

# Science of Synthesis

## Compounds with Four and Three Carbon— Heteroatom Bonds

Three Carbon—Heteroatom Bonds:  
Nitriles, Isocyanides, and Derivatives

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## Science of Synthesis

**Science of Synthesis** is the authoritative and comprehensive reference work for the entire field of organic and organometallic synthesis.

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# Science of Synthesis

**Houben-Weyl** Methods of Molecular Transformations

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# Science of Synthesis

Houben–Weyl Methods of Molecular Transformations

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Carbon–Heteroatom Bonds**

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**Three Carbon–Heteroatom Bonds:  
Nitriles, Isocyanides, and Derivatives**

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## Preface

As our understanding of the natural world increases, we begin to understand complex phenomena at molecular levels. This level of understanding allows for the design of molecular entities for functions ranging from material science to biology. Such design requires synthesis and, as the structures increase in complexity as a necessity for specificity, puts increasing demands on the level of sophistication of the synthetic methods. Such needs stimulate the improvement of existing methods and, more importantly, the development of new methods. As scientists confront the synthetic problems posed by the molecular targets, they require access to a source of reliable synthetic information. Thus, the need for a new, comprehensive, and critical treatment of synthetic chemistry has become apparent. To meet this challenge, an entirely new edition of the esteemed reference work **Houben-Weyl Methods of Organic Chemistry** will be published starting in the year 2000.

To reflect the new broader need and focus, this new edition has a new title, **Science of Synthesis, Houben-Weyl Methods of Molecular Transformations**. **Science of Synthesis** will benefit from more than 90 years of experience and will continue the tradition of excellence in publishing synthetic chemistry reference works. **Science of Synthesis** will be a balanced and critical reference work produced by the collaborative efforts of chemists, from both industry and academia, selected by the editorial board. All published results from journals, books, and patent literature from the early 1800s until the year of publication will be considered by our authors, who are among the leading experts in their field. The 48 volumes of **Science of Synthesis** will provide chemists with the most reliable methods to solve their synthesis problems. **Science of Synthesis** will be updated periodically and will become a prime source of information for chemists in the 21st century.

**Science of Synthesis** will be organized in a logical hierarchical system based on the target molecule to be synthesized. The critical coverage of methods will be supported by information intended to help the user choose the most suitable method for their application, thus providing a strong foundation from which to develop a successful synthetic route. Within each category of product, illuminating background information such as history, nomenclature, structure, stability, reactivity, properties, safety, and environmental aspects will be discussed along with a detailed selection of reliable methods. Each method and variation will be accompanied by reaction schemes, tables of examples, experimental procedures, and a background discussion of the scope and limitations of the reaction described.

The policy of the editorial board is to make **Science of Synthesis** the ultimate tool for the synthetic chemist in the 21st century.

We would like to thank all of our authors for submitting contributions of such outstanding quality, and, also for the dedication and commitment they have shown throughout the entire editorial process.

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## **Volume 19: Three Carbon—Heteroatom Bonds: Nitriles, Isocyanides, and Derivatives**

	<b>Preface</b> .....	V
	<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	IX
	<b>Introduction</b>	
	S.-I. Murahashi .....	1
<b>19.1</b>	<b>Product Class 1: Nitrile Oxides, Sulfides, and Selenides</b>	
	S. Kanemasa .....	17
<b>19.2</b>	<b>Product Class 2: Nitrile Imines</b>	
	S. Kanemasa .....	41
<b>19.3</b>	<b>Product Class 3: Nitrilium Salts</b>	
	S. Kanemasa .....	53
<b>19.4</b>	<b>Product Class 4: Nitrile Ylides</b>	
	S. Kanemasa .....	67
<b>19.5</b>	<b>Product Class 5: Nitriles</b>	
	L. R. Subramanian .....	79
<b>19.5.1</b>	<b>Construction of the Cyano Group by Functional-Group Transformation from a Nitrogen-Free Starting Material</b>	
	L. R. Subramanian .....	95
<b>19.5.2</b>	<b>Construction of the Cyano Group by Functional-Group Transformation from a Nitrogen-Containing Starting Material</b>	
	L. R. Subramanian .....	109
<b>19.5.3</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Hydrogen</b>	
	A. Schmidt .....	133
<b>19.5.4</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Metals</b>	
	L. R. Subramanian .....	163
<b>19.5.5</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of a Halogen</b>	
	L. R. Subramanian .....	173
<b>19.5.6</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Oxygen Functions</b>	
	L. R. Subramanian .....	197

