Some of the heteroatom-containing groupings are readily replaced by hydrogen (e.g., S by Raney nickel desulfurization [350] or with other reducing agents [351]), hydrolyzed to carbonyl compounds (e.g., dithioacetals to aldehydes and ketones [202, 352, 353] or 1,1,1-trihalides to acids [207]), or eliminated to give alkenes (e.g., $-\text{Se}\Phi$ [194, 354] and $-\text{S}\Phi$ [193] by oxidizing and warming, or $-\text{S}(\text{C}=\text{S})\text{NR}_2$ by reacting with methyl iodide followed by $\text{LiF/Li}_2\text{CO}_3$ [186]).

Some S_N2' type reactions (4-4) of carbanions with allyls attached to good leaving groups employ as leaving groups halogen [355], N-ethyl-4,6-dimethyl-2-oxidopyridinium [356], and 2-oxidopyridine [357]. The first two of these leaving groups gave virtually complete S_N2' rearrangement (γ -alkylation), but the last required heavy α -substitution or the S_N2 product predominated. A further sequence for γ -alkylating allyl alcohols *via* a copper complex has been shown to involve *anti* γ -alkylation [358]; if 2-O⁻-benzothiazole is the leaving group, only the *trans*-1,2-disubstituted alkene is formed [359]. The conversion of a propargyl acetal to an allenyl ether by a Grignard reagent catalyzed by cuprous bromide (4-5) [360] is at least formally related to the above, as is a reaction of type 4-8 involving an organoaluminate and allenyl bromide with a cuprous chloride catalyst [361].

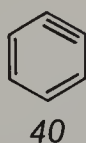
The reaction of alkyl carbanions with epoxides (reaction 4-6) can be considered either as an addition or as an intramolecular substitution. The mechanism is ordinarily intramolecular S_N2 , with substitution occurring with inversion of configuration at the less hindered carbon atom [362]. Alkyl-lithiums or Grignard reagents are usually used, but cuprates react similarly [363]. Episulfides sometimes react analogously, though attack can occur at sulfur [364].

Vinyl halides (reaction 4-7) are notoriously sluggish in nucleophilic

IV. Reactions of σ Carbanions with Electrophiles

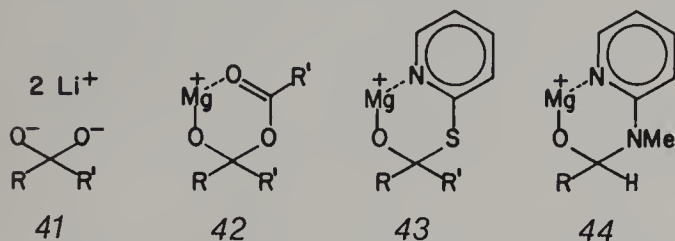
displacement reactions, since their structures are not conducive to S_N1 and S_N2 mechanisms, and the addition-elimination mechanism is slow unless some additional grouping is present to stabilize the intermediate carbanion, as in the case $R_2CuLi + R'IC=CH(C=O)R' \rightarrow RR'C=CH(C=O)R'$ [365]. In the absence of such a grouping, a transition metal catalyst containing copper [366], nickel [367], or palladium [368, 369] may serve to break the vinyl-iodine or vinyl-bromine bond and give a good yield of coupled product from a Grignard reagent or alkyllithium. Such reactions generally go with retention of configuration at the double bond. Other possible mechanisms by which vinyl halides may react include halogen exchange to give a vinyl anion and an alkyl halide, which could then react in an S_N2 fashion to give the same coupling product, and elimination to the alkyne followed by nucleophilic addition to the alkyne.

Aryl halides (reaction 4-9) behave toward organometallics very much like the vinyl halides just discussed. S_N1 and S_N2 are disfavored, but addition-elimination involves a resonance-stabilized pentadienyl anion intermediate 39, and can go very rapidly if a carbanion-stabilizing group such as nitro is present *ortho* or *para* to the halogen. The elimination-addition mechanism now involves a benzyne intermediate 40, and the R group may go into the *ortho* positions as well as the position to which the halogen was attached. Again, a transition metal catalyst containing palladium may bring about the desired coupling by breaking the carbon-halogen bond [370]. The reaction of methyllithium with iodobenzene to give toluene probably involves halogen exchange followed by displacement [371].



Acylation of a carbanion (reaction 4-10) can proceed readily by an addition followed by elimination of Y^- , but is complicated by addition of further carbanion to the product (probably a ketone; this is a good route to tertiary alcohols of the type $R_2R'COH$ [372]). This further reaction has been avoided in several ways. When an organolithium reagent RLi reacts with a lithium carboxylate, $R'CO_2Li$, the resulting insoluble salt 41 can be quenched by adding to aqueous acid to produce the ketone $RR'C=O$ [373]. Reaction of a Grignard reagent with an anhydride can also give an insoluble precipitate (42) which hydrolyzes to the ketone [374]; closely related is the addition product 43 from the S-2-pyridyl thioate, which does not require recycling of $R'COOH$ recovered in the anhydride reaction [375]. Similarly, the N-methyl-N-2-pyridyl formate gives the aldehyde *via* 44 [376]. In HMPA, Grignard reagents are acylated by esters to give ketones if the enolate of the ketone is formed fast enough [377]. Grignard reagents and organolithiums react with tertiary amides to give ketones [378] and aldehydes (from DMF) [379]. An acid chloride can be used directly for acylation if the Grignard

reagent or organolithium is first converted to the less reactive cadmium [380, 381], manganese [382], copper [345], or rhodium [383] reagent. $\text{Me}_3\text{SiCH}_2^-$ with esters gives ketones if two equivalents of the base are used; the ketone is converted to its enolate faster than it suffers nucleophilic attack [384]. (4-10) is not limited to ketone preparation: Formates can give aldehydes, and carbonates can give esters [181].



The reaction of carbanions with TsCN (4-11) has been used to prepare nitriles [385].

Silylation with, for example, chlorotrimethylsilane, often proceeds quantitatively and has been used to characterize carbanions (4-12) [172, 386]. Again, however, SET can occur with strongly basic anions to lower the yield [387].

Tertiary amines not easily made by nucleophilic substitution can be synthesized from alkylolithiums or Grignard reagents by reaction with *N,N*-dialkyl-*O*-arenesulfonylhydroxylamines (4-13) [388]. Aromatic nitro compounds have been made from aryllithiums and alkyl nitrates (4-14) [389]. Trialkylphosphines can be made as in 4-15 by reaction with dialkylchlorophosphines [390].

The reactions of carbanions with oxygen (4-16) and other oxidizing agents are discussed in Chapter VII. Carbanions react with elemental sulfur to give mercaptides (4-17) [391], and with disulfides (4-18, $\text{Y} = \text{R}'\text{S}-$ [392]), sulfonyl chlorides (4-18, $\text{Y} = \text{Cl}-$ [393]), or thiocyanates (4-18, $\text{Y} = \text{N}\equiv\text{C}-$ [394]) to give mixed sulfides RSR' . With phenyl arenesulfonates, alkyl aryl (or diaryl) sulfones are formed (4-19) [395].

Reaction (4-20) of carbanions with halogen-containing species (X_2 [228, 396], TsCl [397], NXS [398], CH_2X_2 [399], CX_4 [400], or C_2X_6 [399]) is sometimes used for replacing an acidic hydrogen by halogen; often, however, the halide RX is more readily prepared than the carbanion R^- and it is the reverse reaction (3-1) which is practical. Oxidative coupling (Chapter VII) competes with halogenation in many cases and may predominate.

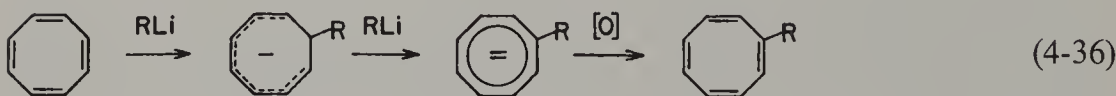
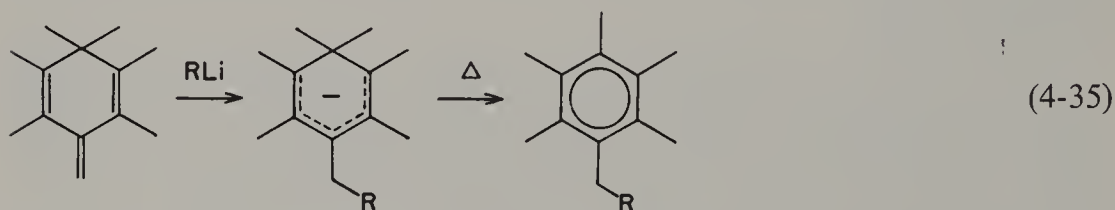
Reaction (4-21) can be used to attach alkyl groups to any metal, since the most active (alkali) metal can initially be associated with the carbanion, and the reaction favors the organometallic containing the less active metal [401]. This sort of reaction can be used to take advantage of the varied reactivity of carbanions coordinated to transition metals [2]; e.g., (4-33) is a useful synthetic procedure [201, 402].



2. Addition Reactions of Alkyl (sp^3) Anions

The addition of alkyl anions to alkenes (reaction 4-22) is greatly facilitated by the presence of a carbanion-stabilizing group (W) on the double bond, though one is not essential as shown by the anionic polymerization of ethylene catalyzed by alkyllithiums [403]. Other simple alkenes without carbanion-stabilizing groups fail in this reaction, however, presumably because they lack ethylene's unique combination of an unhindered carbon for attack and a primary carbon at the other end for a relatively stable carbanion. Many alkenes containing carbanion-stabilizing groups, e.g. $\text{CH}_2=\text{CHCN}$, can be anionically polymerized by catalytic amounts of bases; if the 1:1 adduct is desired, the alkene is added slowly to the alkyllithium.

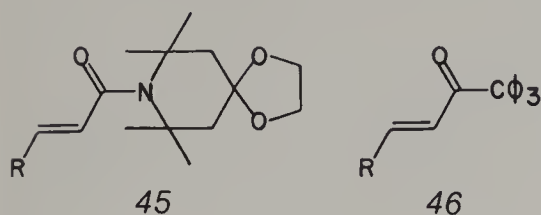
The carbanion-stabilizing group W can stabilize through induction, resonance, or a combination. Examples of the former are $\Phi\text{Si}-$, $\Phi\text{S}-$ [404], $\Phi\text{Se}-$, and $\Phi_2\text{As}-$ [405]. For resonance stabilization, even a second carbon-carbon double bond (conjugated with the first) will aid greatly, by giving an allyl carbanion intermediate; thus butadiene is readily anionically polymerized [403] or telomerized [406] by organometallics. Some other synthetically useful additions to various conjugated diene systems are shown in reactions (4-34) [407], (4-35) [408], and (4-36) [409].



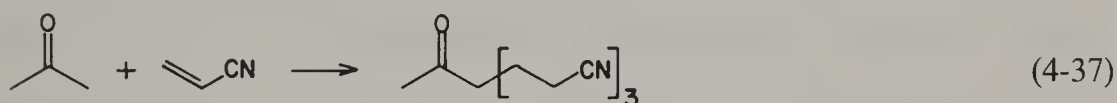
One of the most important types of carbanion-stabilizing groups W is a carbonyl group, which gives a (resonance-stabilized) enolate ion intermediate. While 1,2-addition of alkyllithiums or Grignard reagents to α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds usually predominates over 1,4-addition, when lithium dialkylcuprates (or sometimes simply catalytic amounts of a cuprous halide) are used, 1,4-addition (4-24) is usually favored [410–412]. Lithiodithioacetals add 1,2 kinetically and 1,4 thermodynamically [413, 414]. A mixed cuprate such as $\text{LiCu(R)S}\Phi$, prepared from copper(I) thiophenoxide and an alkyllithium [365], or addition of a trialkylphosphine [412], saves alkyl groups when desired [345]. Of the methyl-copper species, $\text{Me}_5\text{Cu}_3\text{Li}_2$ was found most selective for 1,4-addition [415]. Ways of favoring 1,4-addition

2. Addition Reactions of Alkyl (sp^3) Anions

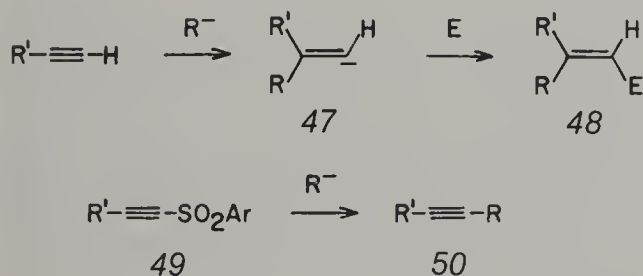
without employing copper are to use zinc [416] or to use an α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compound to which 1,2-addition is sterically difficult, e.g., 45 or 46 [417].



The many other groupings W which promote addition of metal alkyls to alkenes through resonance include $C=N-$ [418, 419], $-C\equiv N$ ("cyano-ethylation" if acrylonitrile itself is used (4-37)) [420], and, in the presence of copper salts and with accompanying reduction to $-NH_2$, $-NO_2$ [421].



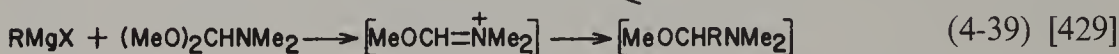
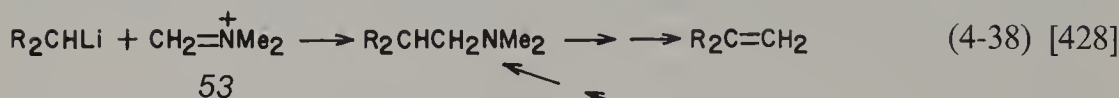
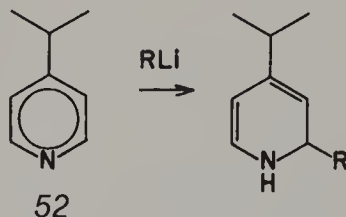
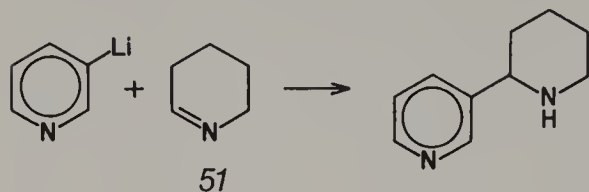
Metal alkyls add to acetylenes (4-23) somewhat more readily than they do to alkenes since the intermediate carbanion has its charge on an sp^2 hybridized carbon atom; carbanion-stabilizing groups are not necessary, but make the addition faster [54, 398, 422]. Even terminal alkynes may be used with cuprous catalysts, with the carbanion adding *syn* to the non-terminal carbon to give an intermediate vinyl copper reagent 47 which can be reacted with electrophiles E stereospecifically to give trisubstituted alkenes 48 [398]. Though initial additions are *syn*, in some cases the intermediate vinyl anions can be isomerized to provide the other stereoisomer [54]. Alkylolithiums and Grignard reagents react with acetylenic sulfones of type 49 to give acetylenes of type 50, presumably *via* an addition-elimination mechanism [423].



Many imines are not very stable, but some, e.g. 51, are sufficiently so that they can be reacted with metal alkyls (4-24) [424–426]. Additions of this type often compete successfully with α -metallation of γ -substituted

IV. Reactions of σ Carbanions with Electrophiles

pyridines, e.g. 52 [231, 427]. Iminium salts, e.g. 53, can similarly be used to make tertiary amines (4-25, 4-38, 4-39).



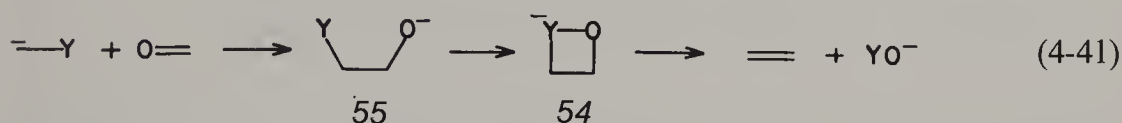
Organometallics add to nitriles (4-26) almost as rapidly as to ketones; the imine formed by addition of one mole is not usually stable, but may be hydrolyzed in good yield to the ketone in many cases [430]. In some cases, a second mole of carbanion adds, giving on hydrolysis a tertiary alkyl amine $\text{R}_2\text{R}'\text{CNH}_2$ [430, 431].

The reaction of a carbanion with an aldehyde or ketone to give a 1°, 2°, or 3° alcohol (4-27) is one of the most widely used carbon-carbon bond-forming reactions [432, 433]. Though often thought of as a simple ionic addition, recent evidence indicates that in at least some cases it proceeds by an SET mechanism involving as intermediates $\text{R}\cdot$ and the ketone anion radical [434]. Occasional side reactions are enolate ion formation, which usually results in recovered ketone (and can also involve SET [434]), and reduction of the ketone to the corresponding alcohol (4-40); this side reaction may also go by an SET mechanism, at least when a good electron acceptor like a diaryl ketone is used [435]. Considerable progress has been made in the synthesis of optically active 2° alcohols from achiral alkylolithiums and aldehydes using chiral TMEDA analogs [436]. The Barbier reaction, in which an alkyl halide is reacted with Li (much better than Mg) in the presence of an aldehyde or ketone, often proceeds better than the two-step route [102]. There is evidence that in at least some cases the Barbier reaction may not go *via* an organometallic reagent at all, but may follow a radical pathway [437].

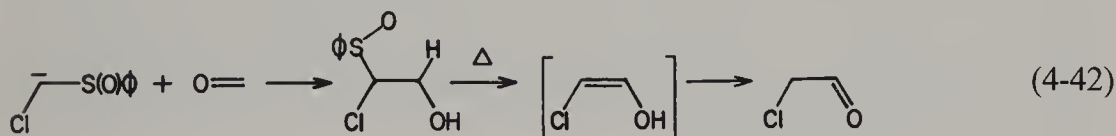


2. Addition Reactions of Alkyl (sp³) Anions

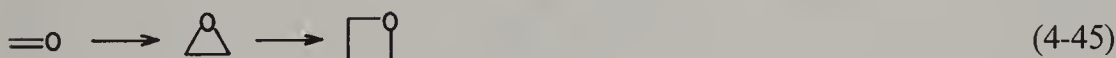
The additions of heteroatom-containing carbanions to aldehydes and ketones are often followed by useful secondary reactions. The secondary reaction is an olefin-forming elimination in the case of the Wittig (4-41, $Y = -P\Phi_3^+$) [169, 170, 438], Horner-Emmons (4-41, $Y = -(P=O)(OR)_2$) [191, 197, 439–442], Peterson (4-41, $Y = -SiMe_3$) [191, 216, 443–445], and related reactions (4-41, $Y = -(C=O)\Phi$ [446], $Y = -Sn\Phi_3$ [447], $Y = -S(C=O)OR$ [448, 449]). These reactions, which have the decided advantage over many other olefin syntheses of giving the double bond in a single known position, probably proceed *via* 4-membered ring intermediates of type 54. These reactions are versatile enough to permit the synthesis of alkenes possessing $-OR$ [198, 393], $-NR_2$ [197], $-SiMe_3$ [444], $-CO_2H$ [441, 442], $-CN$ [393], and $-SO_2R$ [446] groupings.



The addition of anion 55 to an aldehyde followed by pyrolysis leads to a different sort of olefin-forming elimination (4-42) [204].



Certain groupings Y in 55 are γ -eliminated to form epoxides (4-43). Examples are $Y = -SMe_2^+$ [184]; $Y = -Cl$, in which case an additional activating $-SiMe_3$ group permits acidic hydrolysis to an aldehyde or ketone (4-44) [195, 196]; or $Y = -(S=NTs)\Phi$ [187], in which case additional reagent can ring expand the epoxide to an oxetane (4-45) [188].



The products of addition of α -metallated isocyanides to aldehydes and ketones are readily cyclized to dihydrooxazoles (4-46) [179].



IV. Reactions of σ Carbanions with Electrophiles

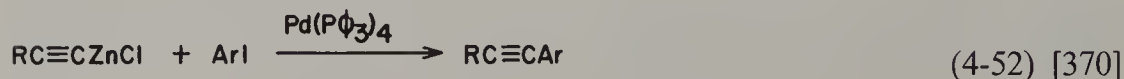
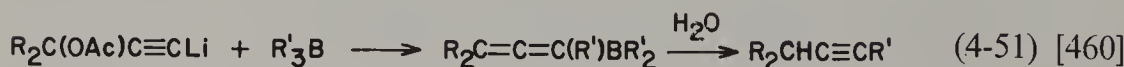
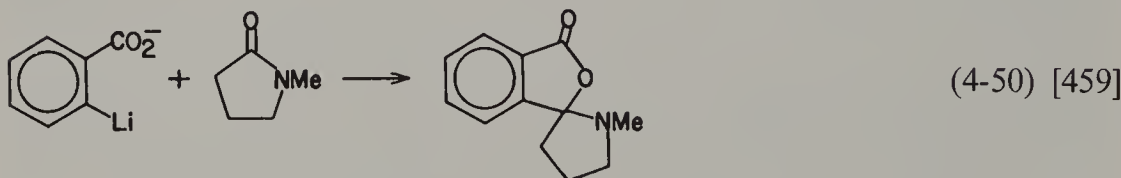
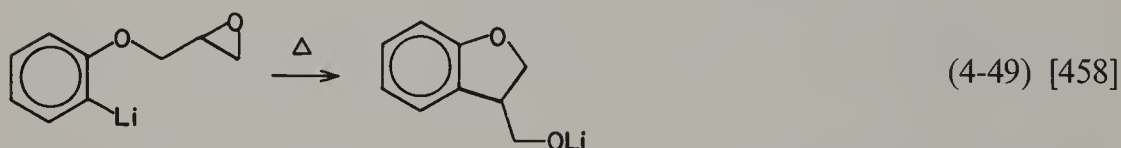
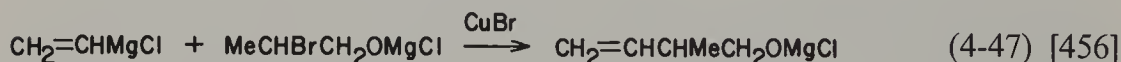
A standard preparation of carboxylic acids involves reaction of an organometallic with CO_2 (4-28) [450]. If a second equivalent of organometallic is present, it may add to the resulting carboxylate anion to give a dianion of type 41, which will give ketone upon workup [372].

Alkylolithiums react with CO (4-29) to give symmetrical ketones and other products [451, 452].

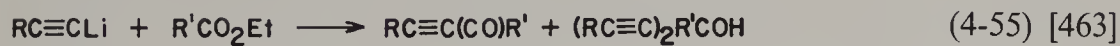
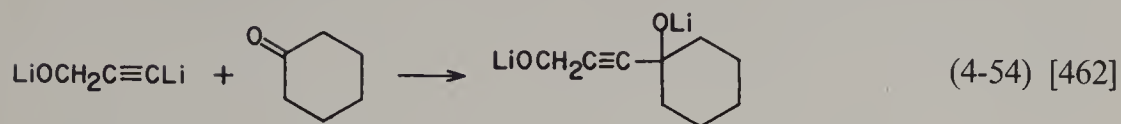
While carbanions add to the carbon atom of ester carbonyl groups, leading to substitution (4-10) followed by further addition (4-27), the direction of addition to thioester thiocarbonyl groups is reversed (4-30) [352]. Their addition to carbon disulfide (4-31), however, is analogous to their addition to carbon dioxide [453].

3. Vinyl (sp^2), Aryl (sp^2), and Acetylenic (sp) Anions

These anions undergo most of the reactions described above for alkyl anions (sp^3); examples are (4-47) to (4-55). In the reactions of vinyl anions, the configuration about the double bond is retained if the temperature is kept sufficiently low. With vinyl anions as with alkyl anions, the lithium dialkylcopper reagent is often prepared when the lithium reagent reacts unsatisfactorily, e.g., to get 1,4-additions to α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds [454]. Acyl anions are not stable under ordinary conditions [455], though they are probably the first intermediates in the reactions of carbanions with carbon monoxide (4-29) [452]; fortunately many acyl anion equivalents have been devised (Chapter IX).



