

*Supporting Information*

## **Stereospecific Suzuki Cross-Coupling of Alkyl $\alpha$ -Cyanohydrin Triflates**

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**General Procedures.** All reactions were maintained under an argon atmosphere. Anhydrous solvents were freshly distilled from sodium benzophenone ketyl or from CaH<sub>2</sub>. Unless otherwise noted, commercially available materials were used without further purification. Flash chromatography (FC) was performed using E. Merck silica gel 60 (240–400 mesh). Thin layer chromatography (TLC) was performed using pre-coated plates purchased from E. Merck (silica gel 60 PF254, 0.25 mm). Spectra were recorded in CDCl<sub>3</sub> on Varian 300, 400 or 500 spectrometers at operating frequencies of 300/400/500 MHz (<sup>1</sup>H) or 75/100/125 MHz (<sup>13</sup>C) as shown in the parameter of each NMR spectrum. Chemical shifts (δ) are given in ppm relative to residual solvent (usually chloroform δ = 7.26 for <sup>1</sup>H NMR or δ = 77.23 for proton decoupled <sup>13</sup>C NMR and δ of <sup>19</sup>F NMR were relative to neat CFCl<sub>3</sub>) and coupling constants (J) in Hz. Multiplicity is tabulated as s for singlet, d for doublet, t for triplet, q for quadruplet, and m for multiplet. Optical rotations were measured at room temperature and corrected to 20 °C on a Rudolph Research Analytical Autopol<sup>®</sup> IV polarimeter. LC/MS spectra were obtained with an Agilent 1200 series LC/MSD spectrometer. The high-resolution mass spectral analyses were kindly provided by Professor Kasem Nithipatikom at the Medical College of Wisconsin Mass Spectroscopy Facility. The enantiomeric excesses, expressed as % ee, were determined using a Shimadzu HPLC system with chiral columns as specified in the individual experimental descriptions and verified using appropriate racemic mixtures.

Racemic<sup>1</sup> and non-racemic<sup>2</sup> α-cyanohydrins were prepared according to literature procedures. 2-Hydroxy-2-phenylacetonitrile was purchased from Aldrich. All boronic acids, boronate esters, potassium trifluoroborate and MIDA boronates were purchased (Aldrich, Frontier Scientific, or Oakwood Products). Anhydrous solvents (THF, DME, benzene) were freshly distilled from sodium benzophenone ketyl; toluene was freshly distilled from CaH<sub>2</sub>. All other chemicals were reagent-grade and used as received.

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(1) (a) Watahiki, T.; Ohba, S.; Oriyama, T. *Org. Lett.* **2003**, *5*, 2679–2681. (b) Kulkarni, B. A.; Sharma, A.; Gamre, S.; Chattopadhyay, S. *Synthesis*, **2004**, 595–599.  
(2) Hamashima, Y.; Sawada, D.; Kanai, M.; Shibasaki, M. *J. Am. Chem. Soc.* **1999**, *121*, 2641–2642.