<b>19.5.7</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Sulfur Functions</b> L. R. Subramanian .....	215
<b>19.5.8</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Nitrogen Functions</b> L. R. Subramanian .....	217
<b>19.5.9</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to a Carbonyl Group</b> M. North .....	235
<b>19.5.10</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to an Imino Group</b> M. North .....	285
<b>19.5.11</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Conjugate Addition</b> J. Podlech .....	311
<b>19.5.12</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to Alkynes</b> J. Podlech .....	325
<b>19.5.13</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to Alkenes</b> J. Podlech .....	333
<b>19.5.14</b>	<b>Synthesis from Nitriles with Retention of the Cyano Group</b> S.-I. Murahashi .....	345
<b>19.5.15</b>	<b>Applications of Nitriles as Reagents for Organic Synthesis with Loss of the Nitrile Functionality (Including Cycloaddition Reactions)</b> S. J. Collier and P. Langer .....	403
<b>19.6</b>	<b>Product Class 6: Phosphaalkynes (Alkylidynephosphines)</b> U. Bergsträsser .....	427
<b>19.7</b>	<b>Product Class 7: Isocyanides and Related Compounds</b> M. Suginome and Y. Ito .....	445
	<b>Keyword Index</b> .....	531
	<b>Author Index</b> .....	557
	<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	589

## Table of Contents

### Introduction

S.-I. Murahashi

<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
---------------------------	---

### 19.1 Product Class 1: Nitrile Oxides, Sulfides, and Selenides

S. Kanemasa

<b>19.1</b>	<b>Product Class 1: Nitrile Oxides, Sulfides, and Selenides</b> .....	17
<b>19.1.1</b>	<b>Product Subclass 1: Nitrile Oxides</b> .....	17
<b>19.1.1.1</b>	Synthesis of Product Subclass 1 .....	19
<b>19.1.1.1.1</b>	Method 1: Dehydrohalogenation of Hydroximoyl Halides .....	19
<b>19.1.1.1.2</b>	Method 2: Dehydration of Activated Nitroalkanes and Nitroalkenes .....	22
<b>19.1.1.1.3</b>	Method 3: Halogenation/Dehydrohalogenation of Aldoximes .....	24
<b>19.1.1.1.4</b>	Method 4: Dehydration of Nitroalkanes (The Mukaiyama Reaction) .....	25
<b>19.1.1.1.5</b>	Method 5: Oxidation of Aldoximes .....	28
<b>19.1.1.1.6</b>	Method 6: Thermolysis of 1,2,5-Oxadiazole 2-Oxides (Furoxans) .....	31
<b>19.1.1.1.7</b>	Methods 7: Miscellaneous Methods .....	31
<b>19.1.2</b>	<b>Product Subclass 2: Nitrile Sulfides</b> .....	34
<b>19.1.2.1</b>	Synthesis of Product Subclass 2 .....	34
<b>19.1.2.1.1</b>	Method 1: Thermolysis of 1,3,4-Oxathiazol-2-ones .....	34
<b>19.1.2.1.1.1</b>	Variation 1: Thermolysis of 1,3,4-Oxathiazoles .....	36
<b>19.1.3</b>	<b>Product Subclass 3: Nitrile Selenides</b> .....	37