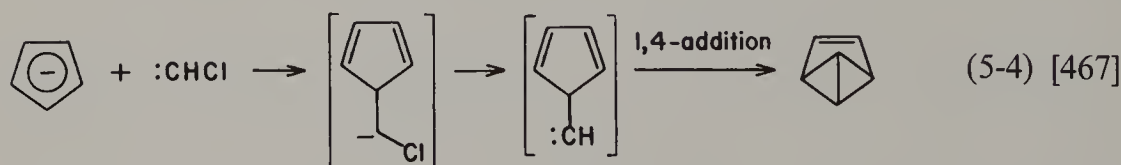
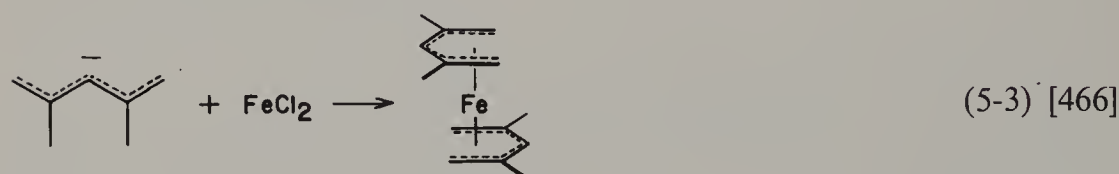
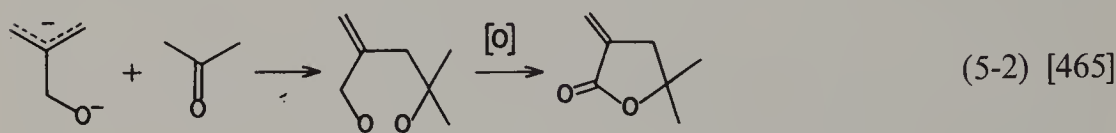
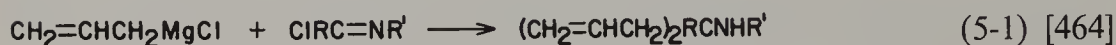
3. Vinyl (sp^2), Aryl (sp^2), and Acetylenic (sp) Anions



V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles

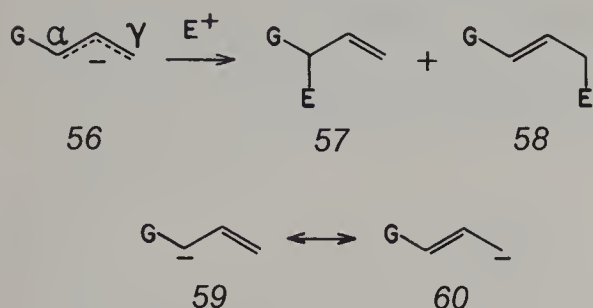
1. Hydrocarbon π Anions

π type carbanions undergo most of the reactions described in the last chapter for alkyl anions; (5-1) to (5-4) are examples with no regiochemical problems.



The main complication which arises with π anions is the site of reaction in unsymmetrical cases; e.g., substituted allyl anion 56 gives 57 by α -attack or 58 by γ -attack. In rate-controlled reactions with electrophiles, attack occurs primarily at the carbon of higher electron density, though steric and other factors no doubt contribute as well. When grouping G stabilizes an α -carbanion (as in 59) more than it does a double bond (as in 60), the electron density will be higher at the α -carbon and α -attack to give 57 will predominate; this is the case with $\text{G} = -(\text{C}=\text{O})-$ [468, 469] unless Cu^+ is the counterion [470], 2-benzothiazole [418], $-\text{CN}$ [471], $-\text{NO}_2$ [472], $-\text{S}-$ [473], $-\text{S}(\text{O})-$ [474], $-\text{S}(\text{O}_2)-$ [474, 475], and $-\text{Cl}$ [476, 477]. When the reverse is true of

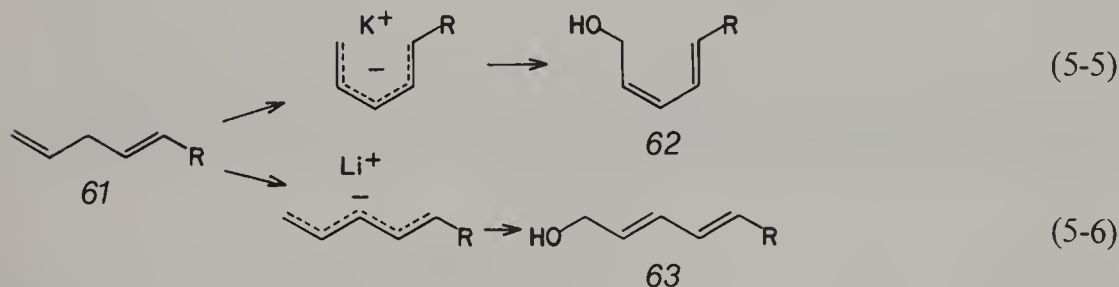
grouping G, γ -attack to give 58 wins out, as with G = $-\text{R}$ (usually) [289], vinyl (usually) [478, 479], $-\text{Ar}$ [480], $-\text{NR}_2$ [481, 482], and $-\text{O}-$ [474].



The reactions of crotyl anion (56, G = Me) with electrophiles illustrate the regioselectivity obtained with alkyl groups and in addition the stereochemical results which can be obtained in the γ -alkylation product 58. Equilibrated crotyllithium (85% *Z*) gives 46% α -butylation and 54% γ -butylation; 85% of the γ product is *Z* [483]. *Z*-Crotylpotassium, prepared at low temperatures from *Z*-2-butene, gives γ -boronation product which is almost 100% *Z*, while *E*-crotylpotassium from *E*-2-butene gives γ -boronation product which is essentially 100% *E* [289].

When prenyl *Grignard* reagents are used, the regiochemistry can be quite well controlled: In the absence of CuI, the γ -alkylation product predominates (92–98%), whereas addition of CuI gives mostly α -alkylation (97–99%) [484]. Interestingly, the α -attack observed when G = $-(\text{C}=\text{O})-$ can be converted to γ -attack by adding CuX [485].

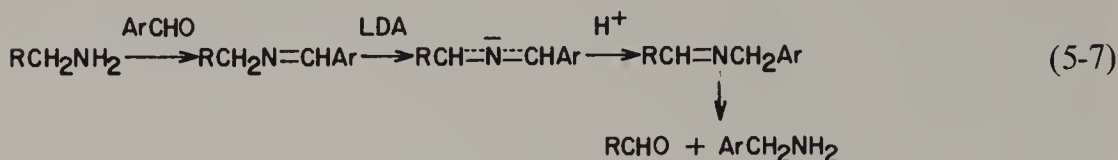
The conversion of diene 61 to dienols 62 and 63 with high regio- and stereoselectivity *via* the sequence metallation — $\text{B}(\text{OMe})_3$ — H_2O_2 (5-5 and 5-6) illustrates the reactions of pentadienyl anions with electrophiles [479].



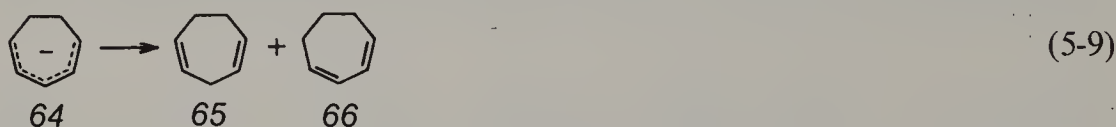
Allylic deprotonation of an alkene followed by protonation of the allyl anion may result in a double bond shift, as in the biomimetic transamination reaction (5-7) [486]. In many cases, the carbanion is not prepared in high concentration, as substances such as alkenes are equilibrated in kinetically

V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles

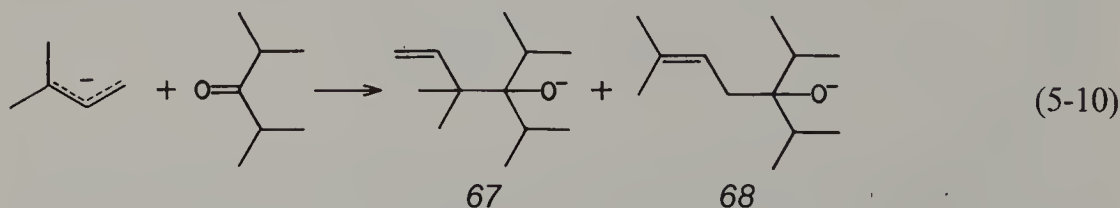
strong but thermodynamically weak base-solvent systems such as KO-*t*-Bu — DMSO (e.g., 5-8) [487].



Protonations and other readily reversible reactions can lead eventually to the equilibrium mixture of products, usually different from the rate-controlled mixture. For example, in (5-9), rate-controlled protonation of cycloheptadienyl anion (64) gives 1:3 65:66, whereas equilibrium control gives 99+ % 66 [314]. The ratio of rate-controlled products depends on the protonating species and conditions; in principle one could find protonating agents and conditions which would give either 65 or 66 exclusively, and in less symmetric cases, one could induce chirality by using a suitable optically active protonating agent. Much less can be done to control the composition of the equilibrium mixture; it will generally vary some with temperature, but the temperature range over which equilibrium can be attained is usually rather restricted by competing reactions. With equilibrium or kinetic control, it may be possible to separate the desired isomer and recycle the undesired one to get more of the desired isomer. In the present case, for example, the unconjugated isomer 65 can be separated from the kinetic mixture and the conjugated isomer 66 recycled by deprotonating it with *n*-BuLi — KO-*t*-Bu [288] and again kinetically protonating it.

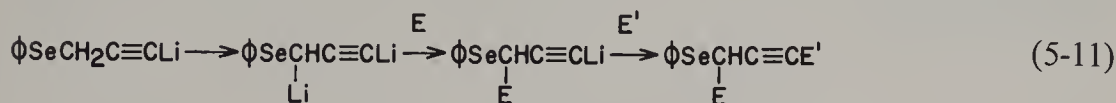


More surprisingly reversible to equilibrium are reactions of prenyl anion with ketones, e.g., (5-10): 67 is formed 4:1 over 68 at short reaction times, but after a long time only 68 is present [488].



A useful and usually reliable rule for reactions of di- and higher anions is that the first reaction with an electrophile will occur where the last proton

came off (assuming the dianion was generated by removal of protons) [259], e.g., (5-11) [489, 490]. The vast majority of examples illustrating this rule involve anions with stabilization from heteroatoms, but the principle applies to hydrocarbon dianions as well. A serious problem with hydrocarbon dianions in this respect is that many of them have very low solubilities (especially dipotassium salts; dilithium salts are more soluble); many cannot be reacted selectively with one electrophile followed by another since the monoanion from initial reaction *is* soluble and reacts faster with electrophile than the dianion.

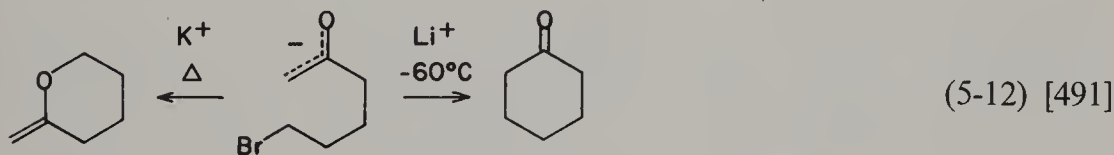


2. Enolate Anions

a. Substitutions

Enolates derived from esters will be included in this section with enolates from aldehydes and ketones.

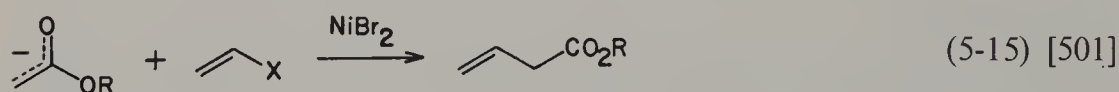
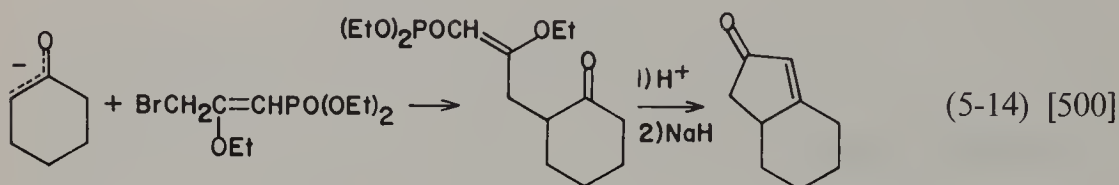
As with unsymmetrical allyl anions, a question of regiochemistry arises when enolates are reacted with electrophiles; in this case, it is whether reaction will occur at carbon or oxygen. In most cases, the product of bond formation at carbon is desired, and in most cases, this can be achieved by employing conditions which favor it: (1) Li^+ rather than K^+ or Na^+ as the counterion, as lithium enolates tend to associate into dimers and tetramers in which the oxygen is sterically shielded from attack (if it is the monomeric Li enolate which reacts, this also must have a more shielded oxygen than do the other enolates) [86, 98, 491]; (2) A relatively non-polar solvent to favor aggregation and an $\text{S}_{\text{N}}2$ mechanism over $\text{S}_{\text{N}}1$ (e.g., THF rather than a solvent which strongly solvates cations preferentially like DMF, DMSO, and DME) [98, 492]; (3) Lower temperature to favor aggregation [98, 491]; (4) Avoidance of crown ethers and cryptands, which give relatively free anions [98]; (5) A “softer” electrophile, such as MeI (rather than Me_2SO_4) or $\phi_2\text{MeSiCl}$ (rather than Me_3SiCl), which will prefer to react at the “softer” carbon atom rather



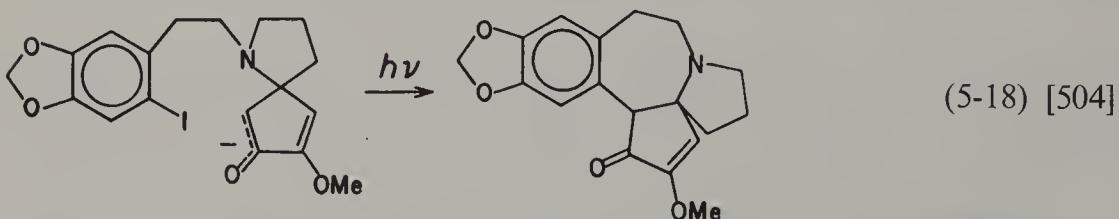
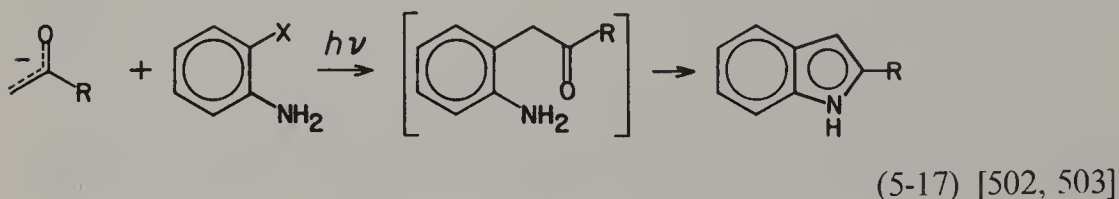
V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles

than at the "harder" oxygen [98, 493]. Reactions (5-12) and (5-13) show how the product can be changed by varying some of these factors.

Polyalkylation of enolates can be a problem if proton exchange between the alkylation product and the enolate occurs very rapidly. This can sometimes be avoided by adding Bu_3SnCl or Et_3Al to generate the tin or aluminium enolate [494] or by adding triethanolamine borate [495]. Enolates of aldehydes can sometimes be alkylated directly, though rapid aldol condensation and polyalkylation can make the yield low [496, 497]. Indirect routes involving alkylation of the enamine [498] or enamine (Section 5 below) may be preferable. Reactions (5-14) and (5-15) illustrate the alkylation and vinylation of enolates [499].

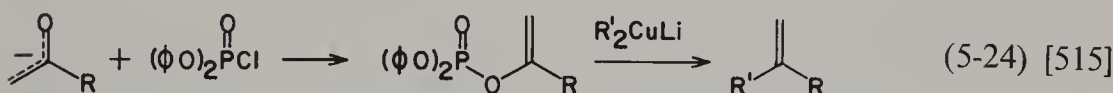
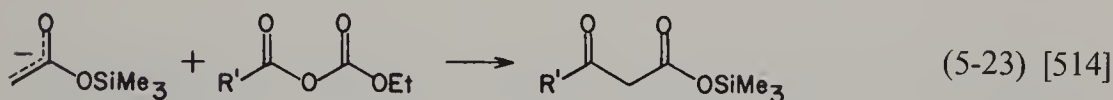
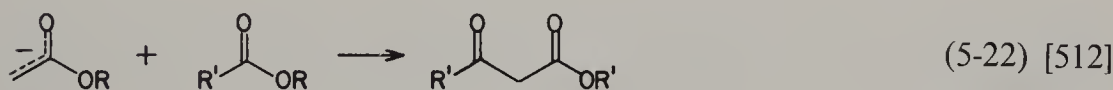
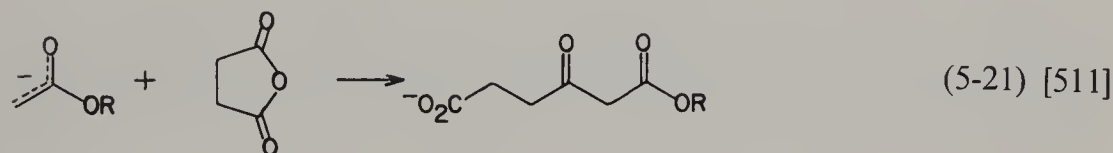
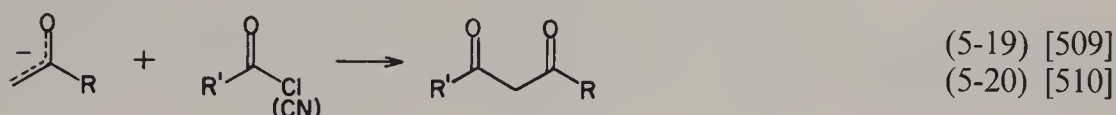


Arylation of enolates, like the vinylation shown in (5-15), does not occur without assistance in breaking the carbon-halogen bond. This may be done with the aid of a transition metal (5-16) or by an $\text{S}_{\text{RN}}1$ mechanism, in which case the anion radical of the aryl halide dissociates into halide anion and aryl radical (5-17, 5-18) [502–508].



Acylation of an enolate can be accomplished with an acyl chloride (5-19), an acyl cyanide (5-20), an anhydride (5-21), or even an ester (5-22). In the

latter case, if the enolate is derived from an ester, the intermolecular reaction is called a Claisen condensation [512] (recently shown to occur even in the gas phase without a counterion [513]) and the intramolecular reaction is a Dieckmann condensation [265]. These two condensations (and a few of the other enolate reactions) are best and most easily run without preliminary generation of the enolate ion in high concentration. The enolate in (5-23) reacts analogously, but O-phosphorylation occurs in (5-24).

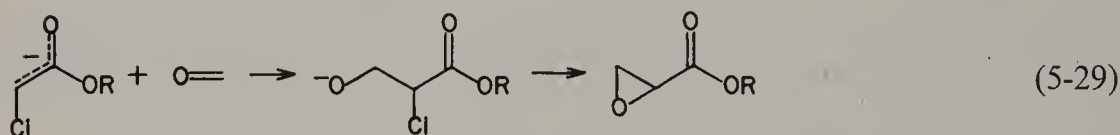
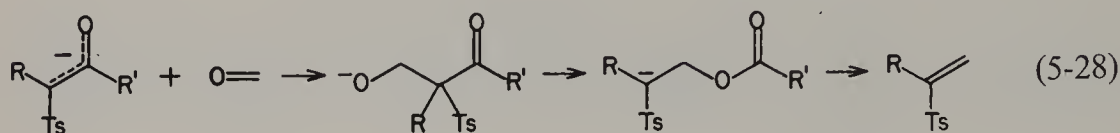
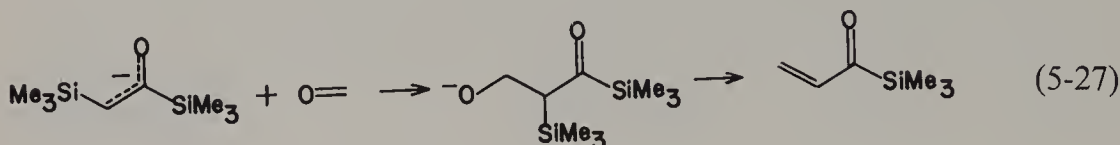
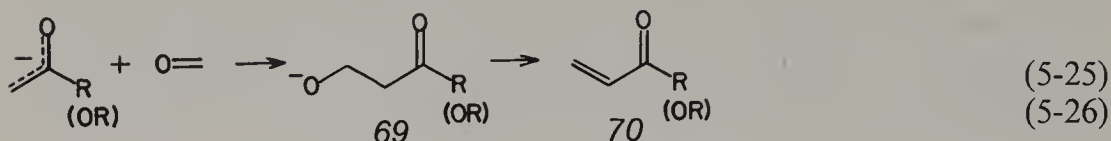


b. Additions

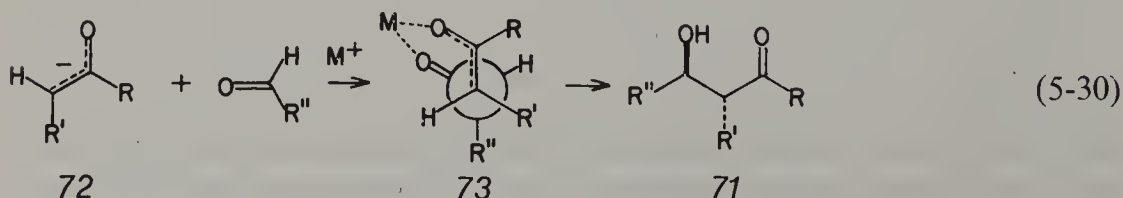
The addition of an enolate to an aldehyde or ketone carbonyl group (5-25) is the key step in the base-catalyzed aldol condensation, which is one of the most important carbon-carbon bond-forming reactions [516]. The intermediate β -alkoxylaldehyde or ketone (69) may be protonated, trapped with Me_3SiCl [517], or, under vigorous conditions, caused to eliminate water to give the α,β -unsaturated aldehyde or ketone (70). In cases where mixing the carbonyl components and adding base leads to the wrong aldol product, it may be possible to get the desired product using a preformed enolate [518] or enamine [519]. This is necessary, for example, if an enolate from an ester is to be added to a ketone containing an α -hydrogen (5-26) [518]. Me_3SiOH may be eliminated instead of water, as in (5-27) [520]. Reaction (5-28) shows the use of an aldol condensation followed by the loss of carboxylate in a vinyl sulfone synthesis [521]. (5-29) shows an aldol followed by

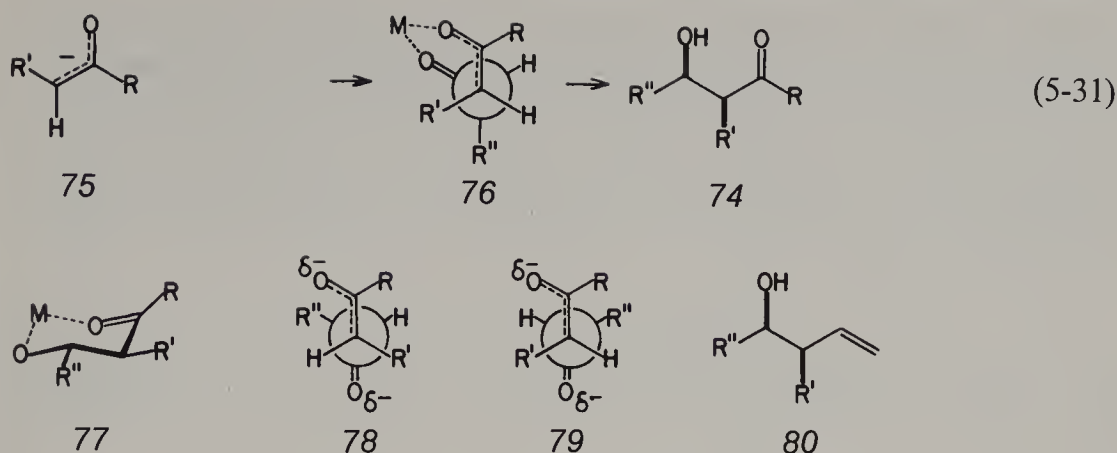
V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles

γ -elimination of chloride to give α -epoxyester; this is the Darzens condensation [522].

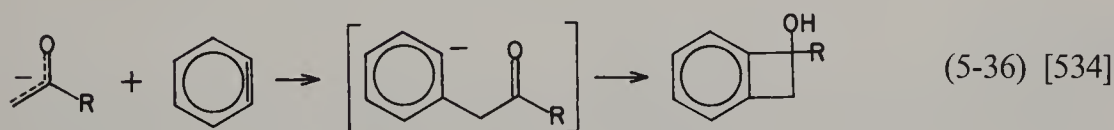
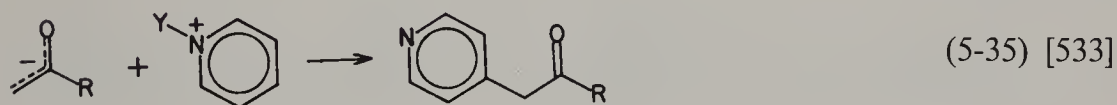
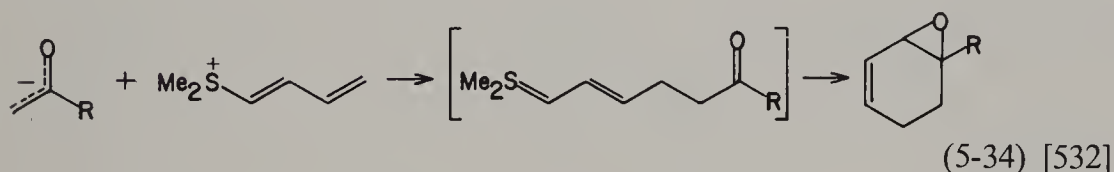
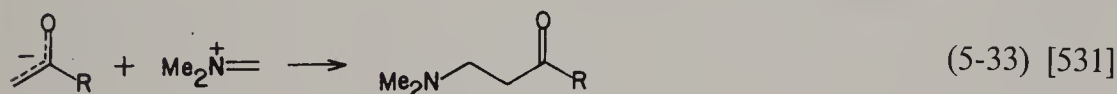
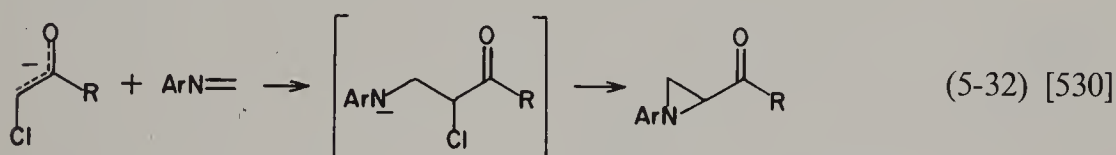


The stereochemistry of the aldol condensation has been extensively studied recently with a view to developing highly stereoselective aldol methods for synthesizing certain natural products, e.g., macrolide antibiotics [523]. With lithium [524] or boron [525] enolates, the favored kinetic products, obtained at low temperatures, are *threo*- β -hydroxyketone 71 from *E*-enolate 72 via transition state 73 (5-30) and *erythro*- β -hydroxyketone 74 from *Z*-enolate 507 via transition state 76 (5-31). The equilibrium product, especially favored by adding ZnCl_2 , is *threo* (71), presumably because R' and R'' are pseudo-equatorial in 77 [526]. With $(\text{Et}_2\text{N})_3\text{S}^+$ as the cation, *erythro* product 74 is favored from *either* enolate 72 or 75 (avoiding the necessity of generating a specific enolate), presumably via transition states 78 (from *E*-enolate 72) and 79 (from *Z*-enolate 75) [517]. For unknown reasons, zirconium enolates give *erythro* products regardless of enolate geometry [527], aluminium *Z*-enolates give considerable *threo* product [528], and either crotyltin stereoisomer gives *erythro* alcohol 80 which can be converted into *erythro* β -hydroxycarbonyl derivatives 74 [529].