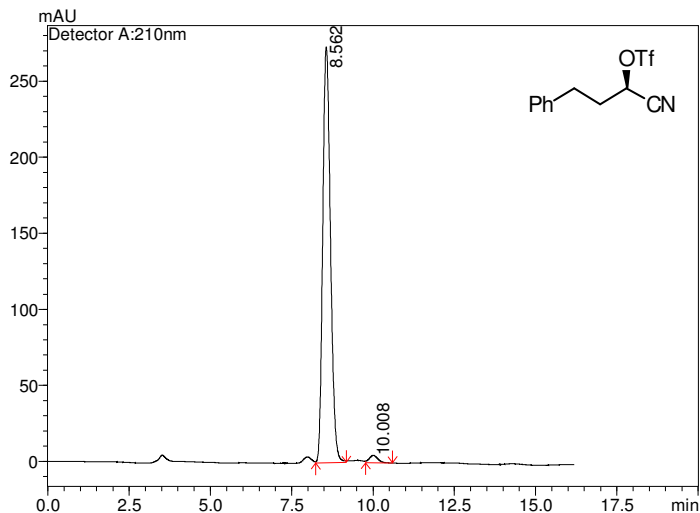
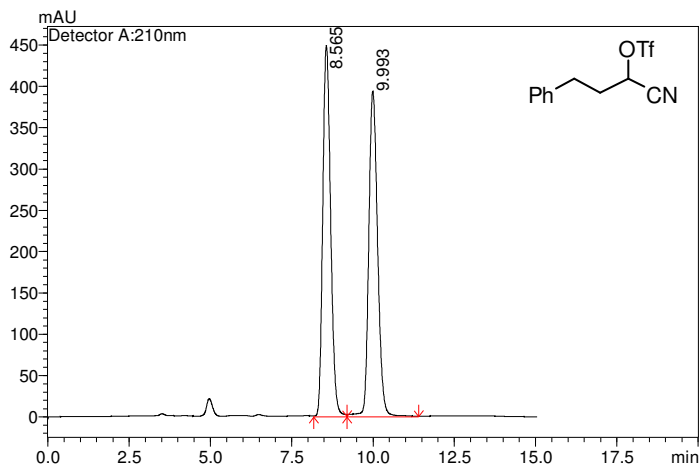
## Experimental

**Preparation of  $\alpha$ -cyanohydrin triflate/mesylate.** To a  $\leq -50$  °C solution of  $\alpha$ -cyanohydrin (10 mmol) in CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (25 mL) in a 100 mL RBF was added 2,6-lutidine (12 mmol) dropwise followed by Tf<sub>2</sub>O (or MsCl, 12 mmol). After stirring at 0 °C for 1-2 h for Tf<sub>2</sub>O or overnight for MsCl, the reaction was quenched with water, then extracted with CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>. The organic extracts were combined and washed with brine, dried over anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, then concentrated on a rotavapor. The residue was purified by SiO<sub>2</sub> chromatography to give  $\alpha$ -cyanohydrin triflate/mesylate (80-90% yield) which was stored neat under an inert atmosphere at -25 °C until used.

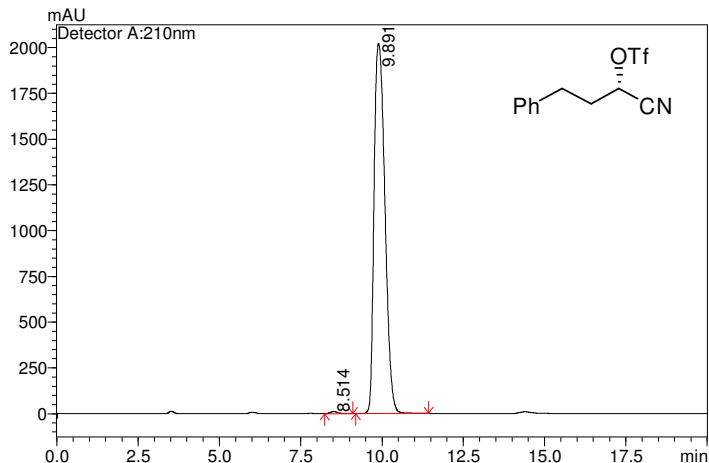
**Representative cross-coupling: (*S*)-4-Phenyl-2-*p*-tolylbutyronitrile **3**** (Table 2, entry 1). A mixture of 4-tolylboronic acid (**2**) (37 mg, 0.3 mmol), KF (35 mg, 0.6 mmol), and palladium catalyst **A** (5.3 mg, 0.0075 mmol) in toluene (1 mL) and H<sub>2</sub>O (10  $\mu$ L, sparged with argon) were stirred at rt under an argon atmosphere for 5 min. To this was added a solution of (*S*)-1-cyano-3-phenylpropyl trifluoromethanesulfonate **1** (44 mg, 0.15 mmol, 99% e.e.) in toluene (1 mL) and then stirred at 40 °C. After 20 h, the reaction mixture was filtered through a pad of silica gel and the silica gel pad was washed with EtOAc (100 mL). The combined filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure and the residue was purified by SiO<sub>2</sub> chromatography to give (*S*)-4-phenyl-2-*p*-tolylbutyronitrile **3** (31 mg, 91%, 98% e.e.).