### 19.2 Product Class 2: Nitrile Imines

S. Kanemasa

<b>19.2</b>	<b>Product Class 2: Nitrile Imines</b> .....	41
<b>19.2.1</b>	Synthesis of Product Class 2 .....	41
<b>19.2.1.1</b>	Method 1: Dehydrohalogenation of Hydrazonoyl Halides .....	41
<b>19.2.1.2</b>	Method 2: Oxidation of Hydrazones .....	46
<b>19.2.1.3</b>	Methods 3: Miscellaneous Methods .....	48
<b>19.2.1.3.1</b>	Variation 1: From a Lithiated Diazomethane .....	48
<b>19.2.1.3.2</b>	Variation 2: Thermolysis or Photolysis of Heterocycles .....	49

<b>19.3</b>	<b>Product Class 3: Nitrilium Salts</b> S. Kanemasa	
<b>19.3</b>	<b>Product Class 3: Nitrilium Salts</b> .....	53
<b>19.3.1</b>	Synthesis of Product Class 3 .....	53
<b>19.3.1.1</b>	Method 1: Dehydration of Oximes .....	53
<b>19.3.1.2</b>	Method 2: N-Alkylation of Nitriles .....	55
<b>19.3.1.3</b>	Method 3: Generation of Nitrilium Salts in Ring-Closure and Rearrangement Reactions Leading to Heterocycles .....	59
<b>19.3.1.4</b>	Method 4: Synthesis from Triazenyl Chlorides and Dialkylcyanamides ....	63
<b>19.4</b>	<b>Product Class 4: Nitrile Ylides</b> S. Kanemasa	
<b>19.4</b>	<b>Product Class 4: Nitrile Ylides</b> .....	67
<b>19.4.1</b>	Synthesis of Product Class 4 .....	67
<b>19.4.1.1</b>	Method 1: Dehydrochlorination of Imidoyl Chlorides .....	67
<b>19.4.1.2</b>	Method 2: Preparation of Nitrile Ylide Equivalents .....	71
<b>19.4.1.3</b>	Method 3: Reaction of Nitriles with Carbenes .....	73
<b>19.4.1.4</b>	Method 4: Photolysis of Azirines .....	74
<b>19.4.1.5</b>	Methods 5: Miscellaneous Methods .....	76
<b>19.5</b>	<b>Product Class 5: Nitriles</b> L. R. Subramanian	
<b>19.5</b>	<b>Product Class 5: Nitriles</b> .....	79
<b>19.5.1</b>	<b>Construction of the Cyano Group by Functional-Group Transformation from a Nitrogen-Free Starting Material</b> L. R. Subramanian	
<b>19.5.1</b>	<b>Construction of the Cyano Group by Functional-Group Transformation from a Nitrogen-Free Starting Material</b> .....	95
<b>19.5.1.1</b>	Transformation of an Aldehyde Group .....	95
<b>19.5.1.1.1</b>	Method 1: One-Pot Reactions Involving Intermediate Aldimines .....	95
<b>19.5.1.1.1.1</b>	Variation 1: By Copper-Catalyzed Oxidation .....	95
<b>19.5.1.1.1.2</b>	Variation 2: By Nickel-Catalyzed Oxidation .....	96
<b>19.5.1.1.1.3</b>	Variation 3: By Oxidation with Manganese(IV) Oxide .....	96
<b>19.5.1.1.1.4</b>	Variation 4: By Oxidation with Ammonium Cerium(IV) Nitrate .....	97
<b>19.5.1.1.1.5</b>	Variation 5: By Oxidation with Iodine .....	98
<b>19.5.1.1.1.6</b>	Variation 6: By Oxidation with Hydrogen Peroxide .....	98
<b>19.5.1.1.2</b>	Method 2: Reactions Involving Intermediate Oximes .....	99
<b>19.5.1.1.2.1</b>	Variation 1: Using Boron Trifluoride–Diethyl Ether Complex .....	99