Reactions (5-32) to (5-36) show additions of enolate anions to carbon-nitrogen and activated carbon-carbon double bonds. (5-33) is the key step in the base-catalyzed Mannich reaction of secondary amines [535]; in the Mannich the iminium salt is prepared *in situ* by mixing the amine with the aldehyde.

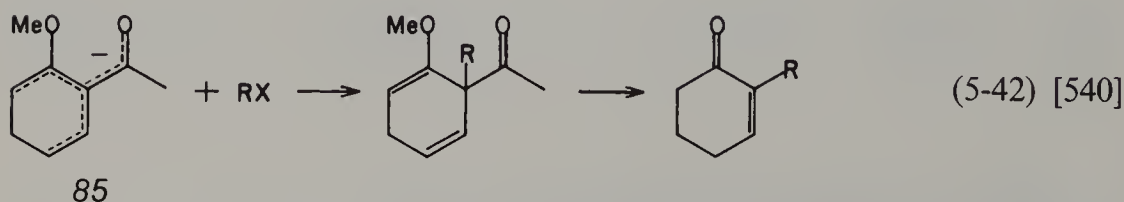
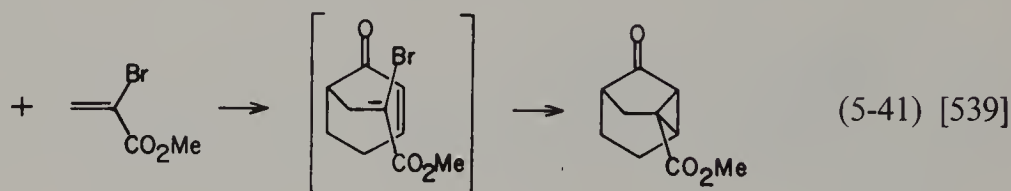
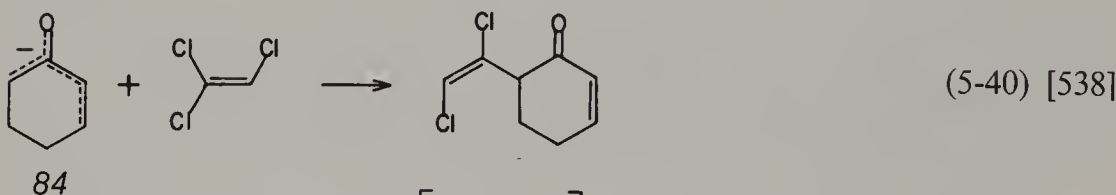
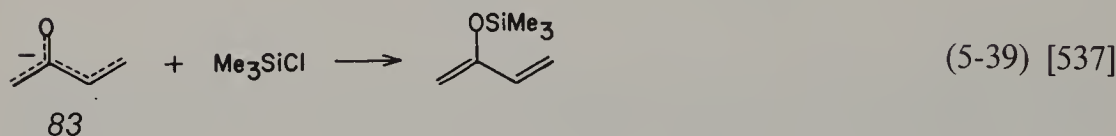
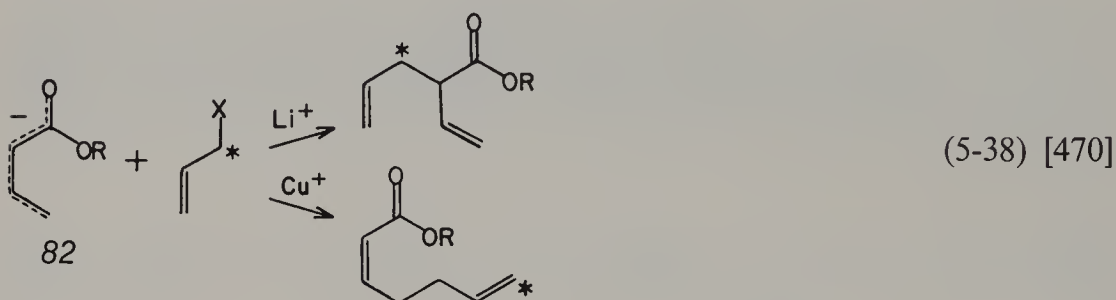


3. Other O-Stabilized Monoanions

The conjugation in enolates can be linearly extended by addition of a carbon-carbon double bond to give dienolate ions 81 and 82, which usually react with electrophiles under kinetic control in the α -position. In (5-37), the

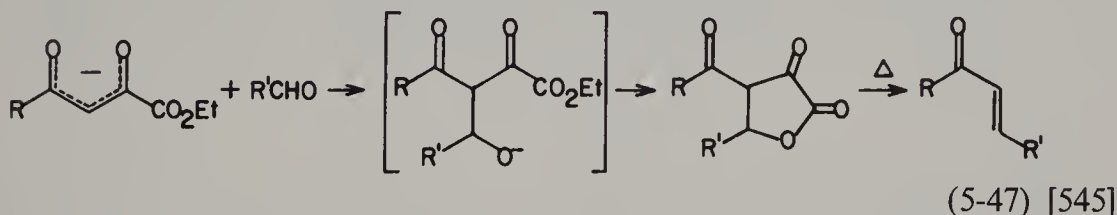
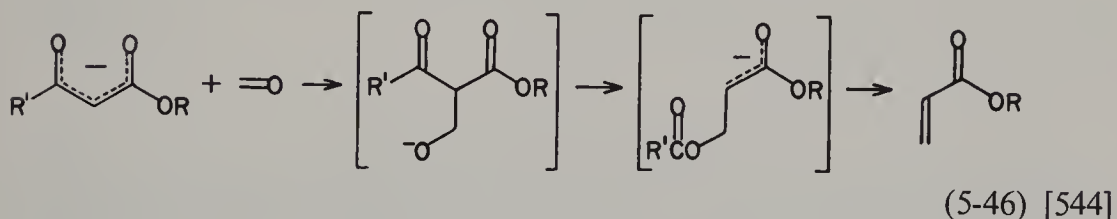
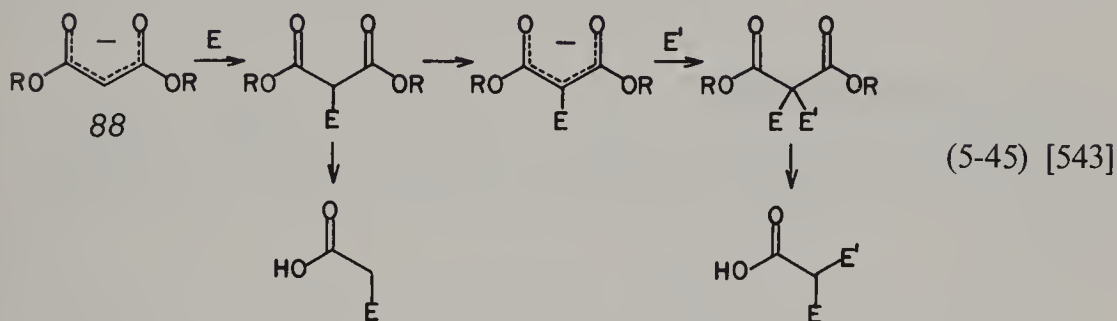
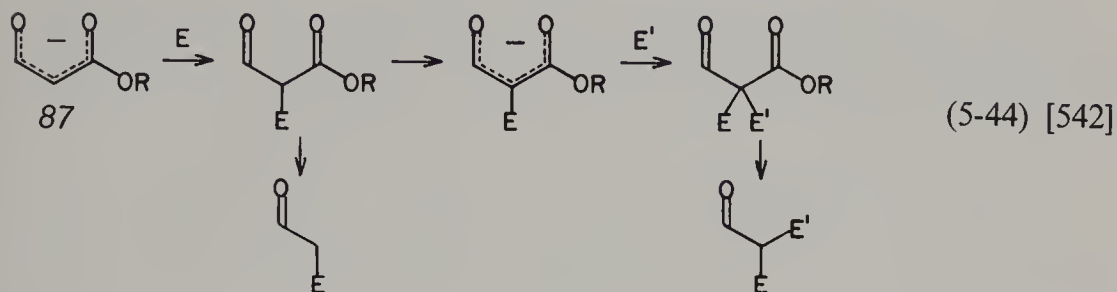
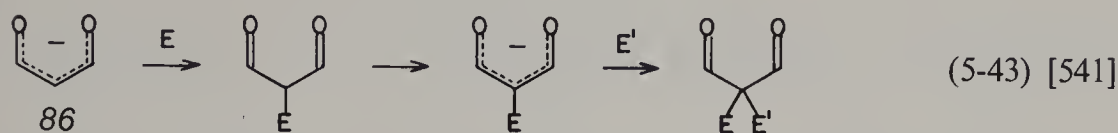
V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles

observed γ -attack may indicate thermodynamic control. In (5-38), γ -attack is found when Cu^+ is the counterion, and α -attack when Li^+ is the counterion. If the conjugation is extended in a cross-conjugated manner to give ions 83 and 84, reaction can occur on oxygen as in (5-39) or in the α -position as in (5-40) and (5-41). Anion 85, with its conjugation extended by two carbon-carbon double bonds, has been used as an equivalent of 2-metallated-2-cyclohexenone (5-42).

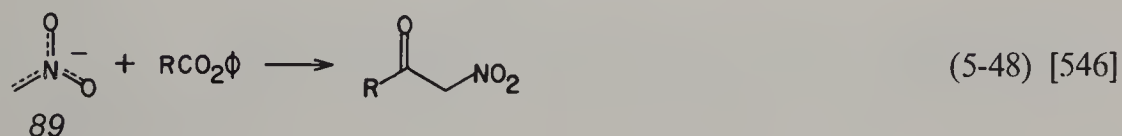


With two stabilizing oxygens arranged as in 86–88, the anion is relatively easy to prepare and is easy to alkylate on carbon (5-43 to 5-45); (5-44) [542] is the acetoacetic ester synthesis and (5-45) [543] is the malonic ester synthesis.

Some recent variations of these syntheses using di- and trianions will be mentioned in the next section. Two alkene syntheses employing carbanion chemistry of this type are (5-46) and (5-47).

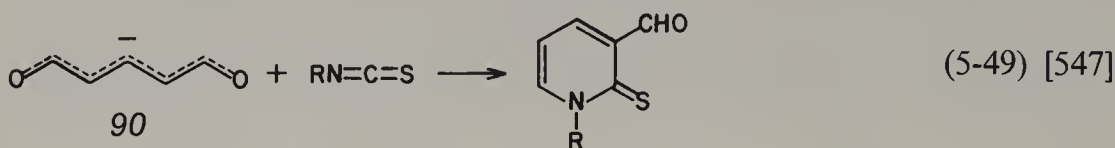


Two stabilizing oxygens are also present in an anion 89 derived by abstraction of an α proton from a nitroalkane; these anions react with electrophiles on carbon in some cases, e.g. (5-48).

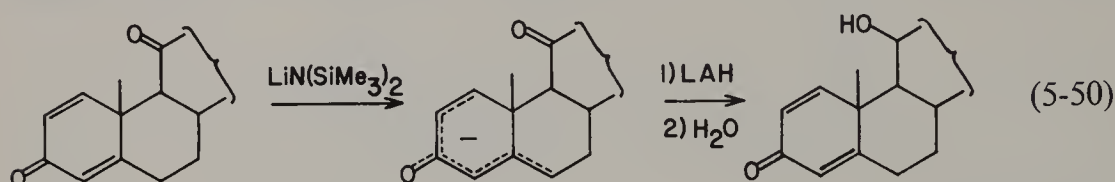


V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles

Anion **90**, a higher vinylog of **86**, is available commercially with Bu_4N^+ as the counterion for use in synthesis; in at least some of its reactions, e.g. (5-49), initial attack on the α carbon is indicated.

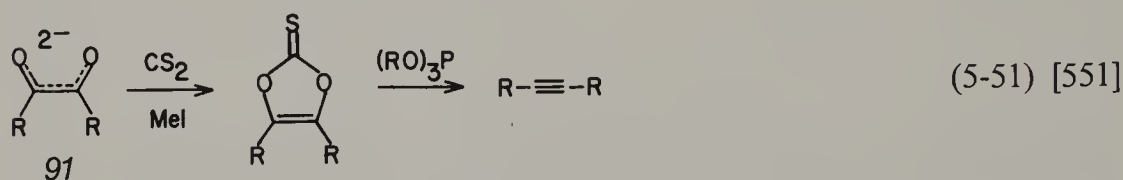


Various types of extended enolate ions have been used as protecting groups (e.g. 5-50) [548–550], with the carbonyl compound being liberated at the end by protonation of the enolate.

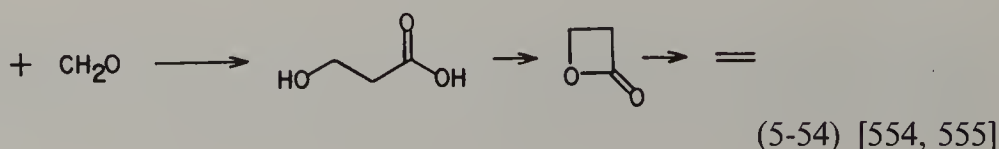
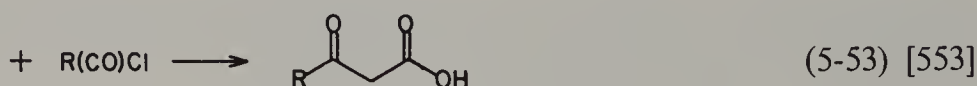
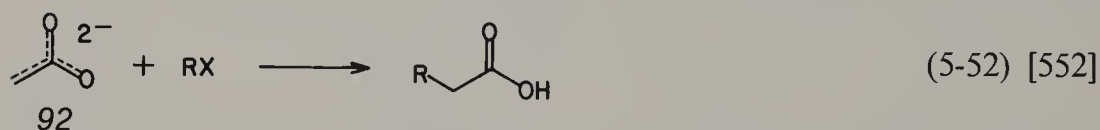


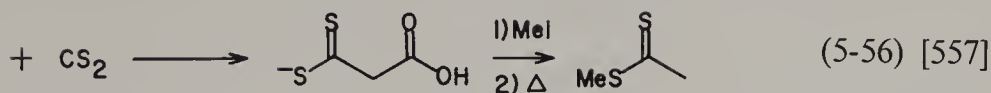
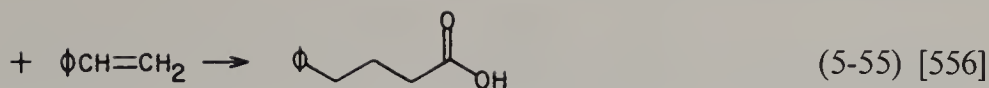
4. O-Stabilized Dianions

Many oxygen-stabilized dianions are synthetically useful, e.g. enediolate dianion **91** in the acetylene synthesis (5-51); initial attack is on oxygen in this case.

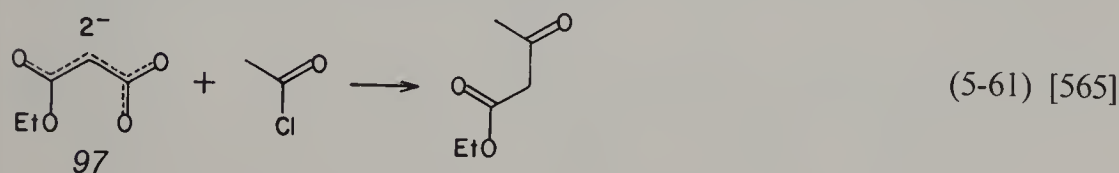
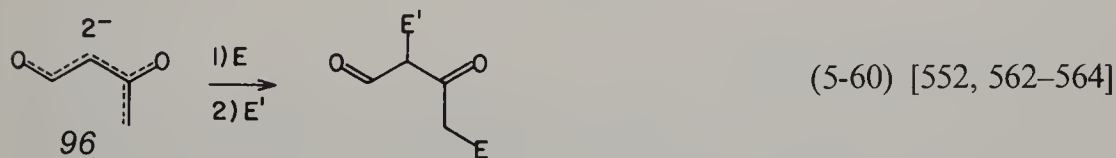
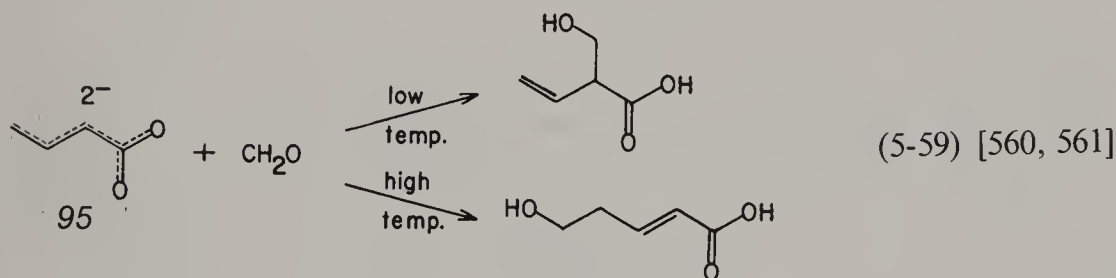
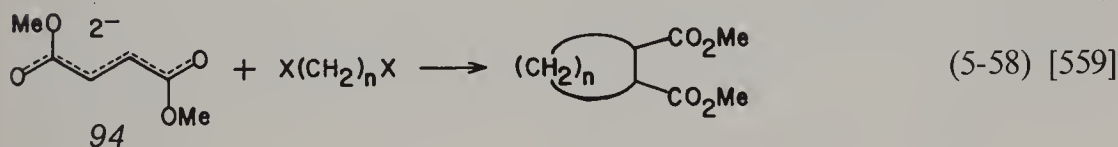
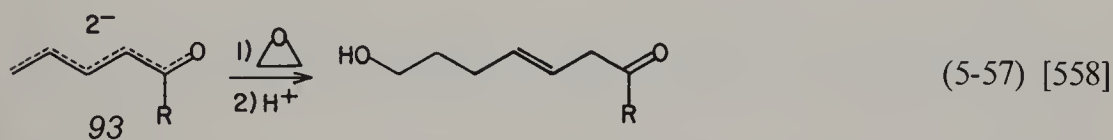


Reactions (5-52) to (5-56) of branched-chain dianions **92**, usually derived by removal of two protons from carboxylic acids, illustrate the usually valid principle that the first site of reaction of a dianion with an electrophile is the atom from which the last proton was removed [259], i.e., at the end carbon in these cases.

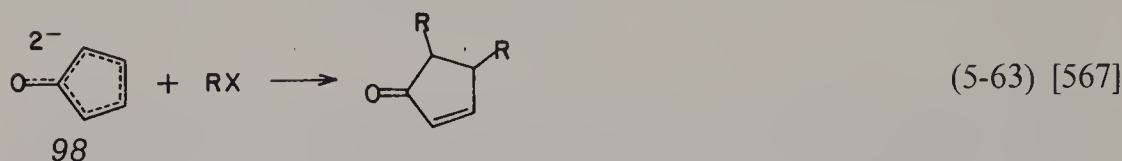
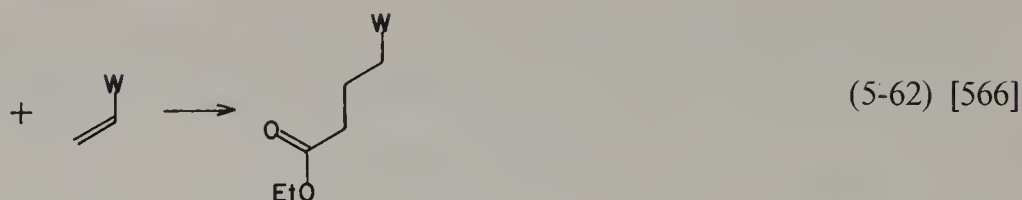




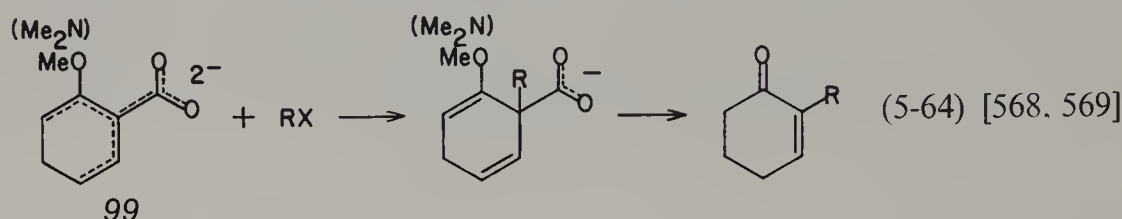
The above dianions 91 and 92 have 4 atoms in a π system bearing the negative charges. Reactions (5-57) to (5-63) of some of the analogous 6-atom systems 93–98 are given below. (5-59) illustrates kinetic *vs.* thermodynamic control in a reversible addition. (5-60) shows that β -diketones and β -ketoesters can be reacted with electrophiles at the γ -position *via* the dianion 96; this complements well the usual reactions of the monoanions at the α -position. 97 is the dianion (usually with Mg^{2+} as the counterion) of ethyl hydrogen malonate, which is superior to monoanion 88 from diethyl malonate for many “malonic ester” type syntheses because a hydrolysis step is avoided and a monoester is obtained upon decarboxylation.



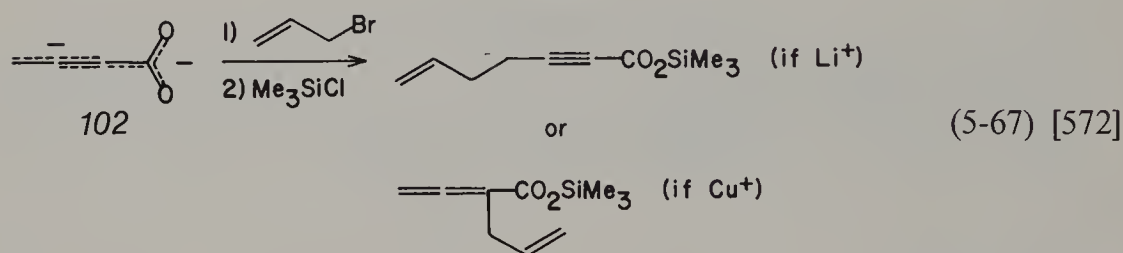
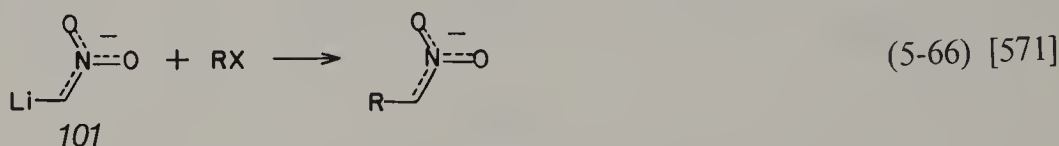
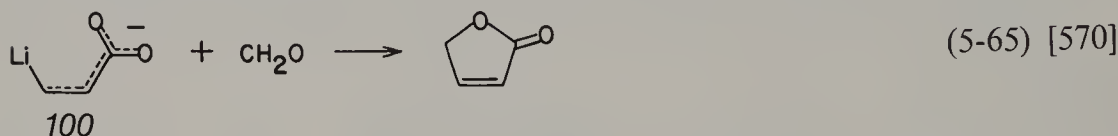
V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles



Dianions **99** with more extended π systems alkylate as shown (5-64); they have been used as synthetic equivalents of 2-metallated-2-cyclohexenone.