## New Compound Characterization and HPLC Chromatograms

**1-Cyano-3-phenylpropyl trifluoromethanesulfonate (1).**  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (300 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.38-7.19 (5H, m), 5.28 (1H, t,  $J = 6$  Hz), 2.90 (2H, t,  $J = 6$  Hz), 2.48-2.40 (2H, m);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  137.7, 129.2, 128.5, 127.4, 118.4 (q,  $J_{\text{C-F}} = 320$  Hz), 113.9, 71.4, 35.3, 30.2;  $^{19}\text{F}$  NMR (282 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  74.5; LC/MS (ES)  $m/z$  293  $[\text{M}]^+$ .



Peak#	Retention time (min)	Area%
1	8.5	98.0
2	10.0	2.0



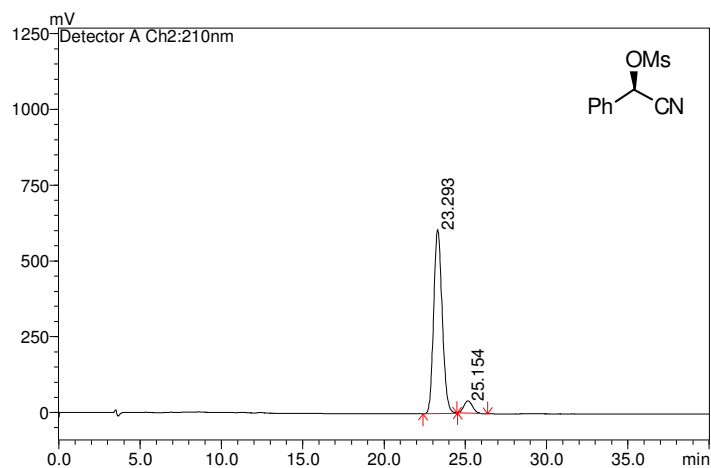
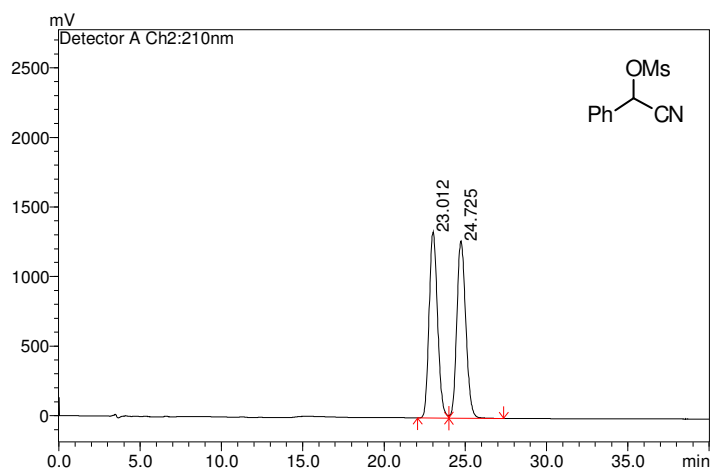
Peak#	Retention time (min)	Area%
1	8.5	0.4
2	9.9	99.6

Chiralpak AD (4.6 × 250 mm), hexane/IPA 100:0.5, 1 mL/min, 210 nm

**1-Cyano(cyclohexyl)methyl trifluoromethanesulfonate (19).** <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 5.14 (1H, d, *J* ~ 6 Hz), 2.10-1.10 (11H, m); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 118.4 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> ~ 320 Hz), 113.4, 76.6, 41.4, 27.5, 25.4, 25.1, 25.05; <sup>19</sup>F NMR (282 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 74.5; LC/MS (APCI) *m/z* 271 [M]<sup>+</sup>.