19.5.1.1.2.2	Variation 2:	Using 4-Toluenesulfonic Acid	100
19.5.1.1.2.3	Variation 3:	Using Acetic Anhydride	100
19.5.1.1.2.4	Variation 4:	Using Phthalic Anhydride	100
19.5.1.1.2.5	Variation 5:	Using 1-Methylpyrrolidin-2-one	101
19.5.1.1.2.6	Variation 6:	Using Pyridine/Formamide	101
19.5.1.1.2.7	Variation 7:	Using Sodium Iodide	102
19.5.1.1.2.8	Variation 8:	By Dehydration with Triphosgene	102
19.5.1.1.2.9	Variation 9:	By Treatment with Iron(II) Chloride Modified Montmorillonite K 10	102
19.5.1.1.2.10	Variation 10:	Using Dry Alumina	103
19.5.1.1.2.11	Variation 11:	By Using Microwaves	103
19.5.1.1.3	Methods 3:	Miscellaneous Methods	105
19.5.1.1.3.1	Variation 1:	Using <i>S,S</i> -Dimethylsulfurdiimide as Iminating Agent	105
19.5.1.1.3.2	Variation 2:	Using Sodium Azide/Aluminum Trichloride	105
19.5.1.2		Transformation of a Carboxylic Acid or Derivatives	105
19.5.1.2.1	Method 1:	Transformation of Carboxy Groups	105
19.5.1.2.2	Method 2:	Transformation of Carboxylic Ester Groups	106
19.5.1.2.3	Method 3:	Transformation of Carboxylic Acid Halides	107

**19.5.2 Construction of the Cyano Group by Functional-Group Transformation  
from a Nitrogen-Containing Starting Material**  
L. R. Subramanian

19.5.2		<b>Construction of the Cyano Group by Functional-Group Transformation from a Nitrogen-Containing Starting Material</b>	109
19.5.2.1	Method 1:	Synthesis from Hydrazones	109
19.5.2.1.1	Variation 1:	By Alkylation Followed by Basic Cleavage	109
19.5.2.1.2	Variation 2:	By Oxidation Reactions	110
19.5.2.1.3	Variation 3:	By Microwave-Assisted Oxidation with Oxone	111
19.5.2.2	Method 2:	Synthesis from Aldoximes	111
19.5.2.2.1	Variation 1:	By Microbial Dehydration of Aldoximes	112
19.5.2.2.2	Variation 2:	By Chemical Dehydration at Room Temperature	112
19.5.2.2.3	Variation 3:	By Thermal Dehydration with Suitable Reagents	114
19.5.2.2.4	Variation 4:	By Microwave Irradiation	118
19.5.2.3	Method 3:	Synthesis from <i>O</i> -Substituted Aldoximes	118
19.5.2.4	Method 4:	Synthesis from Primary Carboxamides and Thioamides	121
19.5.2.5	Method 5:	From Miscellaneous Nitrogen-Containing Carbonyl and Carboxy Derivatives	127