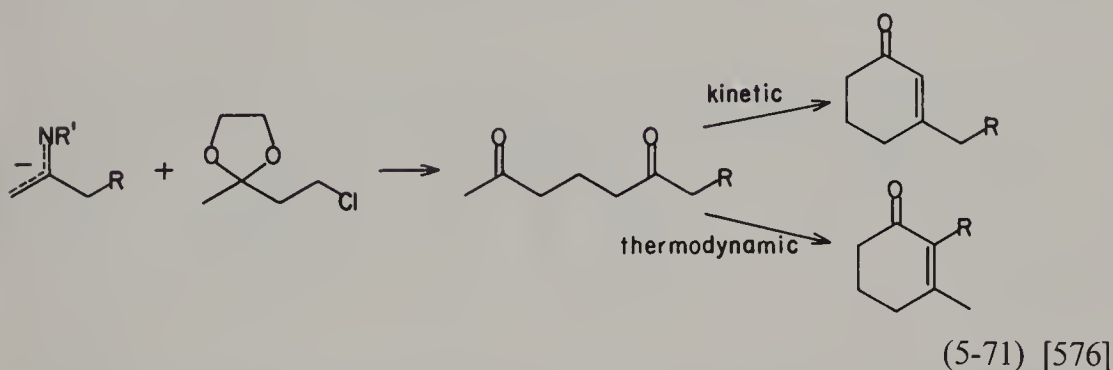
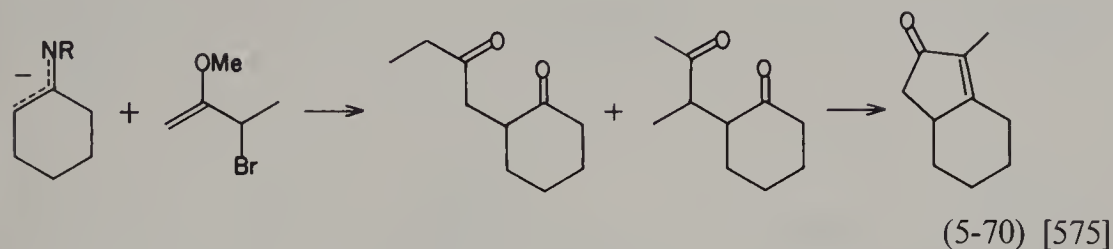
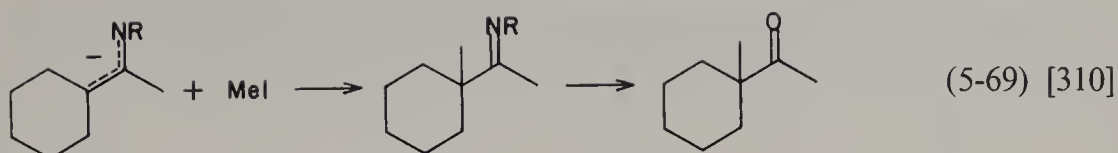
Dianions **100–102**, with the negative charges in separate systems, have found use in synthesis as shown in (5-65) to (5-67).



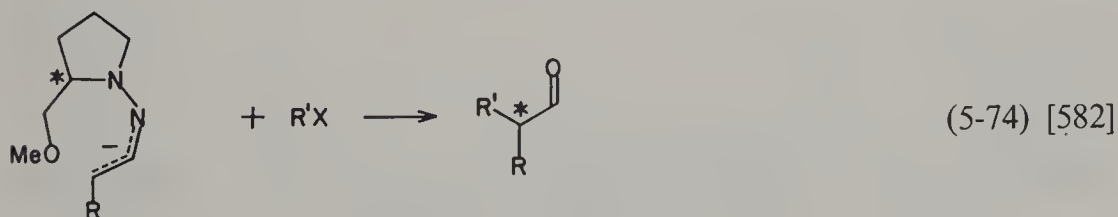
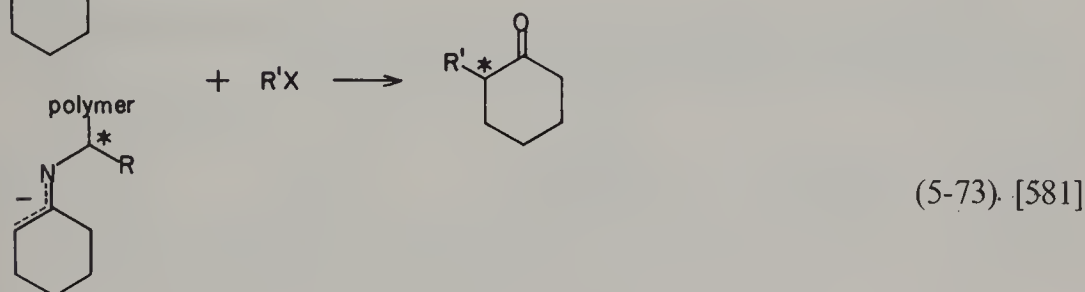
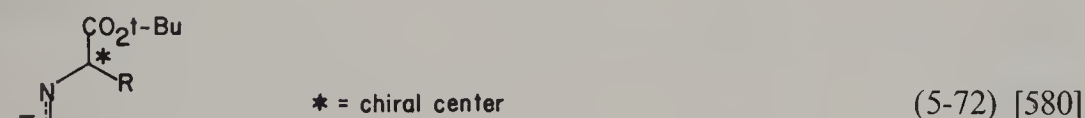
5. N-Stabilized Anions

Enaminate ions **103** alkylate readily on carbon as in (5-68) [310–312, 573–579]; some examples of this reaction are given in (5-69) to (5-71). These reactions are most often used when the corresponding enolate reaction is unsatisfactory.



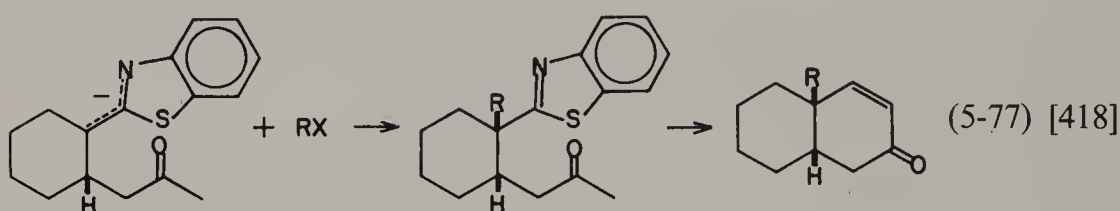
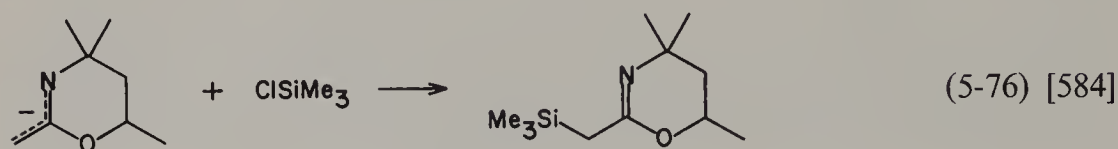
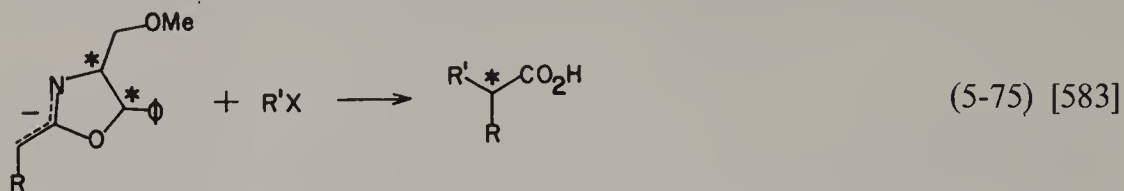


These anions have been used in many asymmetric syntheses of α -alkylated ketones, e.g. (5-72) to (5-74). Many of the groupings on nitrogen contain a heteroatom which can chelate with the metal atom.

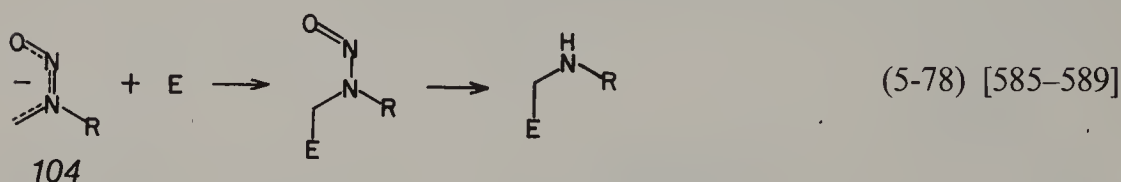


V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles

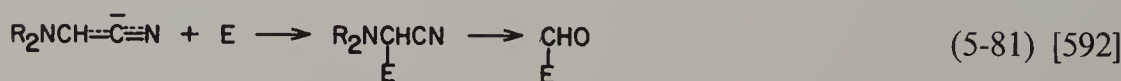
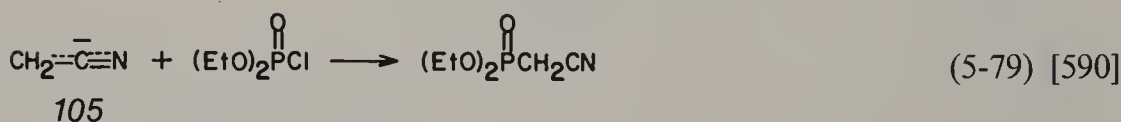
Anions from oxazolines, oxazines, and thiazoles have been used similarly to make carboxylic acids and derivatives, e.g. (5-75) to (5-77).



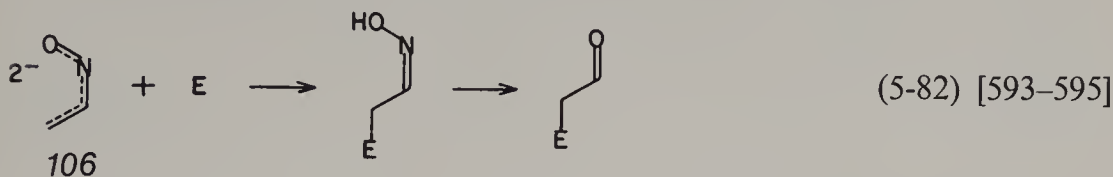
Anions *104* derived from N-nitrosoamines alkylate well on carbon and have been used as equivalents for α -metallated secondary amines (5-78).



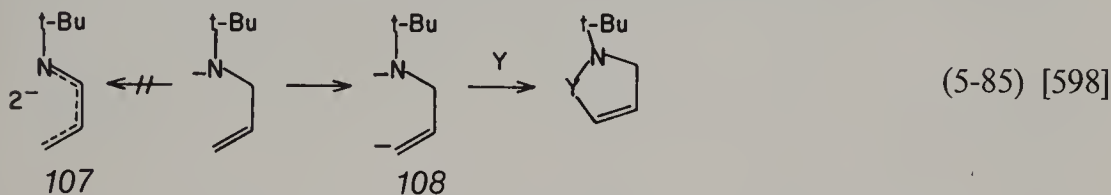
α -Metallated acetonitrile (*105*) and some of its derivatives have been used in syntheses as illustrated in (5-79) to (5-81).



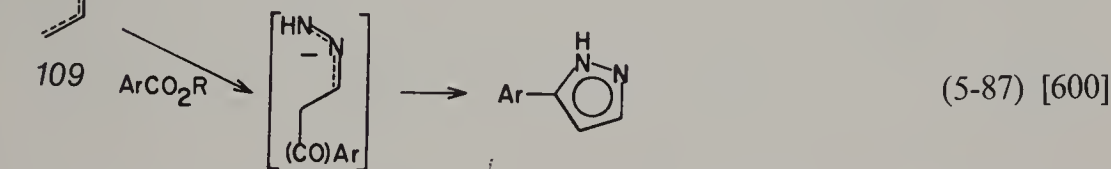
The *cis*-dianions **106** derived regiospecifically from *syn*- or *anti*-oximes react with electrophiles on carbon, e.g. (5-82) to (5-84).



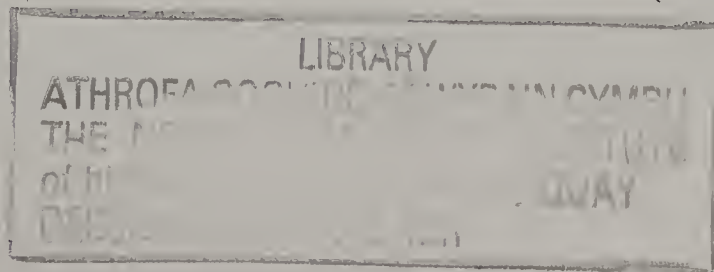
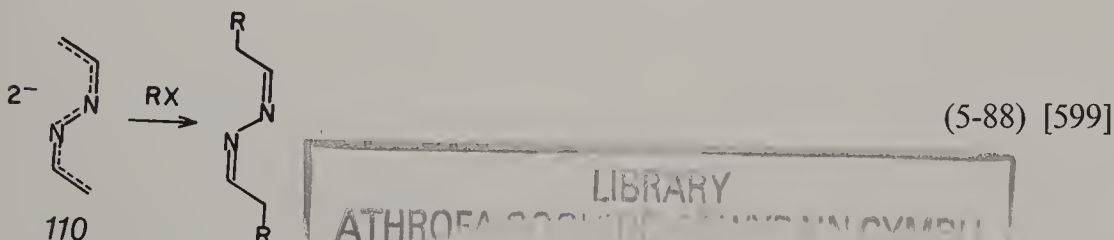
An attempted preparation of N-stabilized butadienedianion analog **107** gave instead dianion **108**, stabilized by chelation, as indicated in (5-85).



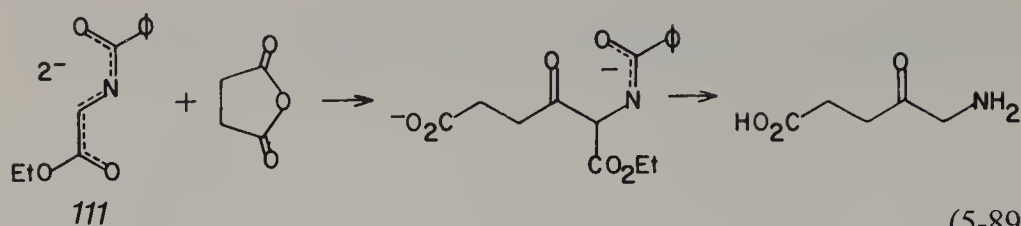
On the other hand, dianions of type **109**, stabilized by two nitrogens, were easily prepared and reacted smoothly with electrophiles at the end carbon atom (5-86 and 5-87).



Nitrogen-stabilized hexatrienedianion analogs **110** and **111** react with electrophiles on carbon as shown in (5-88) and (5-89).

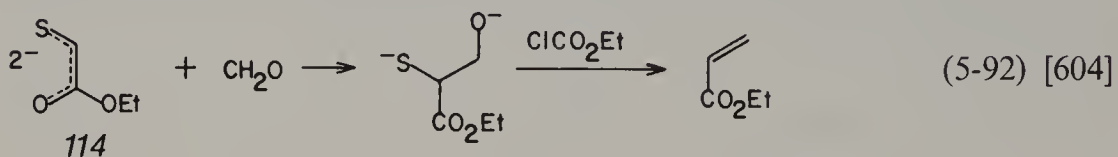
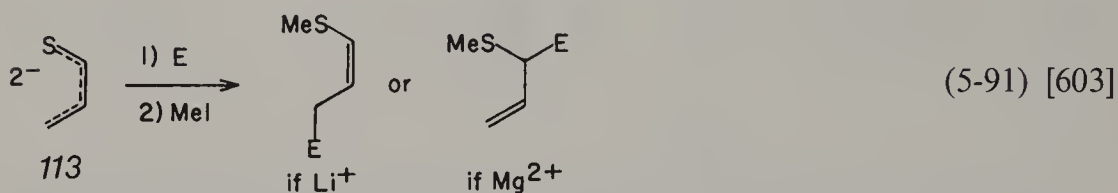
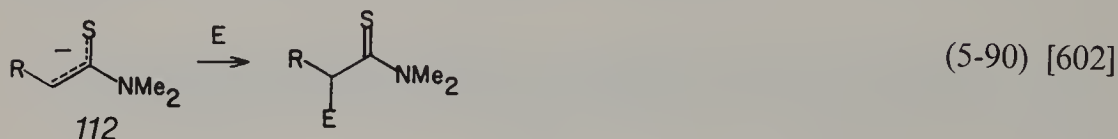


V. Reactions of π Carbanions with Electrophiles



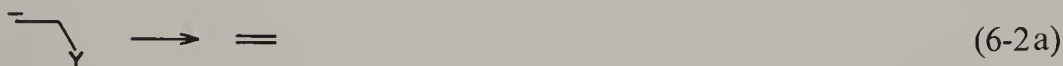
6. S-Stabilized Anions

Some analogous S-containing carbanions 112–115 react with electrophiles on carbon as shown in (5-90) to (5-93).



VI. Eliminations

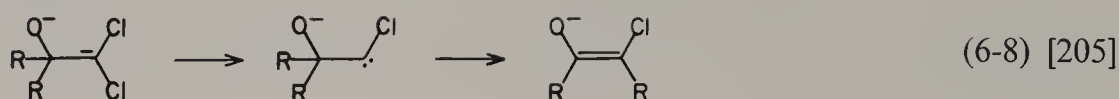
Eliminations of various leaving groups Y from carbanions are useful routes to carbenes (from α -elimination, (6-1)), alkenes and alkynes (from β -elimination, (6-2a) and (6-2b)) cyclopropanes (from γ -elimination, (6-3)), and vinyl anions (from the Shapiro reaction, (6-4)). Many of these reactions proceed rapidly at room temperature but are slow at dry ice temperatures, thus permitting carbanions containing good leaving groups to be used in substitution and addition reactions at low temperatures [205, 207]. Leaving groups can be halide, RO^- , R_2N^- , or even R^- , H^- , and O^{2-} . Cycloeliminations of carbanions (6-5) are also known.



1. α -Eliminations

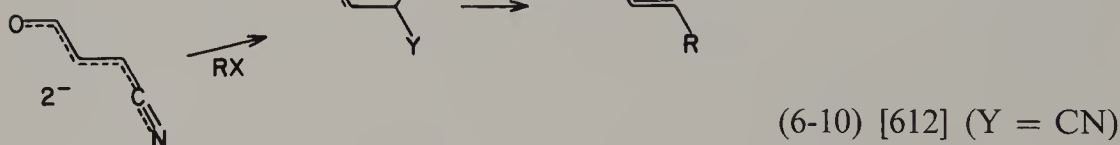
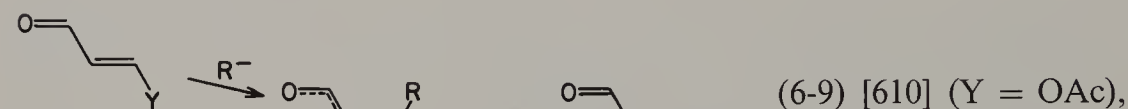
Examples are (6-6), from the Reimer-Tiemann reaction, and (6-7), which can be avoided at low temperatures. Reaction (6-8) may also go by α -elimination as shown.

VI. Eliminations

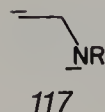
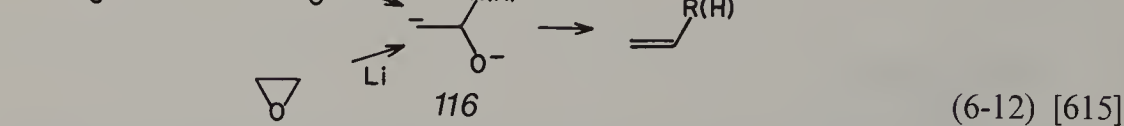
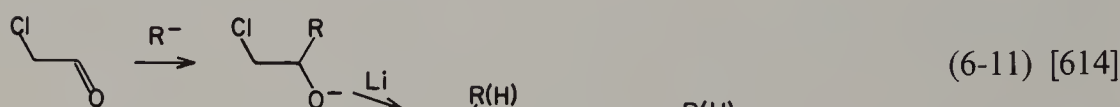


2. β -Eliminations

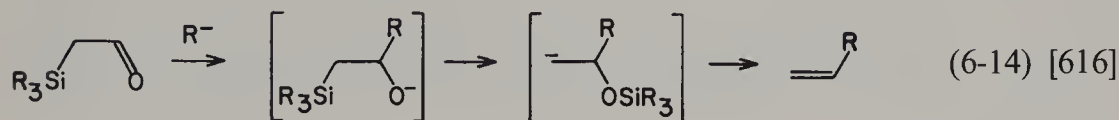
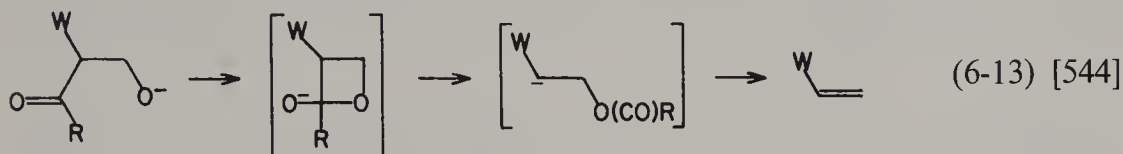
Reaction (6-2a) is a key step in the formation of alkenes by the E1cB mechanism [608, 609]; e.g., the base-catalyzed aldol condensation (5-25) often involves as a last step the elimination of a β -OH from an enolate ion to give an α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compound (70). This is also a key step in several sequences in which the enolate ion is generated in different ways, e.g., by addition as in (6-9) and by alkylation of a dianion as in (6-10). The former sequence can be carried out with retention of configuration at the double bond [610]. The latter sequence takes advantage of the rare combination of good leaving group ability and α -carbanion stabilizing ability possessed by the CN grouping.



RO^- [183] and R_2N^- [210] are known as leaving groups in reactions of type (6-2a). When it is desired to avoid elimination but these groups leave too rapidly, dianions *116* and *117* have been used successfully [613]. It should be noted that when *lithium* is used as the counterion, *116* will eliminate Li_2O at 25 °C; this has been profitably used in the conversions of α -haloketones (6-11) and epoxides (6-12) into alkenes.



A type of reaction which probably involves β -elimination of RCO_2^- is (5-46), which presumably proceeds as shown in (6-13) ($\text{W} = \text{CO}_2\text{R}$). The very useful olefin-forming eliminations of R_3SiO^- [520], e.g. (6-14), probably also involve β -elimination, possibly in some cases as depicted.



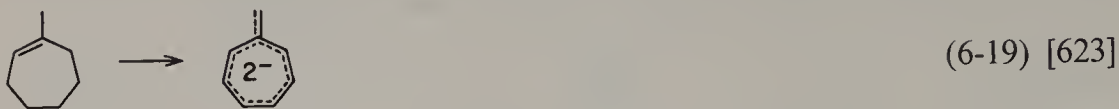
The last step in a nucleophilic aromatic substitution by the addition-elimination mechanism (6-15) can be considered as a β -elimination of Y^- ; the commonest leaving groups are halides. Groupings in the *o*- and *p*-positions of 118 which stabilize the intermediate cyclohexadienyl anion 119 are required for the reaction to proceed well.



Many carbanions have been observed to lose β -hydride, either by simply ejecting metal hydride (6-16) or by transferring hydride to an acceptor such as a trialkylborane [618, 619] or ketone (6-17). Cyclohexadienyllithium, which gives the highly stable substance benzene when hydride is lost, eliminates rapidly at 0 °C, but ethyllithium decomposes to lithium hydride and ethylene at 100 °C and ethylpotassium gives potassium hydride and ethylene with a half-life of 1 day at 25 °C [125]. The reduction of ketones (6-17) by Grignard reagents [620] and alkyllithiums [621], which can be an annoying side reaction during addition, especially with Grignard reagents, apparently involves hydride transfer from a simple alkyl carbanion. Reactions (6-18) and (6-19), which occur when the hydrocarbons are metallated, probably have as key steps the ejection of hydride from an intermediate di- or possibly trianion.



VI. Eliminations



Ejection of a β -alkyl group from a carbanion is not usually as facile as hydride elimination, but in the case of cyclohexadienyl anions in which there is no good alternative (6-20) it is observed on heating; as expected, the more stable carbanion (methyl) is ejected in the example shown. *n*-Butylpotassium gives some ethylene and ethylpotassium on standing at 25 °C [125].

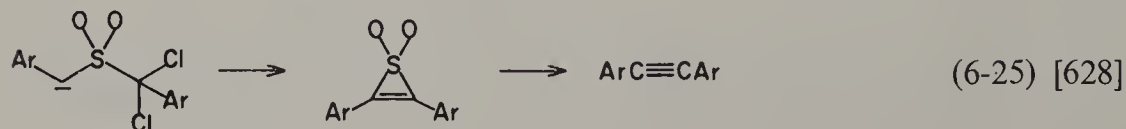


The elimination of HX from vinyl halides with strong base has long been a good way to prepare alkynes; (6-2b) may be a key step in many of these reactions. Other leaving groups, e.g., ArSO_2^- , can be used as well (6-21) [423]. An intriguing alkyne synthesis of unknown mechanism in which three hydrides are eliminated is (6-22) [625].



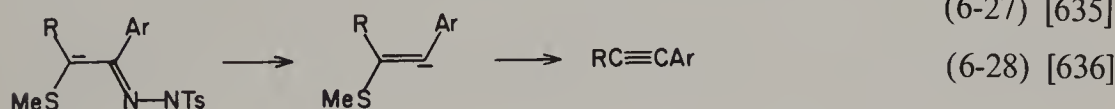
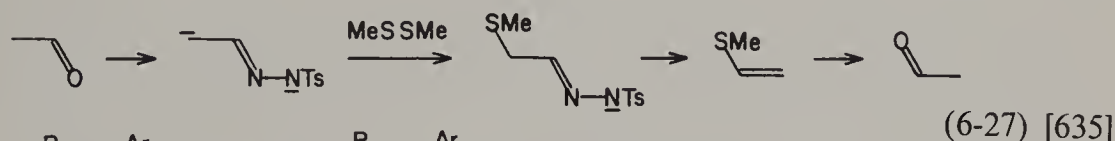
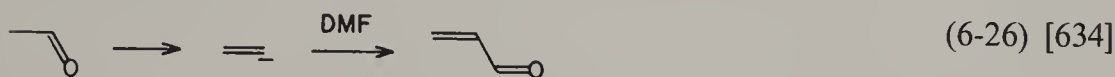
3. γ -Eliminations

Reactions (6-23) to (6-25) show the use of (6-3) to make 3-membered rings; the latter two are termed Ramberg-Bäcklund reactions.