**1-Cyano-2,2-dimethylpropyl trifluoromethanesulfonate (21).** <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 4.98 (1H, s), 1.19 (9H, s); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 118.5 (q, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> ~ 320 Hz), 113.3, 80.5, 36.3, 24.7; <sup>19</sup>F NMR (282 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 74.3; LC/MS (APCI) *m/z* 268 [M+Na]<sup>+</sup>.

**(R)-Cyano(phenyl)methyl methanesulfonate (27).**<sup>3</sup> (87% e.e.) <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.59-7.46 (5H, m), 6.22 (1H, s), 3.12 (3H, s).

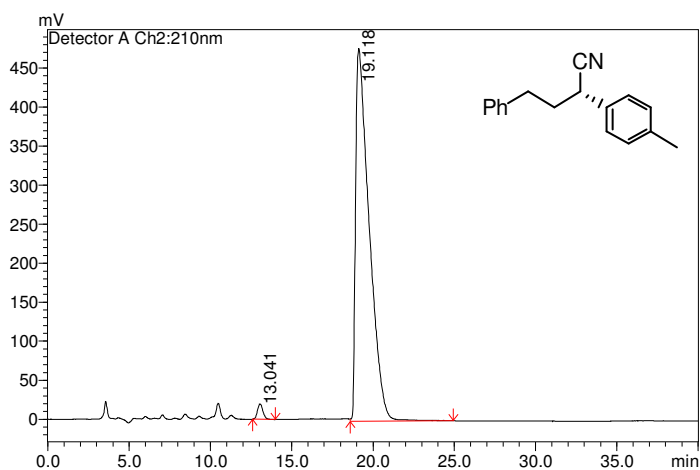
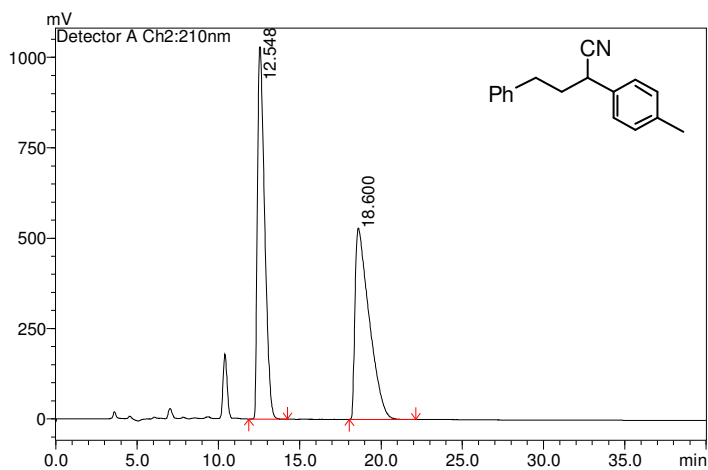


Peak#	Retention time (min)	Area%
1	23.3	93.6
2	25.2	6.4

Chiralpak AD (4.6 × 250 mm), hexane/IPA 100:5, 1 mL/min, 210 nm.

(3) Marco, J. L.; Ingate, S. T.; Jaime, C.; Bea, I. *Tetrahedron*, **2000**, *56*, 2523–2531.

**(S)-4-Phenyl-2-p-tolylbutanenitrile 3<sup>4</sup>** (Table 2, entry 1, 98% e.e.). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.35-7.21 (10H, m), 3.72 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 9, 6 Hz), 2.85-2.78 (2H, m), 2.37 (3H, s), 2.33-2.10 (2H, m); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 140.1, 138.1, 132.8, 129.9, 128.8, 128.6, 127.3, 126.6, 121.0, 37.5, 36.3, 33.2, 21.3.

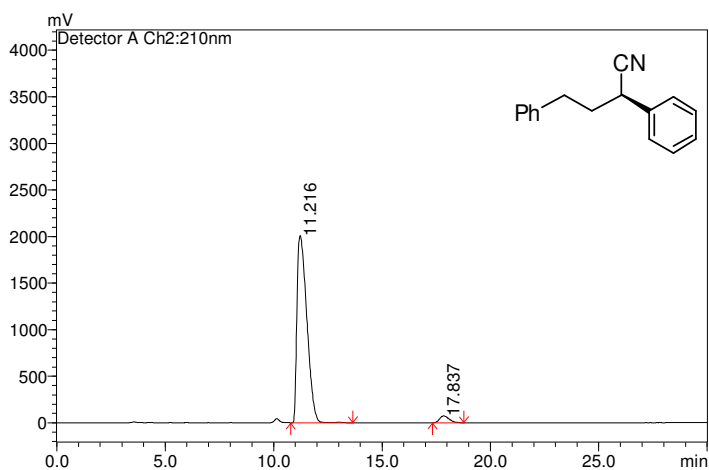
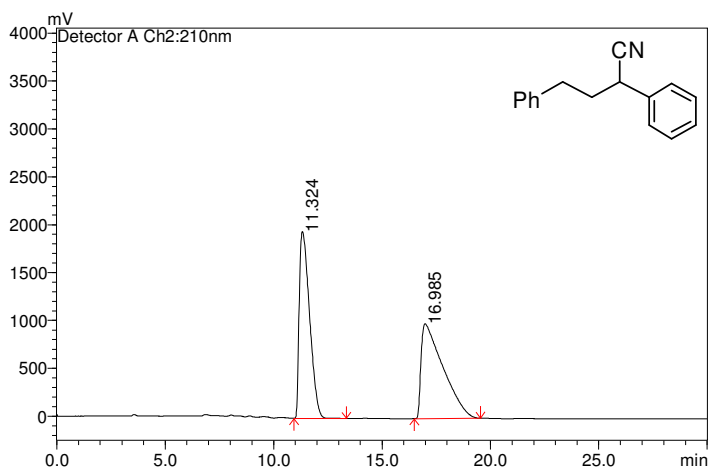


Peak#	Retention time (min)	Area%
1	13.0	1.6
2	19.1	98.4

Chiralpak AD (4.6 × 250 mm), hexane/IPA 100:1, 1 mL/min, 210 nm

(4) Hino, K.; Nagai, Y.; Uno, H.; Masuda, Y.; Oka, M.; Karasawa, T. *J. Med. Chem.* **1988**, *31*, 107–117.

**(R)-2,4-diphenylbutanenitrile 6<sup>5</sup>** (Table 2, entry 2, 94% e.e.). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.42-7.19 (10H, m), 3.75 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 9, 6 Hz), 2.86-2.79 (2H, m), 2.34-2.11 (2H, m); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 140.0, 135.8, 129.3, 128.9, 128.6, 128.3, 127.5, 126.7, 120.8, 37.6, 36.8, 33.2.



Peak#	Retention time (min)	Area%
1	11.2	96.8
2	17.8	3.2

Chiralpak AD (4.6 × 250 mm), hexane/IPA 100:1, 1 mL/min, 210 nm.

(5) Kozikowski, A. P.; Tueckmantel, W.; George, C. J. *Org. Chem.* **2000**, *65*, 5371–5381.



**4-Phenyl-2-*o*-tolylbutanenitrile 8** (Table 2, entry 3). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.45-7.14 (9H, m), 3.86 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 9, 5 Hz), 2.94-2.76 (2H, m), 2.15 (3H, s), 2.25-2.03 (2H, m); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 140.0, 135.1, 134.2, 131.2, 128.9, 128.6, 128.3, 127.5, 127.1, 126.8, 121.1, 36.2, 33.5, 33.4, 19.0; HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>17</sub>NNa [M+Na]<sup>+</sup> *m/z* 258.1253. Found: 258.1258.