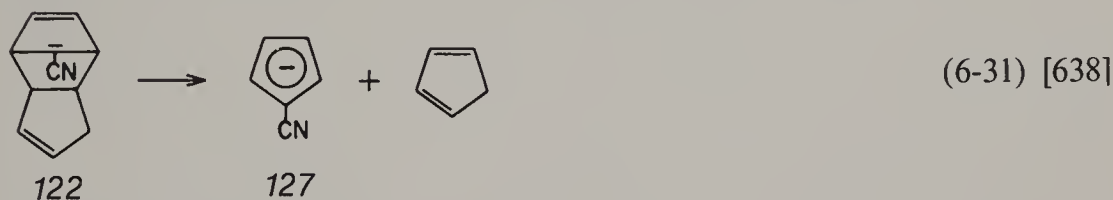
4. δ -Eliminations

The most useful type of reaction which is formally in this category is the Shapiro reaction (6-4) [629]. The vinyl anion can be reacted usefully with a variety of electrophiles [630–634], e.g., as in (6-26). This reaction has been used for carbonyl transposition as in (6-27) and for the synthesis of aryl-acetylenes (6-28).



5. Cycloeliminations

Cyclopentyl type anions 120–124 (unlike the corresponding cyclohexyl anions) undergo rapid ring-openings to allyl type anions 125–129 and ethylene or ethylene analogs (6-29) to (6-33).



VI. Eliminations

π -cyclopentenyl anion *130* undergoes a different type of reverse [4+2] cycloaddition to give the same products observed from isomeric anion *122* (6-34).

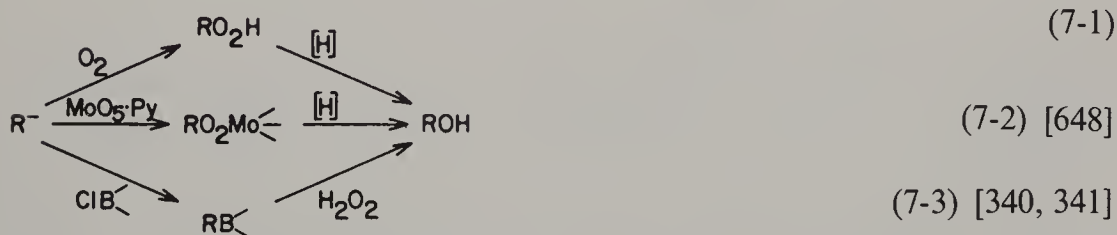


VII. Oxidations

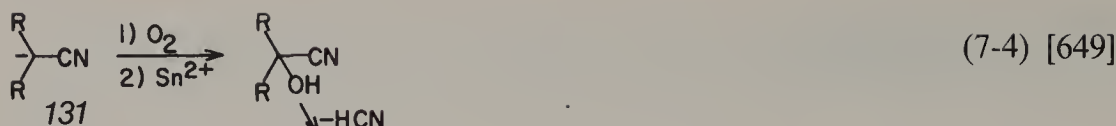
One-electron oxidation of monocarbanions leads to carbon radicals and two-electron oxidation gives carbonium ions [641]. In most of the oxidations below, the mechanism is not known (e.g., do oxidative coupling products arise from radical dimerization, combination of a cation with an anion, or nucleophilic displacement involving R^- and $RY?$), though progress is being made on some of the mechanisms [642, 643]. Again, the parallelism between base strength and ease of oxidation of carbanions should be noted [346].

1. Oxidations to Hydroperoxides, Alcohols, and Ketones

The reaction of O_2 with carbanions followed by quenching with protons (7-1) can give hydroperoxides in good yield in favorable cases [644, 645]. As some hydroperoxides are potentially explosive, they are usually reacted further without isolation; e.g., if the alcohol is desired, they can be reduced with a reagent such as sodium sulfite [646] or a trialkyl phosphite [647]. Alcohols can also be prepared *via* hydroperoxy molybdenum complexes (7-2) and alkylboranes (7-3). Oxygen can catalyze rotations about carbon-carbon bonds in allyl anions through reversible one-electron transfer [71].

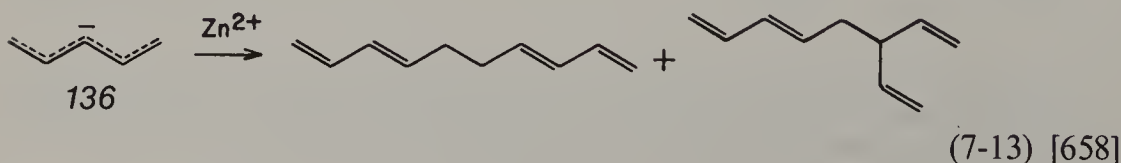
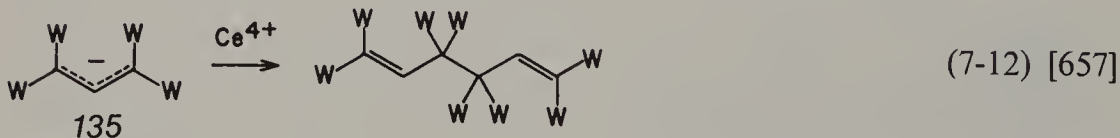


Ketones can be prepared from special carbanion types 131–133 by elimination reactions which follow the oxygenation (7-4 to 7-6).



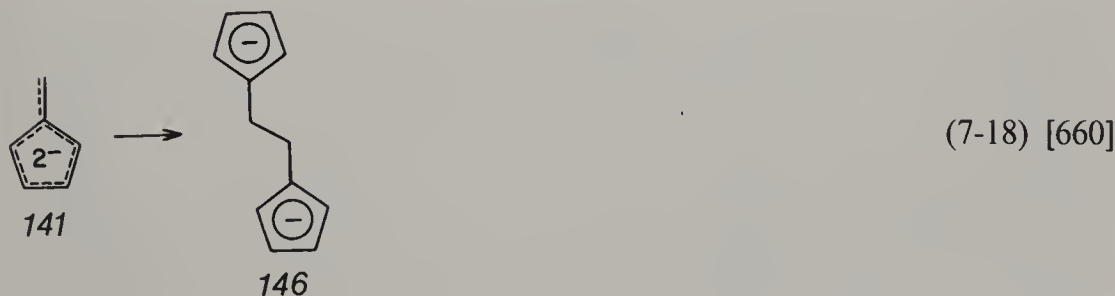
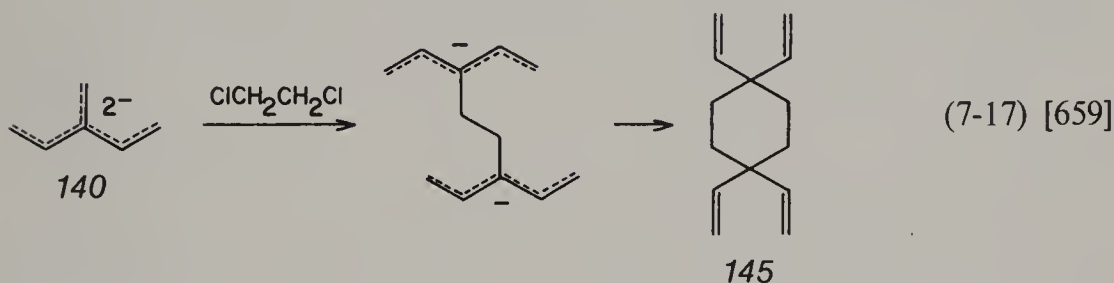
2. Oxidative Couplings

The simple coupling reaction (7-7) works well only in certain cases. One of the most useful is the Eglinton reaction (7-8), which consists of the oxidation of acetylenic anions with ferric ion and goes very well indeed. Resonance-stabilized carbanions 134–136, often containing carbanion-stabilizing groups W, have been oxidatively coupled with a variety of oxidizing agents to give products such as 1,2-dinitro compounds (7-9), 1,4-diketones (7-10), 1,4-diimines (7-11), and 1,5-dienes (7-12 and 7-13). Useful mixed couplings have been reported [655].

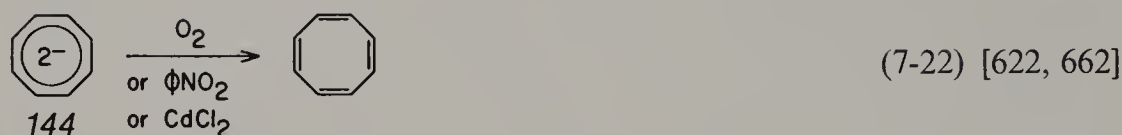
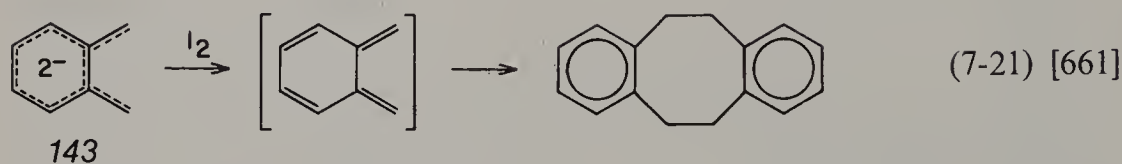
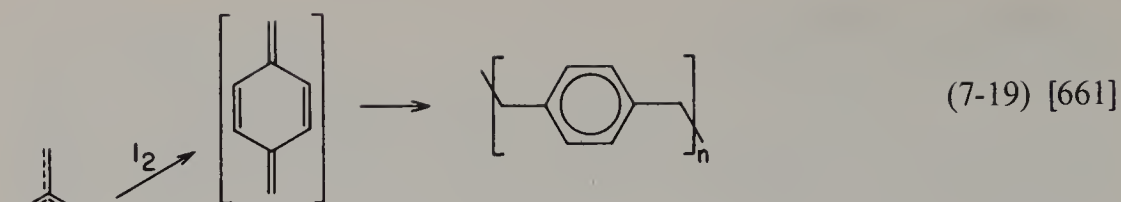


3. Dianion Oxidations

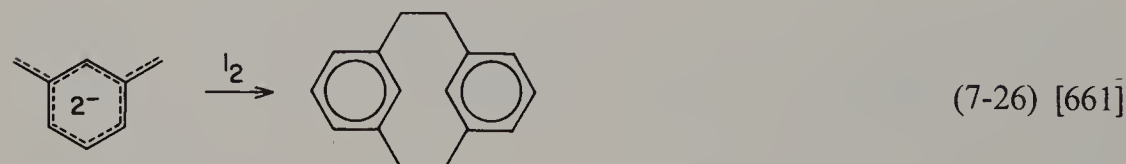
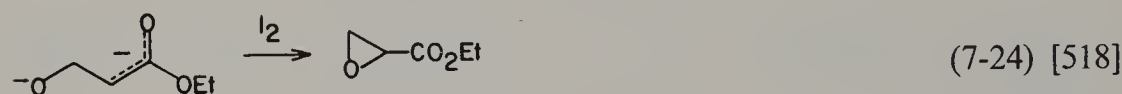
Oxidation of dianions 137–144 leads to the products shown in (7-14) to (7-22); all are two-electron oxidation products except for 145–147, which presumably arise by dimerization of the anion radical formed by one-electron oxidation of dianions 140–142. The first two oxidations (7-14 and 7-15) are very important in biological systems. All of these 2-electron oxidations can represent the second step in a general dehydrogenation process in which the first step consists of abstracting two protons, and the second, two electrons [661–666].



VII. Oxidations



When the product of two-electron oxidation would be a diradical, the isolated products can usually be thought of as arising from intra- or inter-molecular coupling of this diradical (7-23 to 7-27).

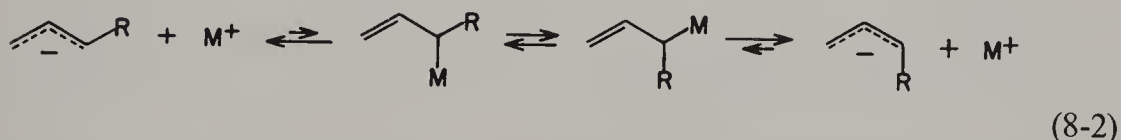


VIII. Rearrangements

The various types of simple intramolecular rearrangements described in Sections 2 to 5 below are often combined in complex sequences, some examples of which are given in Section 6.

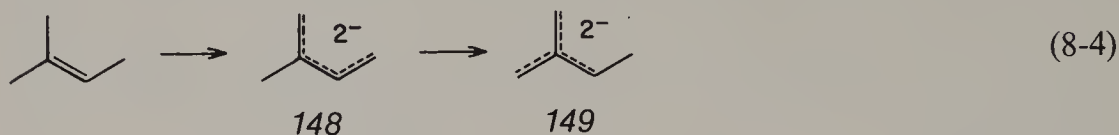
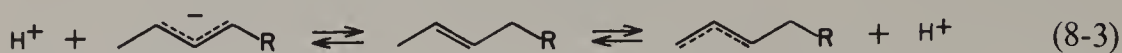
1. Intermolecular Rearrangements

The equilibrium (8-1) in which the counterion M^+ becomes more and less tightly associated with the carbanion R^- can account for stereochemical changes in the carbon species present: (a) σ carbanions, in which the tight structure $R-M$ is favored, can have the configurations at their carbons inverted *via* the loose form R^- ; this is most easily detected by racemization in a case where the charge-bearing sp^3 hybridized carbon is the only chiral center (Chapter II, section 1, part b); (b) π carbanions, in which the loose form is favored, can undergo rotations about partial double bonds which essentially become single bonds in the tight form (8-2); if $R = \text{vinyl}$, this could represent a change from W- to U-shaped pentadienyl anion. Rotations can of course occur about partial double bonds in the delocalized carbanion itself, independent of M^+ , but this seems less likely than the above. π anions have been geometrically isomerized photochemically as well as thermally [669].

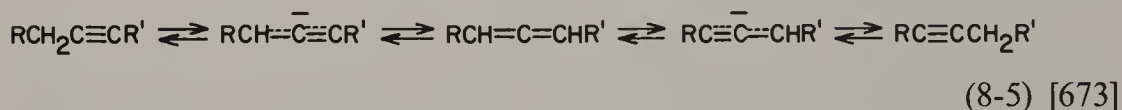


More drastic rearrangement of a π carbanion can occur through the equilibrium (8-1) if $M = H$; the proton can come off a different allylic carbon, causing a shift of the allyl anion system down the chain in addition to any stereochemical changes (8-3). This sequence is a vital part of base-catalyzed alkene isomerizations, which are generally run under conditions where the alkenes are much more stable than the allyl anions, and the *alkenes* are thus equilibrated rather than the allyl anions [487, 670, 671]. Sometimes, however, the *anions* themselves are equilibrated, as when the kinetic dimetallation

product *148* is converted to the thermodynamically more stable isomer *149* on standing at 25 °C (8-4) [672]; for other examples, see [282, 283].

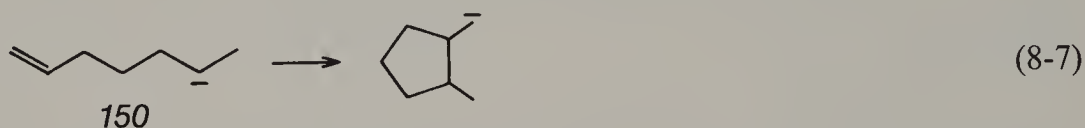


Acetylenes and allenes can similarly be equilibrated efficiently by base (8-5). Again, the bases used are usually not sufficiently strong to provide high concentrations of the anions, *unless* R or R' = H, in which case the final step consists of abstraction of the terminal acetylenic proton to give the acetylenic anion, e.g., (8-6).



2. Intramolecular Additions

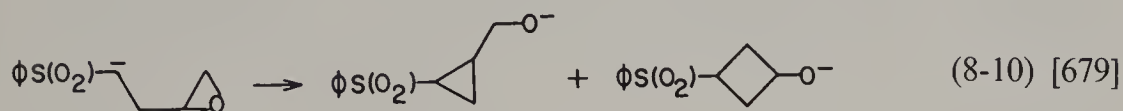
5-Membered rings are kinetically favored over 6; e.g., reaction (8-7) is faster than (8-8) by a factor of 2800 [675]. The preference for an anion of the type 150 to form a 5- rather than a 6-membered ring is borne out in other systems [73, 676, 677].



The most important intramolecular additions are probably ring-forming aldol condensations, e.g. (8-9). These are usually equilibrium-controlled reactions in which only 5- and 6-membered rings are observed.

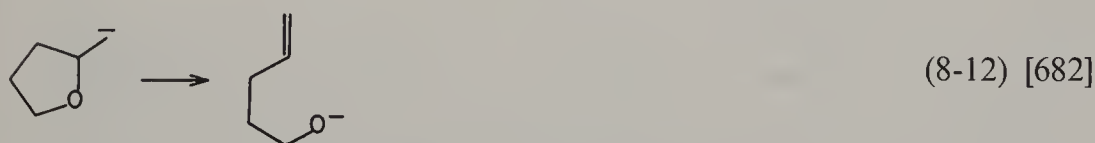


Reaction (8-10) shows the formation of cyclopropane and cyclobutane rings by intramolecular additions; in this case the energy to make such thermodynamically unfavored ring sizes is provided by the opening of an epoxide and the shift of charge from carbon to oxygen. Li^+ at room temperature favored the former product and Mg^{2+} at -70°C the latter.



3. Intramolecular Eliminations

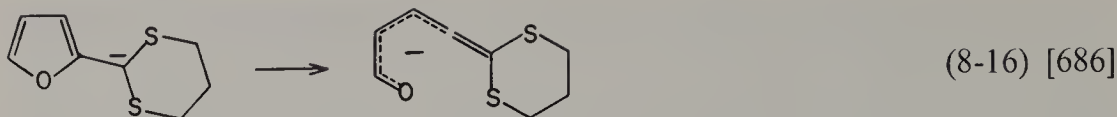
These reactions are simply the reverse of the reactions in Section 2 [680]. The driving force is often relief of ring strain (8-11), or leaving group stabilization as in (8-12) and reverse aldols (8-9), or both.



Vinyl (8-13) and heteroaromatic (8-14 and 8-15) anions can also undergo ring opening, even though an aromatic ring is destroyed in the process in the latter cases. Benzylic-type anions (8-16 and 8-17) also undergo cleavage of the aromatic ring [688].



VIII. Rearrangements

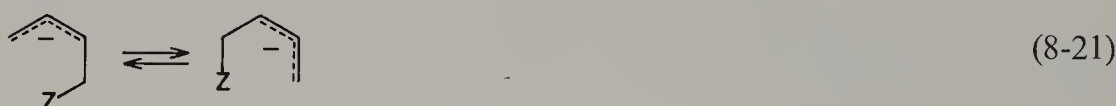


4. Sigmatropic Carbanion Rearrangements

In sharp contrast to carbonium ions, carbanions undergo [1,2]sigmatropic shifts very rarely if ever, in accordance with the Woodward-Hoffmann rules [689]. 1,2-Aryl shifts occur, but by addition-elimination rather than concertedly (see Section 6). Stevens (8-18, 8-19) and Wittig (8-20) rearrangements involve 1,2-alkyl shifts but probably proceed by diradical mechanisms [692, 695].



Suprafacial [1,4]proton shifts in allyl anions (8-21) are permitted thermally but have not been observed due to the thermal instability of allyl anions.



On the other hand, some thermal antarafacial [1,6]sigmatropic proton shifts in pentadienyl anions (8-22) occur just above room temperature [696, 697] *via* a coiled transition state (151). Steric hindrance (R 's = alkyl in 151) slows the rearrangement; each $R = \text{Me}$ up to two (the maximum tried) increases the activation energy by several Kcal/mole. The photochemical suprafacial counterpart of this reaction was found in (8-23) [696].

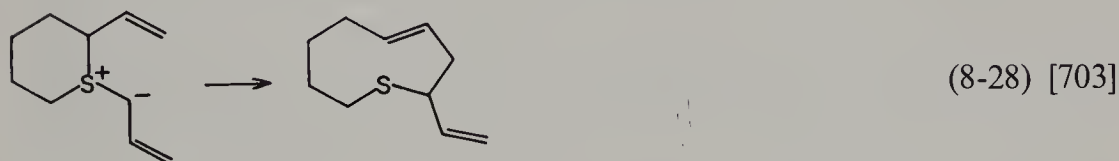
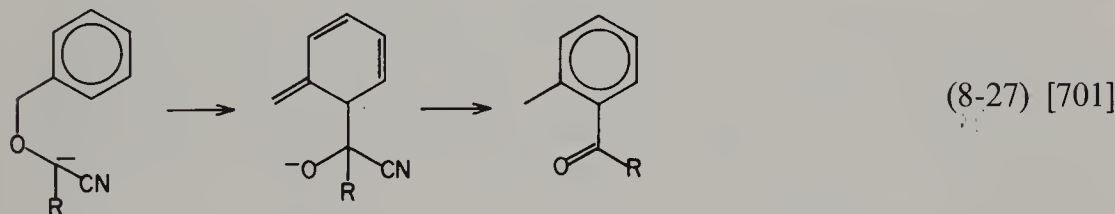
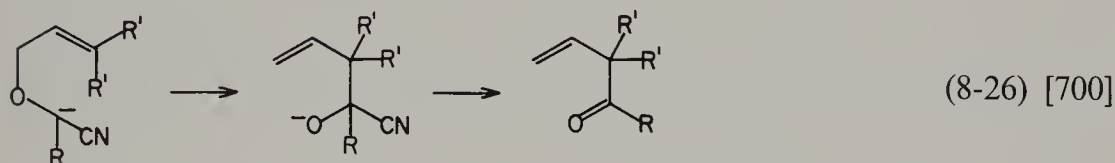
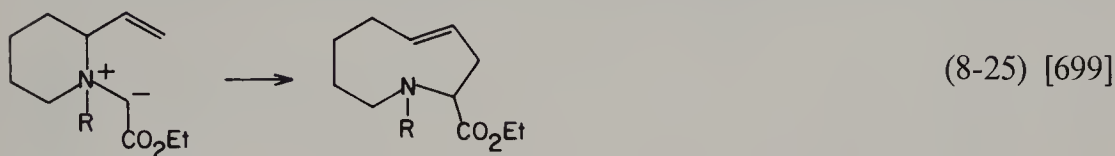


151

4. Sigmatropic Carbanion Rearrangements

Efforts to observe thermal [1,8]sigmatropic proton shifts in heptatrienyl anions failed.

Many [2,3]sigmatropic rearrangements of heteroatom-containing carbanions are known [698–703]. The usual driving force for these reactions is the transfer of charge from carbon to a heteroatom, which can be N (8-24, 8-25), O (8-26, 8-27), or S (8-28). (8-26) is a β,γ -unsaturated ketone preparation, and (8-27) provides a means of getting only *ortho* substitution in the acylation of an alkylbenzene.



A [3,3]sigmatropic rearrangement (8-29) in which a thioenolate anion rearranges has been observed [704]; the driving force is presumably the transferring of partial negative charge from carbon to the much more electro-negative sulfur.

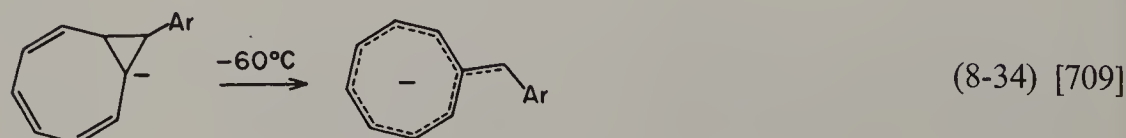


5. Electrocyclic Carbanion Rearrangements

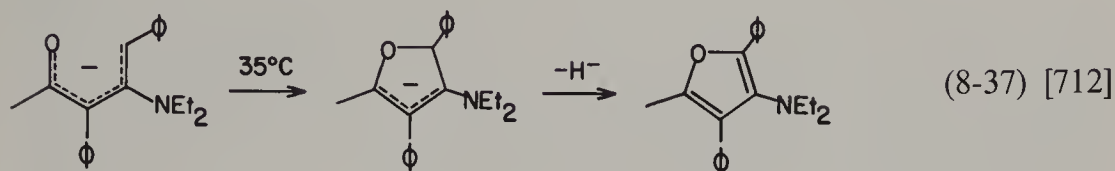
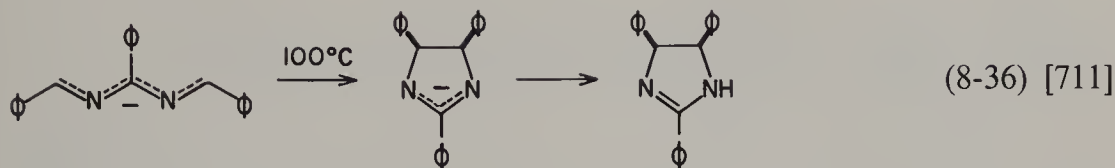
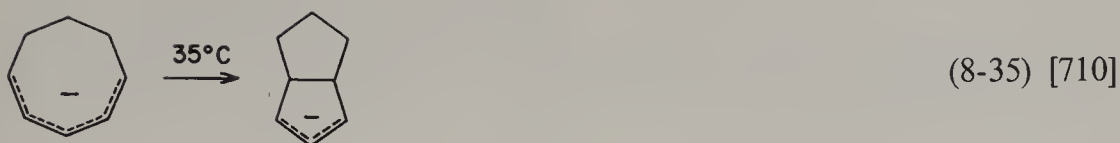
In the all-carbon unsubstituted systems, the thermal equilibria in the cyclopropyl \rightleftharpoons allyl (8-30), cyclopentenyl \rightleftharpoons pentadienyl (8-31), and cycloheptadienyl \rightleftharpoons heptatrienyl (8-32) anion rearrangements probably lie in the directions shown; this has only been actually demonstrated in the last case, where the energy barrier is especially low and the reaction proceeds rapidly just above $-30\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ [314, 705, 706]. The last two examples require the open system to be coiled rather than extended as shown, but the rotation barriers about the inner carbon-carbon bonds in pentadienyl [79] and heptatrienyl [314] anions are known to be low enough that this is no problem. In the first two cases, the open anions have not been observed to close; cyclopropyl anion can be prepared and reacted without opening [55, 56], whereas cyclopentenyl anion has resisted preparation.