**2-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-4-phenylbutanenitrile 10<sup>4</sup>** (Table 2, entry 4). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.34-7.18 (7H, m), 6.93-6.88 (2H, m), 3.81 (3H, s), 3.70 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 9, 6 Hz), 2.83-2.74 (2H, m), 2.32-2.08 (2H, m); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 159.5, 140.0, 128.8, 128.61, 128.60, 127.7, 126.6, 121.1, 114.6, 55.5, 37.5, 35.9, 33.2.

**2-(4-Acetylphenyl)-4-phenylbutanenitrile 12** (Table 2, entry 5). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.97 (2H, d, *J* ~ 8 Hz), 7.28 (2H, d, *J* ~ 8 Hz), 7.33-7.18 (5H, m), 3.80 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 9, 6 Hz), 2.86-2.80 (2H, m), 2.61 (3H, s), 2.30-2.16 (2H, m); HRMS Calcd. for C<sub>18</sub>H<sub>17</sub>NNaO [M+Na]<sup>+</sup> *m/z* 286.1202. Found: 286.1208.

**2-(4-Fluorophenyl)-4-phenylbutanenitrile 14<sup>4</sup>** (Table 2, entry 6). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.34-7.18 (7H, m), 6.93-6.88 (2H, m), 3.81 (3H, s), 3.70 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 9, 6 Hz), 2.83-2.74 (2H, m), 2.32-2.08 (2H, m); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 162.6 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> ~ 248 Hz), 139.8, 131.6, 129.2 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> ~ 8 Hz), 128.9, 128.6, 126.8, 120.6, 116.3 (d, *J*<sub>C-F</sub> ~ 22 Hz), 37.6, 36.0, 33.1.

**2-(2-Chlorophenyl)-4-phenylbutanenitrile 16<sup>4</sup>** (Table 2, entry 7). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.59 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 6, 3 Hz), 7.41-7.21 (8H, m), 4.25 (1H, dd, *J* ~ 9, 6 Hz), 2.99-2.78 (2H, m), 2.26-2.12 (2H, m); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 139.8, 133.7, 132.8, 130.3, 129.7, 129.1, 128.8, 128.7, 127.8, 126.7, 120.2, 35.8, 34.4, 33.5.

**(E)-2-Phenethyl-4-phenylbut-3-enenitrile 18** (Table 2, entry 8).  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.32-7.21 (9H, m), 6.72 (1H, d,  $J \sim 16$  Hz), 6.03 (1H, dd,  $J \sim 16, 7$  Hz), 3.40-3.36 (1H, m), 2.92-2.79 (2H, m), 2.15-2.02 (2H, m);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (126 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  140.1, 135.9, 133.8, 128.8, 126.8, 123.0, 120.2, 35.1, 33.9, 33.1; HRMS Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{18}\text{H}_{17}\text{N}$   $[\text{M}]^+$   $m/z$  248.1434. Found: 248.1440.

**2-Cyclohexyl-2-p-tolylacetonitrile 20<sup>6</sup>** (Table 2, entry 9).  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (300 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.17 (5H, s), 3.59 (1H, d,  $J \sim 9$  Hz), 2.35 (3H, s), 1.90-1.10 (11H, m);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  137.9, 131.8, 129.6, 128.0, 120.5, 44.1, 42.9, 31.4, 29.8, 26.1, 26.04, 26.00, 21.3.

**3,3-Dimethyl-2-p-tolylbutanenitrile (22)<sup>7</sup>** (Table 2, entry 10).  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (300 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.16 (5H, s), 3.52 (1H, s), 2.35 (3H, s), 1.04 (9H, s);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  138.0, 130.5, 129.4, 129.2, 120.8, 49.5, 35.2, 27.6, 21.3.