These reactions have all been observed in systems containing substituents (8-33 to 8-35) and heteroatoms (8-36 to 8-39) which can change the position of equilibrium [707]. The cyclopropyl anions in (8-33) and (8-34) were not observed at $25\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ but opened rapidly to the allyl anions. Putting a pentadienyl system in an 8-membered ring as in (8-35) strains it considerably (none of the shapes with the π system planar is unstrained) with the result that it closes to the cyclopentenyl system at $35\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ with a half life of 90 minutes. The positions of the electrocyclic equilibria in (8-36) and (8-37) are not known since under the reaction conditions the closed anions go on to the further products depicted. Reactions (8-38) and (8-39) are useful for preparing the dienolate and trienolate anions with the shapes shown; the charges are largely on oxygen in the products, driving the equilibria in the direction shown and causing high rotation barriers about the C2-C3 bonds which prevent equilibration with the fully extended shapes.



6. Complex Intramolecular Rearrangements

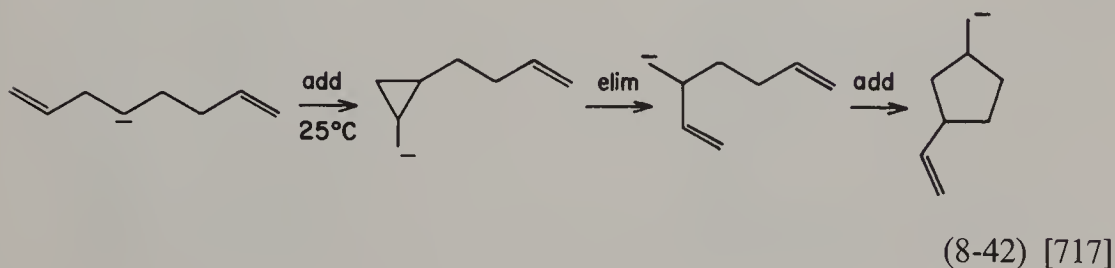
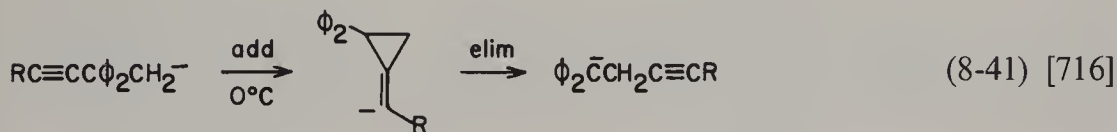


A dianion electrocyclization is apparently involved in (8-40).

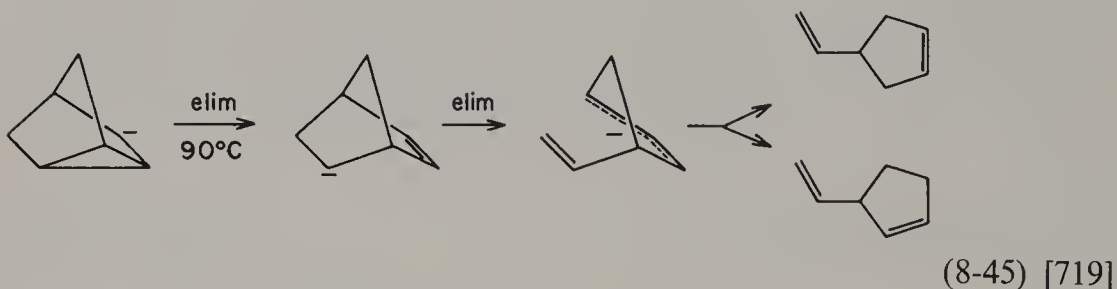
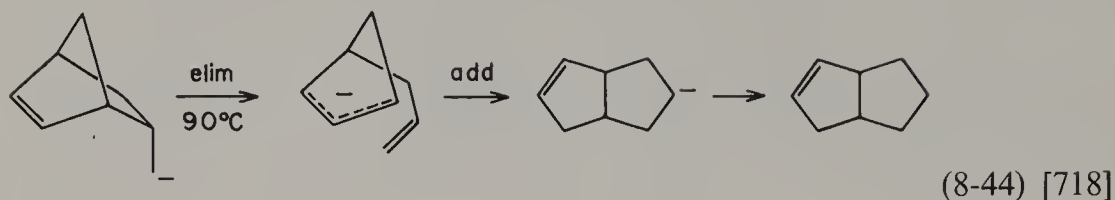
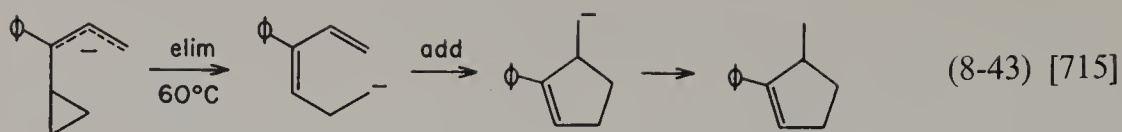


6. Complex Intramolecular Rearrangements

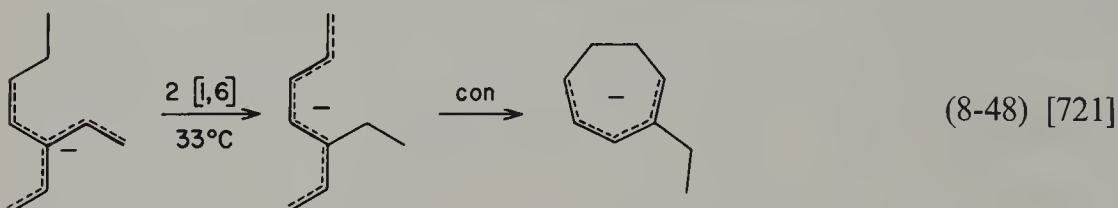
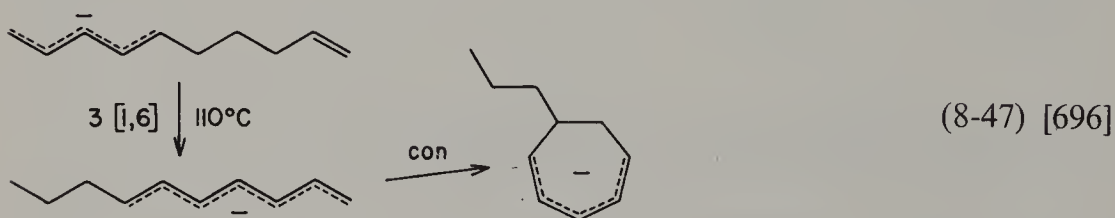
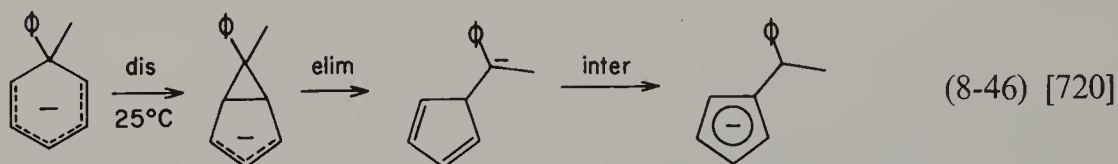
Some sequences combining additions and eliminations are shown in (8-41) to (8-45).



VIII. Rearrangements



Combinations including electrocyclic and/or sigmatropic rearrangements as well as other types are shown in (8-46) to (8-48).



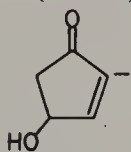
IX. Carbanion Equivalents

When a carbanion is inherently unstable or reacts in the wrong way, it may well prove possible to use a several step route involving a "carbanion equivalent" to accomplish the desired synthetic goal. Acyl anions, for example, lose CO at 25 °C, but hundreds of acyl anion equivalents have been devised which serve the same purpose. The carbanion equivalents with reference numbers below 722 are mentioned in the text and can be located in the text from the reference number.

C ₁	NH ₂ CH ₂ ⁻	178, 571, 722
	RNHCH ₂ ⁻	585–589
	Φ ₃ P ⁺ CH ₂ ⁻	191, 216, 443–449, 723, 724
	ROCH ₂ ⁻	192
	XCH ₂ ⁻	725, 726
	H(C=O) ⁻	193, 194, 206, 727–732
	HO(C=O) ⁻	207, 728, 733
C ₂	RCH ₂ ⁻	351, 734
	HOCH ₂ CH ₂ ⁻	613
	H(C=O)CH ₂ ⁻	141, 454, 542, 727, 735
	NCCH ₂ ⁻	543
	HO(C=O)CH ₂ ⁻	552–557, 565, 566
	HO(C=O)CHNH ₂	736
	HOCHR	182
	R(C=O) ⁻	183, 199, 202, 210, 343, 352, 455, 571, 592, 727, 728, 737–749
C ₃	HOCH ₂ CH ₂ CH ₂ ⁻	750
	H(C=O)CH ₂ CH ₂ ⁻	751–753
	HO(C=O)CH ₂ CH ₂ ⁻	754, 755
	RNHCH ₂ CH ₂ ⁻	613
	CH ₂ =CHCH ₂ ⁻	756, 757
	R(C=O)CH ₂ ⁻	418, 542, 576, 758
	CH ₂ =CHCHOH	759, 760
	RCH=CH ⁻	761, 762
	HOCH ₂ CH=CH ⁻	763
	H(C=O)CH=CH ⁻	764, 765
	CH ₂ =C̄COOH	354, 766–770

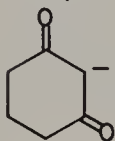
IX. Carbanion Equivalents

C ₄	$R(C=O)CH_2CH_2^-$	771
	$R(C=O)CH=CH^-$	771, 772
	$CH_2=CH\bar{C}=CH_2$	773
	$R(C=O)\bar{C}=CH_2$	774
	$H(C=O)CH_2CH_2(C=O)^-$	775
C ₅	$CH_2=CH(C=O)CH_2CH_2^-$	550
	$HOCH_2RC=CHCH_2^-$	757
	$^-CH_2(C=O)CH=CHCH_2^-$	776
	$CH_2=C(CH_2^-)CH=CH_2$	773
	$H(C=O)CH_2CH_2(C=O)CH_2^-$	777
	$H(C=O)CH_2CH_2CH=CH^-$	778

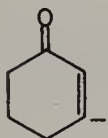


779

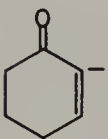
C ₆	$H(C=O)CH_2CH_2CH_2(C=O)^-$	775
	$R(C=O)CH_2CH_2(C=O)^-$	780
	$HO(C=O)CH_2CH_2CH_2CH_2CH_2^-$	781, 782
	$HO(C=O)CH_2CH_2CH_2(C=O)CH_2^-$	781, 782



783



784



540, 568, 569, 785

X. Summary

Carbanions owe their importance as intermediates in synthesis to the great variety of bond-forming reactions which they undergo which lead to bonds from carbon to every element except the noble gases. Unlike many carbonium ions, most carbanions do not undergo rearrangements but in many cases react in substitution and addition reactions in high yield. Changing the cation and solvent can greatly affect the reaction, even without employing transition metals which add a further dimension to their reactivity.

Much further work on the structures of carbanion salts and on the mechanisms of their reactions is necessary before their utility in synthesis can be fully exploited.

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Subject Index

- Acenaphthene dianion dilithium 8
- Acetaldehyde acidity of 21
- Acetamide acidity of 17
- Acetic acid acidity of 21
- Acetic anhydride carbanion acetylation with 25
- Acetoacetic ester syntheses 22, 48, 49
- Acetone acidity of 17, 21
addition of carbanions to 40
cyanoethylation of 35
- Acetonitriles acidity of 17, 20, 21
from metallated acetonitriles 54
metallated reactions with electrophiles 54
metallation of 23, 54, 61, 62
- Acetophenone acidity of 17
- Acetylacetonate lithium 11
- Acetylacetone acidity of 17
- Acetylenes *see* Alkynes
- Acetylenic anions from isomerizations
of alkynes and allenes 68
from terminal alkynes 19
reactions of 38, 39, 64
structure of 7
- Acid chlorides reactions with Cd, Cu, Mn, and Rh reagents 32, 33
reactions with dianions 50, 51
reactions with enolates 45
- Acidities comparison between solution and gas phase, 20, 21
gas phase 20, 21
in DMSO 17–20
kinetic 20
of CH protons 17–21
range of 21
thermodynamic 17–20
- Acrylic acids from Wittig-type reactions 37
- Acrylonitrile anionic polymerization of 34
nucleophilic additions to 35
- Acyl carbanions equivalents of 75
from carbanions and CO 30, 38
instability of 38
- Acyl cyanides reaction with enolates 45
- Acyl groups carbanion-stabilizing ability of, 18
- Additions of carbanions 34–39
acetylenic 38, 39
aryl 38
to aldehydes 30, 36, 37, 50–52, 56, 58, 59
to alkenes 26, 30, 34, 35, 37, 48, 51, 52, 58, 68, 73, 74
to alkynes 30, 32, 35, 48, 73
to arenes 59
to benzynes 47
to carbon dioxide 30, 38
to carbon disulfide 30, 38, 50, 51
to carbon monoxide 30, 38
to carboxylates 38
to cycloheptatriene 26, 34
to cyclooctatetraene 34
to 1,3-dienes 34
to esters 30, 38
to imines 30, 35, 36, 40, 47
to iminium salts 30, 36, 47
to ketones 30, 36, 37, 39, 40, 56
to nitriles 30, 36
to pyridinium salts 47
vinyl 38
- 1,2-Additions vs. 1,4-additions to α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds 34, 35, 38
- Aggregation of organometallics 3, 20, 43
- Alcohols as solvents for carbanions 22
from carbanions 29, 30, 32, 36–38, 46, 47, 56, 63
solution and gas phase acidities of 20

- Aldehydes additions of carbanions to 28, 30, 36, 37, 45-47, 49, 51, 52, 56, 58, 59
 conversion to tosylhydrazones 61
 from carbanions and DMF 32, 33
 from carbanions and formates 32, 33
 from carbanions *via* dithioacetals 30, 31, 38
 from hydrolysis of α -aminonitriles 54
 from hydrolysis of imines 52
 from hydrolysis of vinyl sulfides 61
 from α -silylepoxydes 37
 α -halo-, from α -halosulfoxides 37
 β -hydroxy-, dehydration of 45-47
 from aldol condensations 45-47
 in transaminations 42
 reaction with amines 47
 α,β -unsaturated from aldol condensations 45-47
 from vinyl anions 61
 Aldol condensations base-catalyzed 22, 44-47, 53, 54, 58, 68
 reverse 69
 stereochemistry of 46, 47
 Alkali metals *see also* individual metals
 metallation of acidic hydrocarbons with 23
 reduction of 1,3-dienes with 25
 Alkanes acidity of 19, 21
 as solvents for carbanions 22
 preparation of symmetrical 64
 preparation of unsymmetrical 29, 30
 Alkenes acidity of 19
 by elimination of alkoxides 69
 by elimination of carboxylates 49, 59
 by elimination of oxide ion 58
 by elimination of SO_2 66
 by elimination of trimethylsiloxide 59
 by Wittig reactions 37
 conversion to carbanions through mercuriation 27
 from allyl alcohols 31
 from allyl anions and electrophiles 40-42, 67
 from carbanions by hydride transfer 36
 from cyclopentyl anions 61
 from dithiocarbamates 31
 from enolates 45
 from Horner-Emmons reactions 37
 from Peterson reactions 37
 from pyrolysis of amines oxides 40
 from pyrolysis of α -keto- γ -lactones 49
 from pyrolysis of β -lactones 50
 from pyrolysis of selenoxides and sulfoxides 31
 from vinyl carbanions and electrophiles 35, 38
 metallation of 19, 24, 41, 60, 67
 positional isomerization of 41, 42, 67
 Alkoxides *see also* Potassium *t*-butoxide
 as bases for carbanion preparation 22, 36, 37, 58, 68, 69
 as leaving groups in eliminations from carbanions 57, 58
 as protecting groups for hydroxyls 58
 from Wittig rearrangements 70
 reaction with trimethylsilyl chloride 45
 α -Alkyl groups stabilizing and destabilizing effects on carbanions of 18, 21
 Alkyl halides metallations of 18, 19
 reactions with: carbanions 29-31, 50-56, 65, 66
 copper-lithium reagents 29
 iron carbonyl complexes 33
 reactivity as a function of halogen 14, 15
 Alkyl isothiocyanates reactions with carbanions 50
 Alkyl phenyl sulfides reactions with lithium 15
 Alkylboranes from carbanions 29
 rearrangements of 29
 Alkylolithiums *see also* Organolithiums and individual alkylolithiums
 activation by alkoxides 24
 activation by THF 24
 activation by TMEDA 24
 as bases for carbanion preparation 21, 23
 cleavage of solvents by 24
 determination of concentration of 25

- reactions with: aldehydes 36
 - alkenes 34
 - alkyl halides 29
 - amides 32
 - carboxylic acids 32
 - cuprous halides 29
 - D₂O 29
 - epoxides 31
 - vinyl halides 32
- relative metallation rates with, 20
- Alkylpotassiums non-activation by TMEDA 24
- Alkylsodiums activation by TMEDA 24
 - reactions with alkyl halides 29
- Alkylthio groups, carbanion-stabilizing ability of 18
- Alkynes additions to 30, 35, 48
 - as intermediates between vinyl halides and alkenes 32, 48
 - from alkenes 60
 - from allenyl halides 30, 31
 - from dianions 50, 52
 - from other alkynes 23, 38, 39, 64, 68, 73
 - from sulfones 60
 - from vinyl anions 57, 60, 61, 69
 - from vinyl halides 60
 - isomerization of 23, 68
 - structures of 10
 - terminal metallation of 19, 21, 23
- Allenes acidity of 10
 - from dianions 52
- Allenyl ethers from propargyl acetals 30, 31
- Allenyl halides conversion to alkynes 30, 31
- Allyl alcohols γ -alkylation of 30, 31
- Allyl anions additions to aldehydes and ketones of 28, 40, 42, 46, 47
 - additions to alkenes of 74
 - additions to imines of 40
 - eliminations of alkyl anions from 73, 74
 - eliminations of hydride ions from 73
 - equilibration of 67
 - failure to undergo sigmatropic [1,4]-proton shifts of 70
 - geometry of 1-alkyl substituents in 9
 - oxidative couplings of 64
 - position of attack by electrophiles in unsymmetrical 40–42
 - preparations of 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 34, 41, 42, 57, 67, 72–74
 - rotations in 9, 10, 63, 67
 - structures of 8–10, 14, 15
 - thermal instability of 70
 - 3-vinyl- sigmatropic rearrangement of 74
 - with quaternary ammonium counterions 28
- Allyl halides in Reformatsky reactions 15
 - reactions with carbanions 30, 31, 52, 53
- Allyl phenyl ethers reactions with lithium 15
- Allyltrimethylsilane as a precursor for allyl anion 28
- Amide ions as leaving groups in eliminations from carbanions 57, 58
 - as protecting groups for amines 58
 - as strong bases 23
 - from carbanions and imines 47
 - reactions with electrophiles 55
- Amides additions of carbanions to α,β -unsaturated 35
 - metallation of 18, 19
 - reactions with carbanions of 32, 33, 38
- Amidines as bases 23
 - from carbanions 73
- Amines by additions of carbanions to imines 30, 35, 36, 40
 - by additions of carbanions to iminium salts 35, 36
 - from N-nitrosamines 54
 - in Mannich reactions 47
 - in promoting reactions of Grignard reagents with alkyl halides 31
 - metallation of 18–20
 - primary from reductions of nitro compounds 35
 - in transaminations 42
 - tertiary from carbanions 30, 33
 - from sigmatropic rearrangements 71
 - from Stevens rearrangements 70
 - vinyl, from Wittig-type reactions 37
 - metallations of 19
- Ammonia acidity of 17, 21
 - as a solvent for carbanions 23

- Amylsodium 15
- Anhydrides reactions with carbanions 32, 45, 56
- Anion radicals as intermediates in $S_{RN}1$ reactions 44
 - cleavages to anions and radicals 26, 29, 44
 - dimerizations of 65, 66
 - from oxidations of dicarbanions 65, 66
 - from reductions of aldehydes and ketones 36
 - from reductions of sigma bonds 26
 - from reductions of unsaturated compounds 25, 36
- Anthracene dianion preparations of 8, 25
 - structure of 8
- Antiaromaticity of benzene dianion 25
 - of cyclooctatetraene 25
- Aromaticity in stabilizing carbanions 18, 25
- Aromatics metallation of 19, 20
 - ortho acylation of 71
- Aryl carbanions preparations of 13, 16, 24, 27, 47
 - reactions of 36, 38, 47
 - structures of 7
- Aryl groups carbanion-stabilizing ability of 18
- Aryl halides in $S_{RN}1$ reactions 44
 - reactions with: enolates 44
 - metals 14
 - nucleophiles 59
 - organometallics 32, 38
 - transition metal compounds 44
- Asymmetric syntheses aldol type 46, 47
 - of α -alkylated acids 54
 - of α -alkylated aldehydes and ketones 53, 54
- Azines from dimetallated azines 55
- Aziridines preparation of 47
- Azobisisobutyronitrile 28
- Barbier reactions 14, 36
- Barium reaction with alkyl halides 15
- Bases hindered tertiary amine 23
- Base-solvent systems 21-25
- Benzene acidity of 21
 - from hydride elimination 59
- Benzene dianion, antiaromaticity of 25
- Benzoic acid acidity of 17, 21
- Benzonitrile from ring opening of metallated isoxazoles 61
- Benzophenone dianion dilithium 11
- 2-O-Benzothiazole as a leaving group 31
 - on an allyl anion 40
- Benzyl anions preparations of 15, 21, 22, 24, 26, 27, 66, 71-73
 - rearrangements of 71-73
 - structures of 8, 14
- Benzyne intermediates 32, 47
- Bicyclo[1.1.0]butan-1-yl lithium 3, 6
- Biphenyls from carbanions 73
- Bis(diphenylphosphino)methane acidity of 17
- Bis(phenylthio)methane acidity of 17
- Bond lengths 5
- Bond orders 10, 11
- Bond strengths carbon-metal 3, 4, 6-8, 11
- Bonds 2-center 3-8
 - 3-center-2-electron 3-5, 7
 - 4-center-2-electron 3-7
 - metal-metal 5, 6
 - pi 4, 7-12
 - sigma 3-8
- Boranes alkyl 29, 38, 41, 59, 63
 - dialkoxyfluoro 29
 - trialkoxo 29
- Borate trimethyl reaction with carbanions 41
- Bordwell's rule 31, 63
- Bridging alkyl groups 3, 5, 7
- Bridging halogens 5
- N-Bromosuccinimide reactions with carbanions 30, 33, 38
- Butadiene anionic polymerization and telomerization of 34
 - from oxidation of butadiene dianion 65
 - reduction to butadiene dianion 25
- Butadiene dianions from electrocyclizations 73
 - hetero analogs of 55, 56
 - hydride eliminations from 73
 - isomerization of 68
 - oxidation to butadienes of 65
 - preparation by dimetallations 68
 - preparation from butadienes 25

- structure of 9
- 2-vinyl- oxidative coupling of 65
- t*-Butanol acidity of 17, 20, 21
 - as a solvent for carbanion formation 22
- 2-Butenes, metallation of 41
- 1-Buten-2-olate lithium 3,3-dimethyl-10
- t*-Butoxides as bases for carbanion preparations 21, 22, 24
- t*-Butyl bromide reactions with carbanions 31
- t*-Butyl ether 14
- n*-Butyllithium activation by potassium
 - t*-butoxide 24, 42
 - activation by THF 24
 - activation by TMEDA 24
 - as base for carbanion preparations 16, 18, 20, 23, 24
 - in transmetallations 28
 - structure of 5, 6
- sec*-Butyllithium as a superior metalating agent 20, 27
- t*-Butyllithium 5, 16
- n*-Butylpotassium eliminations from 60
- Cadmium chloride oxidation of carbanions with 66
- Calcium reaction with alkyl halides 15
- Carbanion equivalents 75, 76
- Carbanions conversions to: alcohols 29–32, 36–42, 47, 54, 63, 64, 68–70
 - aldehydes 32, 33, 52–55, 61
 - alkanes 29, 30, 64
 - alkenes 30, 31, 35, 36, 45, 50, 57–61, 66
 - alkylboranes 29, 30, 63
 - alkynes 30, 35, 50, 52, 57, 60, 61, 64, 69, 73
 - allenes 30, 31, 52
 - amidines 73
 - amines 30, 33, 35, 47, 54–56, 70, 71
 - α -aminoketones 56
 - β -aminoketones 47
 - arenes 59, 60, 73
 - azines 55
 - aziridines 47
 - carbenes 57, 58
 - carbon radicals 63
 - carbonium ions 63
 - carboxylic acids 30, 38, 49–51, 54
 - cyclobutanes 69
 - cycloheptanes 74
 - cyclooctatetraenes 34, 66
 - cyclopentanes 73, 74
 - cyclophanes 66
 - cyclopropanes 48, 57, 60, 66, 69
 - 1,3-dienes 65
 - 1,5-dienes 64
 - 1,2-diketones 65
 - 1,3-diketones 45, 51
 - 1,4-diketones 53, 64
 - 1,5-diketones 53
 - dithioacetals 30, 38
 - epoxides 47, 66
 - esters 33, 44, 51, 52
 - furans 73
 - halides 30, 33
 - hydrazones 55
 - hydroperoxides 63, 64
 - β -hydroxyacids 50
 - β -hydroxyaldehydes 45–47
 - β -hydroxyketones 45–48
 - imines 52, 53, 64
 - indoles 44
 - isocyanides 69
 - isoxazoles 55
 - isoxazolines 55
 - β -ketoacids 50
 - β -ketoesters 45, 49, 51
 - ketones 29, 30, 32, 33, 36, 38, 39, 47, 49, 53, 64
 - β -lactones 50
 - γ -lactones 52
 - mercaptans 31, 33
 - nitriles 30, 33, 54, 61, 69
 - nitro compounds 30, 33, 35, 52, 64
 - nitroates 52
 - α -nitroketones 49
 - N-nitroso compounds 54
 - oxazines 54
 - oxazolines 54
 - oximes 55
 - phosphines 30, 33
 - phosphonates 54
 - pyrazoles 55
 - pyridines 47
 - quinones 65
 - silanes 30, 33
 - sulfides 30, 33, 56, 61, 70, 71

- sulfones 30, 33
- thiazoles 54
- thioamides 56
- thioesters 51, 56
- α -thiopyridones 49
- α,β -unsaturated acids 51
- α,β -unsaturated aldehydes 45-47, 58, 61
- α,β -unsaturated esters 45, 46, 48, 49, 56
- β,γ -unsaturated esters 48
- α,β -unsaturated ketones 45-48, 52-54, 60
- β,γ -unsaturated ketones 48, 51, 71
- vinyl siloxanes 48
- vinyl sulfides 56, 70
- xylenes 66
- ease of oxidation of 31, 63
- from alkanes by proton abstraction 17-25
- from alkyl halides and metals 13-15
- from alkyl halides and organometallics 15, 16
- from organometallics and metal salts 27, 28
- from organometallics and metals 27
- from organometallics by rearrangement 67-74
- from unsaturated compounds and metals 25, 26
- from unsaturated compounds and organometallics 26
- halide-free 27
- importance of 1, 77
- preparations of 13-28, 67-74
- reactions with: acid chlorides 45, 50, 51
- acids 29, 30
- acyl cyanides 45
- acyl halides 45
- acylating agents 30, 32, 45
- alkyl halides 29, 30, 43, 50-56, 58, 60, 66
- alkyl nitrates 30, 33
- allyl halides 30, 31, 52, 53
- amides 32, 33, 38, 61
- anhydrides 45, 56
- aryl halides 32, 38, 44
- boranes 29, 30, 38, 41
- cadmium ion 66
- carbenes 40
- carbon dioxide 29, 38, 55
- carbon disulfide 29, 38
- carbon monoxide 30, 38
- carbon tetrahalides 30, 33
- carbonates 33
- carboxylic acids 32, 38
- ceric ion 64
- chloroboranes 63
- chlorophosphines 30, 33
- cupric ion 64, 66
- cuprous halides 29, 64
- cuprous thiophenoxide 34
- N,N-dialkyl-O-arenesulfonylhydroxylamines 30, 33
- 1,2-dibromoethane 65, 66
- 1,2-dichloroethane 65
- disulfides 30, 33, 61
- electrophiles 29-56
- epoxides 30, 31, 51, 54
- esters 30, 32, 38, 39, 45, 49, 55
- ferric ion 64, 66
- ferrous ion 40
- halogens 30, 33, 64, 66
- N-halosuccinimides 30, 33, 38, 39
- hexahaloethanes 30, 33
- imines 30, 35, 36
- iminium salts 30, 36
- iron pentacarbonyl 33
- isothiocyanates 50
- ketones 59
- methylene halides 30, 33
- molybdenum peroxide 63
- nitrobenzene 66
- oxygen 30, 33, 63, 64, 66
- phenyl arenesulfonates 30, 33
- phosphoryl halides 45, 54
- propargyl halides 30, 31
- pyridines 36
- silyl halides 30, 33, 43, 54
- singlet oxygen 64
- sulfenyl chlorides 30, 33
- sulfonyl chlorides 30, 33
- sulfur 30, 33
- thiocyanates 30, 33
- tosyl cyanide 30, 33
- vinyl halides 30, 32
- zinc ion 64
- structures of 3-12
- Carbanion-stabilizing abilities additive effects of 18, 19

- increase with increasing character 19
 of various groups 17–21, 60
 Carbenes 1,4-additions to 1,3-dienes of 40
 chloro- reactions with cyclopentadienyl anion 40
 from 1,1-eliminations of carbanions 40, 57, 58
 Carbon dioxide from α -hydroperoxyacids 64
 reactions with carbanions 30, 38, 55
 Carbon disulfide reactions with carbanions 30, 38, 50, 51
 Carbon monoxide reactions with carbanions 30, 38
 Carbon tetrahalides reactions with carbanions 30, 33
 Carbonates dialkyl reactions with carbanions 33
 Carbonium ions from carbanion oxidations 63
 Carbonyl compounds α,β -unsaturated *see also* Aldehydes α,β -unsaturated *etc.* from aldol condensations 22, 44–47, 53, 54, 58
 nucleophilic additions to 34, 35, 38
 Carbonyl transposition 61
 Carboxylates as leaving groups 45, 46, 49, 58, 59
 Carboxylic acids dimetallation of 50
 from acetic acid dianion 50, 51
 from carbanions and CO_2 30, 38
 from enamine-type anions 54
 from malonic ester syntheses 49
 from 1,1,1-triiodides 31
 α -hydroperoxy- from carboxylic acid dianions 64
 β -hydroxy- conversion to β -lactones 50
 from acetic acid dianion 50
 β -keto- from acetic acid dianion 50
 metallations of 20
 reactions with carbanions 30, 38
 α,β -unsaturated from dianions 51
 β,γ -unsaturated from dianions 51
 Cephalotaxine from an enolate 44
 Ceric ion oxidation of carbanions by 64
 Charge delocalization 8
 Chelation in carbanion stabilization 18, 19, 43, 55
 Chichibabin reactions 26
 N-Chlorosuccinimide reaction with carbanions 30, 33, 39
 CIDNP 14, 16
 Claisen condensations 45
 $(\text{CLi}_4)_n$, 10
 $(\text{C}_2\text{Li}_2)_n$, 10
 $(\text{C}_2\text{Li}_4)_n$, 10
 $(\text{C}_3\text{Li}_4)_n$, 10
 Concentration of carbanions measurement of 25
 Configurational stability 7, 41, 67, 72, 73
 Copper catalyst 32
 Copper complexes 31
 Copper-lithium reagents *see* lithium dialkylcuprates
 Counterion effects *see also* lithium dialkylcuprates
 in additions of enolates to aldehydes and ketones 46
 in alkylations of dianions 52, 56
 in alkylations of dienolates 48
 in dissociations of ion pairs 67
 in eliminations of oxide ion from carbanions 58
 in reactions of enolates at C vs. O 43
 in ring openings of epoxides 69
 in stabilizing carbanions 20–22, 41
 Covalent radii of carbon and metals 4
 Crotyl anions equilibrium composition of 41
 position of attack by electrophiles in 24
 preparation of 24, 41
 preservation of configuration in 24
 Crown ethers 8, 43
 Cryptands 11, 43
 Cuprates *see* lithium dialkylcuprates
 Cupric ion, oxidative coupling of anions, with 64, 66
 Cuprous ion effect on alkylation of dianions 52
 in promoting 1,4-additions of carbanions to α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds 34, 38
 in promoting α -alkylation of prenyl Grignard reagents 41
 in promoting γ -alkylation of dienolates 41

- in promoting Grignard reactions with alkyl halides and allenyl ethers 31
- in promoting nucleophilic additions to terminal alkynes 35
- oxidative coupling of enamines with 64
- reaction with alkyllithiums 29, 34
- Cyanide ion 7
- Cyano group carbanion-stabilizing ability of 18, 20, 71
- Cyanoacetic ester syntheses 22
- Cyanoethylation 35
- Cyanohydrins conversion to ketones 64, 71
 - from α -metallated nitriles 64, 71
- Cyclobutanols synthesis of 47, 69
- 1,3-Cycloheptadiene metallation of 42
 - preparation of 42
- 1,4-Cycloheptadiene metallation of 42
 - preparation of 42
- Cycloheptadienyl anions preparation of 42, 72, 74
 - protonation of 42
 - [1,6]sigmatropic proton shifts in 70
- Cycloheptatriene addition of carbanions to 26, 34
- Cycloheptatrienyl trianions preparation of 34
- Cycloheptene 1-methyl- metallation of 60
- Cyclohexadienyl anions electrocyclic ring closure of 74
 - eliminations from 34, 59, 60
 - from additions of nucleophiles to aromatics 34, 59
 - from additions of nucleophiles to 3-methylene-1,4-cyclohexadienes 34
 - structures of 9
- Cyclohexane 1,1,4,4-tetravinyl- from dianion alkylation 65
- Cyclohexanones acidity of 17
 - alkylation of enolates of 44
 - preparation of 43, 68
- 2-Cyclohexenones from aldol condensations 53, 54
 - 2-metallated equivalents of 48, 52
- Cyclohexyllithium structure of 3, 6
- 1,5-Cyclooctadiene metallation of 60
- Cyclooctadienyl anion ring closure of 72, 73
- Cyclooctatetraene dianions from 1,5-cyclooctadiene 60
 - from cyclooctatetraenes 25
 - oxidation to cyclooctatetraenes 34, 66
 - structures of 8
- Cyclooctatetraenes from cyclooctatetraene dianions 34, 66
 - reactions with carbanions 34
 - reduction with alkali metals 25
- Cyclopentadienes acidity of 17, 18, 20, 21
 - from ring openings 61, 62, 74
 - metallation of 23, 74
- Cyclopentadienyl anions aromaticity of 18
 - from oxidative couplings 65
 - from ring openings 61, 62, 74
 - reaction with chlorocarbene 40
 - structures of 8
- Cyclopentenolates structure of 10
- 2-Cyclopentenones from carbanions 44
- Cyclopentenyl anions ring openings of 62, 72-74
- Cyclopentyl anions ring openings of 61
- Cyclophanes from dianion oxidations 66
- Cyclopropanes acidity of 19
 - from carbanions 48, 57, 69, 73
 - metallation of 19
- Cyclopropyl anions reactions without opening 72
 - ring opening of 72
 - structures of 7, 8
- Darzens condensations 22, 46
- DBU as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- Dehydrogenation 65
- Delocalization of charge extra importance in gas phase acidities 20
- Desulfurizations 31, 54
- Deuterations *via* carbanions 22, 29
- Deuterium oxide reaction with carbanions 29
- Dialkyl copper-lithium reagents *see* lithium dialkylcuprates
- Dialkylchlorophosphines reactions with carbanions 30, 33
- Dialkylmagnesiums 6, 14

- N,N-Dialkyl-O-arenesulfonylhydroxylamines reactions with carbanions 30, 33
- Diammonium croconate 10
- Diarylmagnesiums 14
- 1,8-Diazabicyclo[5.4.0]-7-undecene as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- 1,2-Dibromoethane 14, 65, 66
- Dicarbanions addition reactions of 50–52
- eliminations from 57–61, 73
- enediolate 50
- insolubility of salts of 43
- oxidations of 64–66
- preparations of 12, 16, 18, 23–25, 27, 61, 65
- reactions with dihalides 51, 65
- rearrangements of 67–69, 73
- sites of reactions of electrophiles with 42, 43
- N-stabilized reactions of 55–57, 61
- O-stabilized reactions of 50–52, 55, 56
- S-stabilized reactions of 56
- structures of 8–11
- substitution reactions of 31, 49–52, 58
- use of indicators 25
- 1,2-Dichloroethane 65
- Dieckmann condensations 22, 23, 45
- 1,3-Dienes 1,4-addition of carbenes to 40
- from protonation of pentadienyl anions 41, 42
- isomerization of 42
- metallation of 24, 25
- nucleophilic additions to 34
- reduction by Mg 25
- 1,4-Dienes from protonation of pentadienyl anions 41, 42
- metallation of 24
- 1,5-Dienes from oxidative coupling of allyl anions 64
- Dienolate anions cross-conjugated reactions with electrophiles 48
- from ring openings 72, 73
- high rotation barriers in 72
- linear favored α -attack in 40, 41, 47
- linear favored γ -attack with CuX in 41, 48
- ring closings of 73
- Diethyl malonate acidity of 21
- in malonic ester syntheses 48, 49, 51
- Diethylmagnesium 6
- Diglyme 8, 22
- Dihalides reactions with dicarbanions 30, 33, 51, 65, 66
- Diisobutyl ketone additions of carbanions to 42
- Diisopropylamine conversion to LDA 23
- 1,3-Diketone enolates reactions with electrophiles 48, 49
- structures of 10, 11
- 1,2-Diketones from dianion oxidations 65
- 1,3-Diketones dimetallation of 51
- metallation of 23, 48, 49
- synthesis of 45, 49, 51
- 1,4-Diketones aldol condensations of 53
- from carbanions 53
- from oxidative additions 64
- 1,5-Diketones aldol condensations of 53
- from carbanions 53
- Dimers 5, 7, 9, 11, 43
- oxidative 64–66
- 1,2-Dimethoxyethane 11, 14, 43
- 2,6-Dimethoxyphenyllithium 7
- Dimethyl disulfide reactions with carbanions 61
- Dimethyl malonate acidity of 17, 21
- Dimethyl sulfate 14
- as a hard electrophile in reactions with enolates 43
- Dimethyl sulfide 17
- N,N-Dimethylacetamide acidity of 21
- Dimethylberyllium 6
- 2,3-Dimethylenebutadiene dianion reaction with *t*-butyl bromide 31
- N,N-Dimethylformamide 22, 25, 32, 43, 61
- Dimethylmagnesium 3, 6
- Dimethylsulfone acidity of 17, 21
- Dimethylsulfoxide 9, 17, 21–23, 42, 43
- acidity of 17, 21
- Dimsyl anion as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- 1,2-Dinitro compounds from oxidative couplings 64

- Dioxane 14
 Dioxolane 11
 Diphenylmethane acidity of 17, 21
 Diphenyl(methyl)silyl chloride as a soft electrophile 43
 Diradicals 66, 70
 Disulfides reactions with carbanions 30, 33, 61
 1,3-Dithiacyclohexane acidity of 17
 1,3-Dithiacyclohexane-1,1,3,3-tetroxide acidity of 17
 Dithioacetals acidity of 17
 anions from 34, 61, 70
 from carbanions and thioesters 30, 38
 hydrolysis to aldehydes and ketones 31
 DME 11, 14, 43
 DMF 22, 43
 formylations of anions with 25, 32, 61
 DMSO 9, 17, 21–23, 42, 43
 Donor atoms 5
- Eglinton reaction 64
 Electron affinities of radicals 20
 Electron density in controlling attack of electrophiles on allyl anions 40
 in organometallic bonds 3
 Eliminations from carbanions 57–62
 α - 57, 58
 β - 58–60
 cyclo- 37, 57, 61, 62
 δ - 61
 γ - 37, 46, 48, 60
 of alkoxides 57, 58
 of alkyl anions 34
 of amide ions 57, 58
 of carboxylates 45, 46, 49, 58, 59
 of cyanide ion 58
 of halide ions 57–60
 of hydride ions 34, 59, 60
 of hydroxide ion 45–47, 58
 of mercaptide ions 61
 of oxide ion 57, 58
 of sulfinates 35, 60, 61
 of trimethylsiloxide 45, 46, 59
 Enamines additions to aldehydes and ketones 45
 alkylations of 44, 52–54
 preparations of 26
 structures of 10
 Enamines alkylation of 44
 from ring openings of nitrogen ylides 61
 Enediolate anions oxidation to 1,2-diketones 65
 reactions with CS_2 50
 Enol phosphates preparation and reactions with lithium dialkylcuprates 45
 Enolates acylations of 44, 45
 additions of 22, 37, 45–47, 68
 aggregation into dimers and tetramers 10–12, 43
 aluminium 44
 arylation of 44
 as intermediates in aldol condensations 22, 68
 boron 46
 charge distribution in 10
 eliminations from 58
 from aldehydes 44
 from alkylations of dianions 58
 from esters 43–46
 from isobutyrophenone structure of 11
 from β -ketoesters reactions with electrophiles 49
 from malonic esters reactions with electrophiles 49
 kinetic vs. thermodynamic generation of 20
 lithium 46
 oxidations of 64, 66
 O-phosphorylation of 45
 polyalkylation of 44
 preparations of 22, 23, 26, 32–34, 36, 43, 58, 61
 protonations of 36
 reactions at carbon vs. oxygen 43
 regiospecific generation of 28
 stabilization by alkyl groups of 18
 stereochemistry of 46, 47
 structures of 10–12
 substitution reactions of 43–45, 60
 tin 44
 tris(dimethylamino)sulfonium 46
 vinylation of 44
 zinc 46
 zirconium 46
 Episulfides reactions with carbanions 30, 31
 Epoxides conversions to oxetanes 37

- from γ -eliminations 37, 46, 47
- from oxidative couplings 66
- reactions with carbanions 30, 31, 38, 51, 54, 69
- reactions with lithium 58
- silyl metallation of 37
- Equilibrations *see* Thermodynamic control
- Erythro configurations 46
- Esters acidity of 18
 - acylation of 23, 45
 - alkylation of 23
 - α -epoxy- from Darzens condensations 46
 - from carbanions and carbonates 33
 - from malonic half ester dianions 52
 - β -keto- dimetallations of 51
 - from carbanions 45, 49, 51
 - hydrolyses and decarboxylations of 49
 - metallations of 18, 23, 49
 - reactions with carbanions 30, 32, 38, 39, 49, 55
 - succinic from carbanions 51
 - α, β -unsaturated from dianions 56
 - from dienolates and alkyl halides 48
 - from enolates and aldehydes or ketones 45, 46
 - from β -ketoesters 49
 - reductive acylations of 25
 - β, γ -unsaturated from dienolates and alkyl halides 44, 48
- Ethanol acidity of 21
- Ethers as solvents for carbanions 22, 29
 - cleavages by metals of 14, 15
 - cleavages by organometallics of 24
 - metallations of 18–20, 70
 - vinyl from alkylations of enolates 42–45, 52
 - from Wittig-type reactions 37
 - hydrolyses to ketones of 52, 53
- Ethyl acetate acidity of 17
- Ethyl chloroformate reactions with dianions 56
- Ethyl hydrogen malonate in malonic ester syntheses 51
- Ethylbenzene acidity of 21
 - from carbanion eliminations 60
- N-Ethyl-4,6-dimethyl-2-oxidopyridinium as a leaving group 31
- Ethylene, anionic polymerization of 34
 - from carbanion eliminations 60, 61
 - from cyclic sulfone eliminations 66
 - from hydride eliminations 59
- Ethylene oxide preparations from carbanions 37
 - reactions with carbanions 51
 - reactions with lithium 58
- Ethyllithium elimination of hydride from 59
 - structure of 3, 5, 6
- Ethylmagnesium bromide 3, 5, 7
- Ethylphenylsulfone acidity of 17
- Ethylpotassium elimination of hydride from 59
 - from *n*-butylpotassium 60
- Ethynylpotassium 7
- Ethynylrubidium 7
- Ethynylsodium 7
- Exchange between aggregated carbanion forms 7
- Ferric ion oxidations of carbanions by 64, 65
- Ferrocenes open-chain 40
- Ferrous chloride reactions with pentadienyl anions 40
- Flowing afterglow 20
- Fluorene acidity of 17, 20, 21
- Fluorenyl anions 9
- Fluorenyllithium 8
- Fluorenylpotassium 8
- Fluoroform acidity of 21
- Formaldehyde reactions with dianions 50–52, 56
- Formates reactions with carbanions 33
- Fulvene dianion oxidation of 65
- Furans metallations of 19
 - ring cleavage of metallated 70
- Gas phase carbanions 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 45
- Glycidic esters preparations of 46, 66
- Glyme 11, 14, 43
- Grignard reagents mechanism of formation of 14
 - preparations of 14, 36
 - reactions with: acetylenic sulfones 35
 - aldehydes and ketones 36, 37
 - alkyl halides 31, 38
 - amides 32

- anhydrides 32
- N,N-dialkyl-O-arenesulfonyl-
hydroxylamines 30, 33
- D₂O 29
- epoxides 31
- imines 40
- iron pentacarbonyl 33
- propargyl acetals 31
- thioesters 32
- α,β -unsaturated carbonyls 34
- vinyl halides 32
- reductions of ketones by 59
- structures of 3-5, 7, 14

- α -Haloesters reactions with zinc 15
- Halogen exchange of aryl and vinyl
halides 32
- Halogens reactions with carbanions of
30, 33, 64, 66
- Hard vs. soft electrophiles and nucleo-
philes 43, 44
- Heptafulvene dianion from 1-methyl-
cycloheptene 60
- Heptatrienyl anions electrocyclizations
of 72, 74
- failure to undergo [1,8]sigmatropic
proton shifts of 71
- from sigmatropic rearrangements
74
- from tetraenes 34
- metallations of 34
- rotation barriers in 72
- Heteroatoms in carbanions 19, 20, 31,
43-58, 60-62, 64-66, 68-73
- removal of 31
- Hexachloroethane reactions with car-
banions 30, 33
- Hexamers 6
- Hexamethylphosphoramide 22, 24, 32
- Hexatriene dianions electrocyclizations
of 73
- hetero analogs of 55, 56
- structure of 8
- HMPA 22, 24, 32
- Homoaromaticity in carbanion stabi-
lization 18
- Homocyclooctatetraene dianions 18
- Homocyclopentadienyl anions 18
- Homolytic dissociation of carbon acids
20
- Horner-Emmons reactions 37

- Hybridization sp 7
- sp² 7, 8, 12
- sp³ 3-7
- Hydrazones, acylation and alkylation
of dimetallated 55
- conversion to pyrazoles 55
- dimetallation of 55
- from alkylation of metallated hydra-
zones 53
- metallation of 53
- Hydride eliminations from carbanions
57, 59, 60, 73
- Hydride transfers from alkoxides 22
- from carbanions 36, 59, 60
- Hydrochloric acid acidity of 21
- Hydrofluoric acid acidity of 21
- Hydrogen acidity of 17, 21
- Hydrogen cyanide from cyanohydrins
64
- Hydrogen peroxide in oxidizing alkyl-
boranes to alcohols 41
- Hydrogen sulfide acidity of 21
- Hydroperoxides from carbanions 63,
64
- reductions to alcohols of 63, 64
- Hydrostannation of alkynes 28
- Hydroxide ion as a base for carbanion
preparation 21, 22
- as a leaving group in eliminations
45-47, 58
- Hyperconjugation 9, 18

- Imidazoles dihydro- from carbanions
73
- Imines additions of carbanions to 30,
35, 36, 40, 47
- as intermediates in transaminations
42
- from oxidative coupling of enami-
nates 64
- from reactions of enamines with
electrophiles 52, 53
- hydrolyses 36, 52, 53
- instability of 35
- α,β -unsaturated additions of carb-
anions to 35
- Iminium salts additions of carbanions
to 30, 36, 47
- from aldehydes and secondary amines
47
- Indene acidity of 17
- Indenyllithium 8

- bis-Indenylmagnesium 8
 Indoles from enolate ions and *o*-halo-anilines 44
 Inductive effects in charge stabilization 18, 19, 34
 Infrared studies 7, 9
 Iodine oxidations of carbanions by 64, 66
 Iodobenzene reaction with methyl-lithium 32
 Ion cyclotron resonance 20
 Ion pairs 8, 9, 11, 67
 Ionization potential of a hydrogen atom 20
 Iron pentacarbonyl, reaction with Grignard reagents 33
 Isobutylene mono- and dimetallation of 24
 Isocyanides from ring openings of metallated isoxazoles 69
 α -metallated additions to aldehydes and ketones of 37
 metallations of 18, 19
 Isomerizations *see also* Rearrangements
 geometric 7, 8, 67
 optical in carbanions 7, 8, 67
 positional in alkenes 22, 41, 42, 67
 in alkynes and allenes 68
 in allyl anions 67
 in dianions 67, 68
 Isonitriles *see* Isocyanides
 Isopropylbenzene acidity of 21
 Isoxazoles from carbanions 55
 metallated ring opening of 61, 69
 Isoxazolidones from carbanions 55