**4-Phenyl-2-(thiophen-2-yl)butanenitrile (24)** (Table 2, entry 11).  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (500 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.34-7.20 (6H, m), 7.07 (1H, d,  $J \sim 4$  Hz), 6.99 (1H, dd,  $J \sim 6, 4$  Hz), 3.95 (1H, dd,  $J \sim 8, 7$  Hz), 2.88-2.80 (2H, m), 2.39-2.24 (2H, m);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (75 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  139.7, 137.8, 129.0, 128.7, 127.3, 126.8, 126.5, 125.8, 119.9, 37.5, 33.0, 31.9; HRMS Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{14}\text{H}_{13}\text{NNaS}$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$   $m/z$  250.0661. Found: 250.0670.

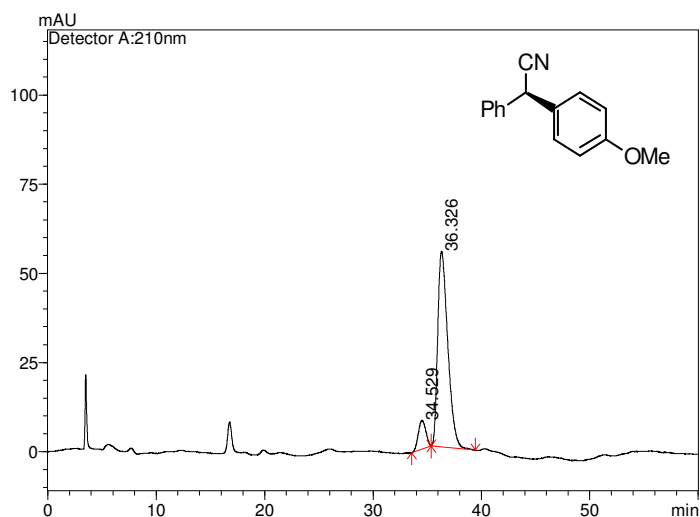
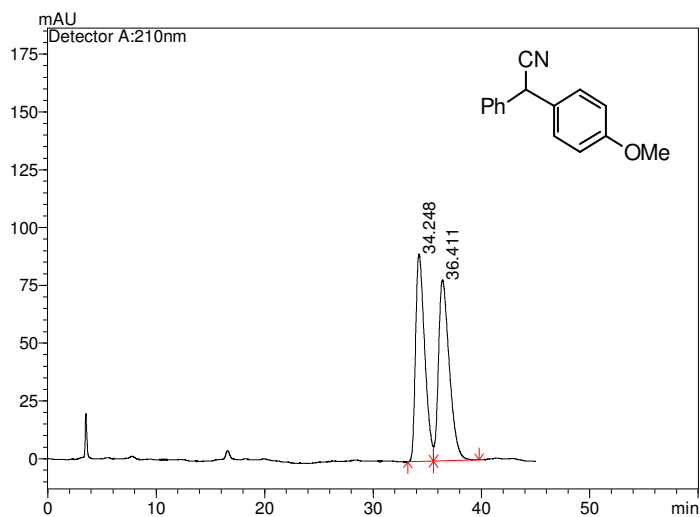
**4-Phenyl-2-(thiophen-3-yl)butanenitrile (26)** (Table 2, entry 12).  $^1\text{H}$  NMR (400 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  7.37-7.19 (7H, m), 7.03 (1H, dd,  $J \sim 6, 3$  Hz), 3.95 (1H, dd,  $J \sim 6, 3$  Hz), 2.85-2.76 (2H, m), 2.32-2.15 (2H, m);  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR (100 MHz,  $\text{CDCl}_3$ )  $\delta$  139.9, 135.7, 128.9, 128.7, 127.4, 126.7, 126.4, 122.8, 120.6, 36.4, 33.1, 32.0; HRMS Calcd. for  $\text{C}_{14}\text{H}_{13}\text{NNaS}$   $[\text{M}+\text{Na}]^+$   $m/z$  250.0661. Found: 250.0680.

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(6) Bordwell, F. G.; Bausch, M. J.; Cheng, J. P.; Cripe, T. H.; Lynch, T. Y.; Mueller, M. E. *J. Org. Chem.* **1990**, *55*, 58–63.

(7) Fischer, H.; Reindl, D.; Hofmann, J.; Troll, C. *J. Organomet. Chem.* **1994**, *472*, 163–174.

**(R)-2-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-2-phenylacetonitrile (28)**<sup>8</sup> (Table 2, entry 13, 80% e.e.). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (500 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 7.40-7.31 (5H, m), 7.28-7.25 (2H, m), 6.92-6.89 (2H, m), 5.11 (1H, s), 3.81 (3H, s); <sup>13</sup>C NMR (125 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>) δ 159.6, 136.4, 129.4, 129.1, 128.4, 128.1, 127.8, 120.1, 114.7, 55.6, 42.0.

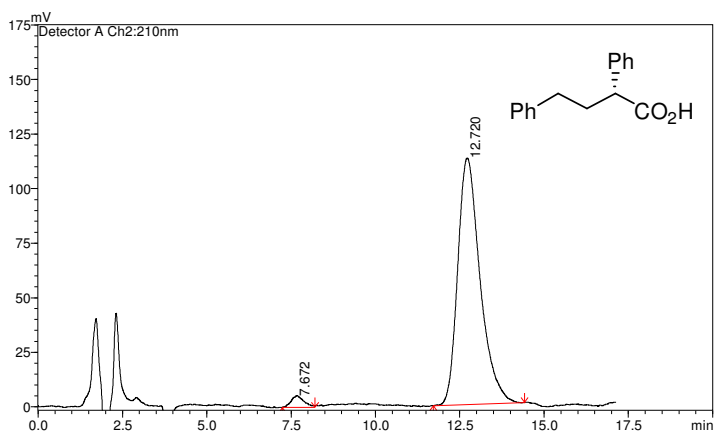
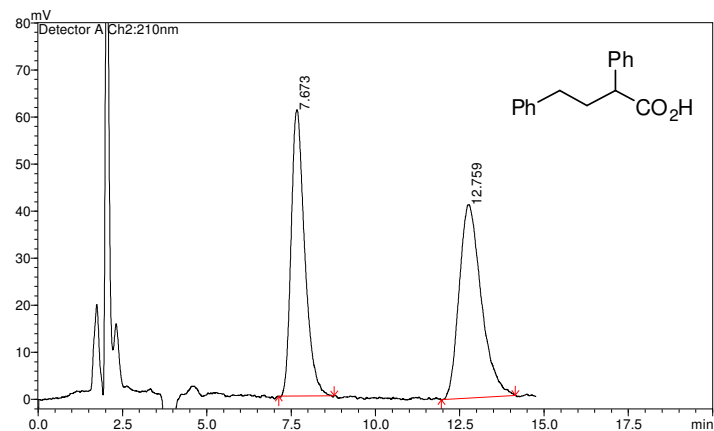


Peak#	Retention time (min)	Area%
1	34.5	9.9
2	36.3	90.1

Chiralpak AD (4.6 × 250 mm), hexane/IPA 100:0.5, 1 mL/min, 210 nm.

(8) Chen, G.; Wang, Z.; Wu, J.; Ding, K. *Org. Lett.* **2008**, *10*, 4573–4576.

**(S)-2,4-Diphenylbutanoic acid (29)**<sup>5</sup> (94% e.e.).  $[\alpha]_D^{20} = -48.0$  (c 0.05, CHCl<sub>3</sub>); literature<sup>5</sup>  $[\alpha]_D = -56.8$  (c 24.9, CHCl<sub>3</sub>). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl<sub>3</sub>)  $\delta$  7.34-7.13 (10H, m), 3.58 (1H, t, *J* ~ 9 Hz), 2.59 (2H, t, *J* ~ 9 Hz), 2.48-2.36 (1H, m), 2.18-2.06 (1H, m).



Peak#	Retention time (min)	Area%
1	7.7	2.6
2	12.7	97.3

Chiralcel OD, (4.6 × 250 mm), hexane/IPA/AcOH 100:2/0.2, 2 mL/min, 210 nm.