Journal of Organometallic Chemistry
 1

Ketones additions of carbanions to 28, 30, 36, 37, 40, 42, 45-47, 49, 56, 68
 additions of enolates to 45-47
 α -amino- from carbanions 56
 47
 aryl from carbanions 71
 aryl, from carbanions 71
 by acylation of carbanions 32, 33
 by hydrolysis of imines 36, 53
 cyclopropyl from enolates 60
 diaryl electron transfer to 36
 enolization of 36
 from carbanions and carboxylates 38
 from carbanions *via* dithioacetals 30, 31, 38
 from carboxylic acid dianions 63, 64
 from chiral alkylations 53, 54
 from β -ketoesters 49
 from α -metallated nitriles 63, 64, 71
 from nitroate ions 63, 64
 from α -silyl epoxides 37
 α -halo- reactions with carbanions 58
 β -hydroxy- elimination of water from 45-47
 from aldol condensations 45-47
 from dienolates 48
 metallations of 23
 reductions to alcohols of 36, 59
 α, β -unsaturated from aldol condensations 45-47, 53
 from α, γ -diketoesters 49
 from α -metallated- α, β -unsaturated ketone equivalents 48
 nucleophilic additions to 48
 β, γ -unsaturated from carbanions 51, 71
 Kinetics 16, *see also* Rate control

Lactones β - from carbanions 50
 α -keto- γ - pyrolysis of 49
 preparations of 40, 48, 52
 α, β -unsaturated- γ - preparations of 52
LAH in ketone reductions 50
LDA as a base for carbanion preparations 23, 28, 42
Leaving groups in eliminations from carbanions 57
 in nucleophilic substitutions 29, 31
Lithiocarbons 10
 α -Lithioethers preparations of 15
 2-Lithio-2-methyl-1,3-dithiane 5
 α -Lithiosulfoxides 12
Lithium reactions with alkyl halides 13, 15, 16, 36, 58
 reactions with epoxides 58
 reactions with terminal alkenes 60
 transmetallations with 27

- Lithium amide as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- Lithium amidines as bases for carbanion preparations 23
- Lithium *t*-butoxide as a base for alkene isomerizations 22
 - insolubility in hexane 24
- Lithium carbonate 31
- Lithium carboxylates reactions with alkyllithiums 32
- Lithium dialkylcuprates 1,4-additions to α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds of 34
 - from vinyl anions 38
 - mixed to save alkyl groups 29, 34
 - preparations of 29, 38
 - reactions with: alkyl halides 29
 - enol phosphates 45
 - epoxides 31
 - vinyl halides 32
- Lithium dicyclohexylamide as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- Lithium diisopropylamide as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- Lithium fluoride 31
- Lithium hexamethyldisilamide as a base for carbanion preparations 23, 50
- Lithium hydride, eliminations of 59, 60
- Lithium naphthalenide 15
- Lithium oxide eliminations of 58
 - structure of 7
- Lithium 2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidide as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- LiTMP as a base for carbanion preparations 23

- Macrolide antibiotics, synthesis of 46
- Magnesium reactions with alkyl halides 13, 15, 36
 - reductions of conjugated dienes with 25
- Magnesium ion as a counterion for dianions 51, 56
 - in controlling epoxide ring openings 69
- Malonic ester syntheses 22, 48, 49, 51
- Malononitrile, acidity of 17, 21
- Mannich reactions 47
- Mass spectrometry high pressure 20

- Mechanisms addition-elimination 32, 35, 59, 70, 73
 - benzyne 32
 - ElcB 58
 - elimination-addition 32, 74
 - of alkyl halide reactions with organo-metallics 29, 31
 - oxidation 63
 - SET 31, 33, 36, 63, 65, 66
 - S_N1 32, 43
 - S_N2 29, 31, 32, 43, 63
 - S_N2 31, 53
 - $S_{RN}1$ 31, 44
- Meisenheimer reactions 26
- Menthylolithium 5, 20
- Mercuric acetate in mercuriation of alkenes 27
- Metal-halogen interchanges 15
- Metallations 17-21
 - kinetic vs. thermodynamic 20, 24, 67, 68
 - of alkenes 19
 - of alkyl halides 18, 19
 - of alkynes 19
 - of amides 18, 20
 - of amines 18-20
 - of aromatics 19, 20
 - of carboxylic acids 20
 - of cyclopropanes 19
 - of esters 18
 - of ethers 18-20
 - of furans 19
 - of isonitriles 18, 19
 - of ketones 20
 - of N-methylpyrrole 19
 - of phosphine oxides 18
 - of phosphines 18
 - of phosphonates 19
 - of phosphonium salts 18
 - of pyridines 19
 - of pyrroles 19
 - of selenides 18
 - of silanes 18, 19
 - of sulfides 18, 19
 - of sulfonylamides 20
 - of sulfones 19
 - of sulfonium salts 18
 - of sulfoxides 19
 - of thiophenes 19
 - ortho- 19-21
- Methane acidity of 17, 21
- Methanol acidity of 17, 20, 21

- Methyl acetate acidity of 21
 Methyl carbanion from eliminations 60
 structure of 3, 6
 Methyl iodide as a soft electrophile in reactions with enolates 43
 oxidations of dianions by 66
 reactions with: dithiocarbamates 31
 dithiocarbonates 50
 dithiocarboxylates 51
 enaminates 53
 thioenolates 56
 N-Methyl phenyl methyl sulfoximine acidity of 17
 Methyl phenyl sulfone acidity of 17
 Methylacetylene 10
 2-Methyl-2-butene dimetallation of 68
 Methylcesium 6
 1-Methylcyclopropene isomerization of 42
 Methylene halides reactions with carbanions 30, 33
 2-Methyleneallyl dianions oxidations of 66
 preparations of 68
 Methylenecyclopropane preparations of 42, 66
 Methylolithium cleavage of silyl ethers with 28
 reaction with D_2O 29
 reactions with iodobenzene 32
 structure of 3, 5, 6
 Methylmagnesium iodide reaction with D_2O 29
 Methylmalonitrile, acidity of 17
 Methylpotassium 6
 N-Methyl-2-pyridyl formates reactions with Grignard reagents 32
 N-Methylpyrrole metallations of 19
 N-Methylpyrrolidone 22
 Methylrubidium 6
 Michael additions 26
 Molecular orbital calculations on carbanions 3, 9, 10, 18, 21
 Molybdenum complexes, oxidations of carbanions with 63
 Monomers 3, 7
 MSAD acidity scale 17
 Myrcene reduction with Mg 25
 Naphthalene reduction to anion radical 25
 Naphthalene dianion preparation of 25
 structure of 8
 Natural product syntheses involving carbanions 26, 46
 NBS reactions with carbanions 30, 33, 38
 NCS reactions with carbanions 30, 33, 39
 Neutron diffraction 7
 Nickel halides as catalysts for reactions of carbanions with aryl and vinyl halides 32, 44
 Nitriles *see also* Acetonitriles
 additions of carbanions to 25, 30, 36
 α -amino- conversions to aldehydes 54
 preparations from carbanions 54
 by nucleophilic additions to α,β -unsaturated nitriles 35
 eliminations of cyanide ion from 58
 from carbanions and tosyl cyanide 33
 from ring openings of metallated isoxazoles 61, 69
 from Wittig-type reactions 37
 Nitroarenes from carbanions and alkyl nitrates 30, 33
 nucleophilic additions to 26
 oxidations of carbanions with 66
 Nitroalkanes acidity of 18, 20
 from carbanions and nitroalkenes 35
 metallation to nitroates 18, 20, 32, 49, 64
 reduction by copper salts
 1-Nitroalkenes nucleophilic additions to 35
 Nitroates from dianions 52
 from nitro compounds 18, 20, 32, 49, 64
 reaction with singlet oxygen 64
 stabilization by α -alkyl groups 18
 Nitrobenzene *see* Nitroarenes
 Nitroethane acidity of 17, 21
 Nitromethane acidity of 17, 21
 2-Nitropropane acidity of 21
 N-Nitrosoamines alkylations of 54
 denitrosations of 54
 metallations of 54
p-Nitrotoluene acidity of 17, 21

- NMP 22
- Nuclear magnetic resonance 3, 9–12, 18
- ^{13}C 9, 11
- ^7Li 9
- Organoaluminiums reactions with alkenyl halides 31
- structures of 3–5, 8
- Organoberylliums 4, 6
- Organocadmiums reactions with acid chlorides 33
- Organocesiums 4, 6
- Organocuprates 26, 33, 40, 41 *see* also Lithium dialkylcuprates
- Organolead compounds transmetal-
lation of 27
- Organolithiums preparations of 15, 27
- reactions of *see* Carbanions, reactions
- structures of 3–13
- Organomagnesiums *see* Grignard reagents and Dialkylmagnesiums
- Organomanganese reagents, reactions with acid chlorides 33
- Organomercury compounds transmetal-
lation of 27
- Organometallics *see* Carbanions
- Organopotassiums low solubility of 24
- metallations with 24
- structures of 3, 4, 6
- use in preserving stereochemistry 24
- Organorhodiums reactions with acid chlorides 33
- Organorubidiums 3, 4, 6
- Organosilicon compounds *see* also Trimethylsilyl chloride
- transmetalation of 27
- Organosodiums metallations with 24
- structures of 4
- Organosulfur compounds desulfuriza-
tion of 31
- Organotin compounds in alkene-form-
ing eliminations 37
- transmetalation of 27, 28
- Organozincs, acetylenic 38
- as Reformatsky intermediates 15
- from Rieke zinc 15
- Ortho acylation of arenes 71
- Oxazines, from metallated oxazines 54
- hydrolysis to acids 54
- metallation of 54
- Oxazoles, dihydro- from isocyanides 37
- metallated ring openings of 69
- Oxazolines from metallated oxazolines 54
- hydrolysis to acids 54
- metallation of 54
- Oxetanes from epoxides 37
- α -metallated 37
- Oxidations of carbanions 34, 63–66
- Oxidative couplings of carbanions 33, 64–66
- mixed 64
- Oxide ion eliminations from carbanions of 57, 58
- 2-Oxidopyridine as a leaving group 31
- Oxygen reactions with carbanions 30, 33, 63, 64, 66
- singlet, reactions with carbanions 64
- Palladium catalysts 32, 38
- 1,3-Pentadiene reduction to anion radi-
cal 25
- 1,4-Pentadiene metallation of 24
- Pentadienyl anions as intermediates in nucleophilic aromatic substitutions 32, 59
- boronation of 41
- control of shape of 41, 72
- 2,4-diaza- 73
- eliminations from 32, 59, 60
- equilibrations with cyclopentenyl anions 72–74
- metallations of 34
- oxidative couplings of 64
- planar shapes of 9, 41, 67, 72
- position of attack by electrophiles in 40–42, 65
- preparations of 24–26, 34, 41, 59, 74
- reactions with FeCl_2 40
- [1,6]sigmatropic proton shifts in 70, 74
- structures of 9
- Peterson reactions 37
- Phase transfer systems for Darzens and Stobbe condensations 22
- Phenol, acidity of 17, 21
- Phenolates 11

- Phenyl arenesulfonates reactions with carbanions 30, 33
- Phenyl methyl sulfide acidity of 17
- Phenylacetonitrile, acidity of 17, 21
- Phenylacetylene acidity of 17
- Phenyllithium 7
- Phenylmagnesium bromide 7
- Phenylmalononitrile acidity of 17
- Phenylpotassium 15
- Phenylsodium 15
- Phosphates as promoters of Grignard reactions with alkyl halides 31
- Phosphine oxides, as Wittig products 37
- metallations of 18
- Phosphines metallations of 18
- preparations from carbanions and chlorophosphines 30, 33
- use to save alkyl groups in cuprates 34
- Phosphites, trialkyl desulfurizations with 50
- reductions of hydroperoxides by 63
- Phosphonates from diethyl chlorophosphate 54
- in Horner-Emmons reactions 37
- metallations of 19
- Phosphonium salts in Wittig reactions 37
- metallations of 18
- Phosphoryl chlorides reactions with enolates 45
- Photochemical carbanion reactions 44, 67, 70
- Phthalocyanine dianion dipotassium 8
- Polarization in charge stabilization 18
- Polycarbanions 19, 23
- Polymeric organometallics 6, 7, 10, 11, 53
- Polymerization anionic 26, 34
- of *p*-xylylene 66
- Polymetallation 19, 23
- Potassium metallations with 23
- reduction of 1,1,2,2,-tetraphenylethane with 26
- transmetallations with 27
- Potassium amide as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- Potassium *t*-butoxide as a base for carbanion preparations 22, 24, 42
- positional isomerization of alkenes with 41, 42
- Potassium hydride as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- elimination from carbanions of 59
- Precipitation as a driving force for carbanion formation 24, 27
- Prenyl anions additions to ketones of 42
- regioselective alkylations of 41
- Preparations of carbanions 13–28, 67–74
- Propargyl acetals conversions to allenyl ethers 31
- Propargyl halides reactions with carbanions 30, 31
- Propene acidity of 17, 21
- metallation of 24
- Propiophenone acidity of 17
- Propylene oxide reaction with carbanions 54
- 1-Propynylpotassium 7
- 1-Propynylsodium 7
- Protecting groups carbanions as 50
- Proton affinities of carbanions in the gas phase 20, 21
- Pseudoequatorial substituents 46, 47
- Pyrazines from carbanions 55
- Pyridines additions of nucleophiles to 26, 36
- from nucleophilic additions to pyridium salts 47
- metallation of 19, 35
- Pyridinium salts additions of carbanions to 47
- α -Pyridones thio-, from carbanions 50
- S-2-Pyridyl thioates reactions with Grignard reagents 32
- Pyrroles, metallation of 19
- Pyrrolidine acidity of 17
- Quaternary ammonium hydroxides as bases for carbanion preparations 22
- Quinones from oxidation of hydroquinone dianions 65
- Quinuclidine 8
- Racemization of optically active carbanions 67
- Radical intermediates, combination with anions to give anion radicals 44

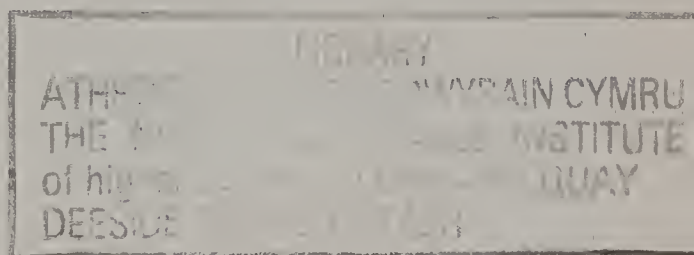
Subject Index

- coupling of 16, 31, 63, 66
- disproportionation of 31
- from carbanions by electron transfer 36, 63
- from cleavages of anion radicals 26, 31, 44
- in Grignard reagent formation 14
- in reactions of alkylolithiums with alkyl and aryl halides 16
- reduction to carbanions 26
- Raman studies 9
- Ramberg-Bäcklund reactions 60
- Raney nickel desulfurizations 31, 54
- Rate control in additions 34, 42, 46, 51
 - in aldol condensations 53
 - in forming 5-rather than 6-membered rings 68
 - in metallations 24, 67, 68
 - in protonations of allyl anions 40, 41
 - in protonations of pentadienyl anions 41, 42
- Rates of ionization 20
- Rearrangements carbanion 13, 16, 67-74
 - complex 73, 74
 - electrocyclic 72-74
 - intermolecular 67, 68, 74
 - intramolecular 68-74
 - of alkyl groups from boron to carbon in alkylboranes 29
 - sigmatropic 70, 71, 74
- Recycling in isomerizations 42
- Reductions electrochemical 25
 - of σ bonds 25
 - one-electron 25
 - to form dicarbanions 25
 - two-electron 25
 - with active metals 25
- Reductive acylations of alkene derivatives 25
- Reformatsky reactions 15
- Reimer-Tiemann reactions 57
- Resonance in stabilizing carbanions 8, 18, 34, 35
- Rieke magnesium 14
- Ring currents in cyclooctatetraene dianions 18
- Ring strain in 3-and 4-membered rings 69, 71-74
- Rotation barriers in allyl anions 9, 10, 63, 67
 - in enolate ions 9, 10
 - in heptatrienyl anions 72
 - in pentadienyl anions 9, 72
 - in vinyl anions 7, 8
- Rotation mechanisms in π carbanions 9, 10, 67
- Salt effects 16
- Sandwich structures 9, 40
- Schlenk equilibrium 14
- Selenides metallations of 18
 - oxidation to selenoxides 31
- Selenoxides preparations from selenides 31
 - pyrolysis to alkenes 31
- Sesquiacetylenic dianions 10
- SET *see* Single electron transfer
- Shapiro reaction 57, 61
- Silanes from carbanions and silyl halides 33, 43
 - metallation of 18, 19
 - vinyl- additions to
 - from Wittig-type reactions 37
- Silicon-oxygen bond cleavage by organometallics 16
- Single electron transfer, from carbanions to:
 - aldehydes and ketones 36
 - alkyl halides 31
 - oxidizing agents 63
 - oxygen 63
 - silyl halides 33
 - from dianions 65, 66
 - to radicals from superoxide 63
- Sodium, metallations with 23
 - reactions with alkyl halides 13, 15
- Sodium amide as a base for carbanion preparations 23
- Sodium hydride as a base for carbanion preparations 23, 44
- Sodium sulfite reduction of hydroperoxides with 63
- Solubility of carbanions 9
- Solvation energies in stabilizing carbanions in solution 20, 21
- Solvents cation-solvating 9, 22, 43
 - coordinating 3, 24
 - ether 3, 5, 7, 14-16, 24, 43
 - for carbanion preparations 22-25
 - hydrocarbon 5, 6, 8, 10, 15, 16, 24

- polarity of in C vs. O alkylation of enolates, 43
- tertiary amine 3, 23, 24
- Spectroscopy IR and Raman 7, 9
- NMR 3, 9–12, 18
- photoelectron 3
- UV-visible 9
- Stabilizing α -groups in alkenes 40, 41
 - in allyl anions 40, 41
 - in carbanions 18, 19
- Stannous ion reduction of hydroperoxides with 64
- Steric effects in additions 35, 40
 - in sigmatropic rearrangements 70
 - on carbanion stability 18
- Stevens rearrangements 70
- Stobbe condensations 22
- Strontium reactions with alkyl halides 15
- Structures of carbanions 3–12
- Styrenes, additions of carbanions to 26, 51
 - reductive acylation of 25
- Substitution reactions of acetylenic, aryl, and vinyl anions 38, 39
 - of alkyl anions 29–33
 - of aryl halides 59
- Succinimide acidity of 21
- Sulfates reactions with carbanions 29
- Sulfides from carbanions 30, 33
 - from sigmatropic rearrangements 70
 - metallation of 18, 19
 - oxidation to sulfoxides 31
 - vinyl, additions to 34
 - from dianions 56, 61
 - hydrolysis to aldehydes 61
- Sulfonates as leaving groups 35, 60, 61
- Sulfonates reactions with carbanions 29
- Sulfones acidity of 18
 - cyclic from Ramberg-Bäcklund reactions 60
 - dimetallations of 66
 - eliminations from 35, 60, 66
 - from carbanions and arenesulfonates 30, 33
 - from oxidations of dicarbanions 66
 - metallations of 19, 60, 69
 - vinyl from enolates 45, 46
 - from Wittig-type reactions 37
- Sulfonium salts eliminations from 37
 - metallations of 18
 - vinyl additions of carbanions to 47
- Sulfonyl chlorides reactions with carbanions 30, 33
- Sulfoxides acidity of 18
 - from sulfides 31
 - α -metallated additions to aldehydes and ketones 37
 - metallations of 19
 - pyrolyses to alkenes 31, 37
- Sulfur reactions with carbanions 30, 33
- Sulfur dioxide eliminations of 66
- Syn additions of carbanions to alkynes 35
- Tautomerizations *see* Isomerizations
- Telomerization of butadiene 34
- Temperature effects in rate vs. thermodynamic control 46, 51, 53
 - on carbanion aggregation 43
 - of epoxide ring openings 69
- Terpene synthesis, butadiene dianions in 25
- Tetraalkylammonium fluoride 28
- Tetraalkylammonium salts of carbanions 28, 49
- Tetrahydrofuran 7, 9–11, 14, 16, 43
 - α -metallated cleavage of 61
- Tetramers 5, 6, 11, 43
- Tetramethylethylenediamine as an activating agent for organometallics 24
 - chiral analogs of in asymmetric syntheses 36
 - structure in organometallic complexes 3, 5–8
- 1,1,2,2-Tetraphenylethane reduction with K 26
- Thermal interconversions of organometallics 10
- Thermodynamic control, in additions 34, 42, 46, 48, 51
 - in aldol condensations 53, 68
 - in alkene isomerizations 41, 67
 - in alkyne and allene isomerizations 68
 - in allyl anions 67
 - in dianions 67, 68
 - in metallations 24
 - variation with temperature 42

- THF 7, 9–11, 14, 16, 43
- Thiazoles desulfurization of 54
- from metallated thiazoles 54
 - hydrolysis to acids 54
 - metallation of 54
- Thioacids from carbanions and CS₂ 30, 38
- from ring openings of dithioacetal anions 61
 - from sigmatropic rearrangements 71
- Thioamides from metallated thioamides 56
- metallated reactions with electrophiles 56
- Thiocarbamates conversions to alkenes 31
- Thiocarbonates from enediolate dianions 50
- pyrolyses of 50
- Thiocyanates reactions with carbanions 30, 33
- Thioesters additions of carbanions to 38
- from carbanions 51, 56
 - in alkene-forming eliminations 37
 - metallated 56, 71
- Thiophenes from dianion oxidations 66
- metallations of 19, 66
 - ring openings of side-chain metallated 70
- Thiourea acidity of 17
- Threo configurations 46
- TMEDA *see* Tetramethylethylenediamine
- TMSCl *see* Trimethylsilyl chloride
- Toluene acidity of 17, 20, 21
- from methyllithium and iodobenzene 32
- Tosyl chloride reactions with carbanions 30, 33
- Tosyl cyanide reactions with carbanions 33
- Transaminations 41
- Transition metals complexes of as catalysts for carbanion reactions 44
- Transmetallations 27, 30, 33
- Trapping experiments 14
- Tributyltin chloride reactions with enolates 44
- Tributyltin hydride additions to alkenes of 28
- Tricarbanions, eliminations from 59, 60
- preparations of 34
 - reactions of electrophiles with 42, 43
 - use in synthesis 49
- Trichloroethene reactions with dienolate ions 48
- Tricyclohexene preparation of 40
- Trienolate ions from ring openings 72, 73
- high rotation barriers in 72
 - reactions with electrophiles 48
 - use as protecting groups for dienones 50
- Triethanolamine borate in alkylation of enolates 44
- Triethylaluminium, reactions with enolates 44
- Triethylamine 5
- Triethylenediamine 8
- Trifluoroacetic acid acidity of 21
- 1,1,1-Trihalides hydrolyses to carboxylic acids 31
- Trimethylaluminium 5
- Trimethylsilanol elimination of 45, 46
- Trimethylsilyl chloride as a hard electrophile 43
- in trimethylsilylations of carbanions 28, 33, 43, 48, 54
 - in trimethylsilylations of other anions 52, 54
- Trimethylsilyl vinyl ethers from enolates 48
- in regiospecific generation of enolates 28
- Trimethylsilylmethylpotassium as a superior metallating agent 24
- preparation by transmetallation 27
 - reactions with esters 33
- Trinitromethane acidity of 21
- Triphenylmethane acidity of 17
- Triphenylmethyl lithium 8
- Triphenylmethylsodium 8
- Triple ion structure 9
- Tris(diethylamino)sulfonium cations in enolate reactions 46
- Tris(phenylthio)methane acidity of 17

- Ultrasounds 14
 Ultraviolet-visible studies 9
 Unshared pairs coordination of metals with 11
 Urea acidity of 17
- Vinyl anions configurations of 35, 38
 eliminations from 60, 61, 69, 73
 isomerizations of 35
 preparations of 13, 16, 24, 32, 35, 55, 57, 61, 73
 reactions with electrophiles 32, 35, 38, 52, 55, 61
 structures of 7
 Vinyl halides from vinyl anions and NBS 38
 reactions with carbanions 30, 32, 44
 reactions with strong bases 60
 reactions with transition metal compounds 32, 44
 Vinyl selenides additions to 34
 Vinyl arsines additions to 34
 Vinylcopper reagents preparations of 35
 reactions with electrophiles 35, 38
 Vinyllithiums preparations of 16, 27, 28
- Vinyltin compounds as carbanion equivalents 28
- Water acidity of 17, 20, 21
 as a solvent for carbanions 22
 Wittig reactions 37
 Wittig rearrangements 70
 Woodward-Hoffmann rules 70
 Wurtz reactions 13-15, 29
- X-ray studies 3-8, 10, 11
o-Xylylene preparation and polymerization of 66
p-Xylylene preparation and polymerization of 66
- Ylides nitrogen 61, 70, 71
 sulfonium 47, 70, 71
- Zinc, reactions with: alkyl halides 13
 α -halocarboxylates 15
 α -haloesters 15
 Zinc ions in promoting 1,4-additions to α,β -unsaturated carbonyl compounds 35
 in making zinc enolates 46
 oxidative couplings of carbanions with 64



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