**19.5.3 Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Hydrogen**

A. Schmidt

<b>19.5.3</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Hydrogen</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>19.5.3.1</b>	Synthesis of Heteroaromatic and Aromatic Cyanides	133
<b>19.5.3.1.1</b>	Method 1: Using Cyanogen Bromide	133
<b>19.5.3.1.2</b>	Method 2: Using Tosyl Cyanide	134
<b>19.5.3.1.2.1</b>	Variation 1: By Modified Reissert Reactions	135
<b>19.5.3.1.3</b>	Method 3: Using Trimethylsilyl Cyanide	136
<b>19.5.3.1.3.1</b>	Variation 1: By Modified Reissert–Henze Reaction	138
<b>19.5.3.1.3.2</b>	Variation 2: By Catalytic Asymmetric Reissert-Type Reactions	139
<b>19.5.3.1.4</b>	Method 4: Using Trichloroacetonitrile	140
<b>19.5.3.1.5</b>	Method 5: Using Chlorosulfonyl Isocyanate	141
<b>19.5.3.1.6</b>	Method 6: Using Ethyl (Triphenylphosphoranylidene)carbamate/ Boron Trifluoride	142
<b>19.5.3.1.7</b>	Method 7: Using Triphenylphosphine/Thiocyanogen	143
<b>19.5.3.1.8</b>	Method 8: Using Acetone Cyanohydrin	144
<b>19.5.3.1.9</b>	Method 9: Using Diethyl Cyanophosphonate	144
<b>19.5.3.1.10</b>	Method 10: Using Tetranitromethane	145
<b>19.5.3.1.11</b>	Method 11: Using Viehe’s Reagent	146
<b>19.5.3.1.12</b>	Method 12: By Anodic Substitution	146
<b>19.5.3.1.13</b>	Method 13: By Modified Vilsmeier–Haack Reactions	147
<b>19.5.3.1.14</b>	Method 14: Oxidative Cyanation of Quinoline 1-Oxides with Potassium Cyanide in the Presence of Potassium Hexacyanoferrate(III)	147
<b>19.5.3.1.15</b>	Method 15: By Nucleophilic Aromatic Substitution of Hydrogen with Cyanides	148
<b>19.5.3.2</b>	Synthesis of Acetylenic Nitriles	148
<b>19.5.3.2.1</b>	Method 1: Using Copper(I) Cyanide	148
<b>19.5.3.2.1.1</b>	Variation 1: In the Presence of Chlorotrimethylsilane	148
<b>19.5.3.2.1.2</b>	Variation 2: In the Presence of Bis(trimethylsilyl) Peroxide	149
<b>19.5.3.2.2</b>	Method 2: Using Tosyl Cyanide and Zinc(II) Iodide	149
<b>19.5.3.2.3</b>	Method 3: Using Phenyl Cyanate	149
<b>19.5.3.2.4</b>	Method 4: Using 1 <i>H</i> -Imidazole-1-carbonitrile	150
<b>19.5.3.3</b>	Synthesis of Vinyl Nitriles	151
<b>19.5.3.3.1</b>	Method 1: Using Cyanogen Bromide and Cyanogen Chloride	151
<b>19.5.3.3.2</b>	Method 2: Using Tosyl Cyanide	151
<b>19.5.3.3.3</b>	Method 3: Using Phenyl Cyanates	152
<b>19.5.3.3.4</b>	Method 4: Using Triphenylphosphine/Thiocyanogen	152
<b>19.5.3.4</b>	Synthesis of Aliphatic Nitriles	152
<b>19.5.3.4.1</b>	Method 1: Using 2,3-Dichloro-5,6-dicyanobenzo-1,4-quinone and Trimethylsilyl Cyanide	152
<b>19.5.3.4.2</b>	Method 2: By Aerobic Ruthenium-Catalyzed Oxidative Cyanation with Sodium Cyanide	154
<b>19.5.3.4.3</b>	Method 3: Using Chlorine Dioxide and Sodium Cyanide	154

19.5.3.4.4	Method 4:	By Anodic Cyanation .....	155
19.5.3.4.5	Method 5:	Using 2-Chlorobenzyl Thiocyanate .....	155
19.5.3.4.6	Method 6:	Using Sulfonyl Cyanides .....	156
19.5.3.4.7	Method 7:	Using 1,2-Benziodoxole-1-carbonitriles .....	157
19.5.3.4.8	Method 8:	Using Phenyl Cyanate .....	157
19.5.3.4.9	Method 9:	Starting from <i>N</i> -Oxides of Tertiary Amines with Trifluoroacetic Acid Anhydride and Cyanide .....	158
19.5.4	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Metals</b> L. R. Subramanian		
19.5.4	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Metals</b> ..... 163		
19.5.4.1	Method 1:	From Organozinc Compounds .....	163
19.5.4.2	Method 2:	From Organocopper Compounds .....	165
19.5.4.3	Method 3:	From Organomagnesium Compounds .....	165
19.5.4.4	Method 4:	From Organolithium Compounds .....	167
19.5.4.5	Method 5:	From Other Organometallic Compounds .....	169
19.5.5	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of a Halogen</b> L. R. Subramanian		
19.5.5	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of a Halogen</b> ..... 173		
19.5.5.1	Method 1:	From Aliphatic and Alicyclic Halides .....	173
19.5.5.2	Method 2:	From Vinyl and Alkynyl Halides .....	177
19.5.5.3	Method 3:	From Aryl Halides .....	179
19.5.5.3.1	Variation 1:	Using Copper(I) Cyanide .....	180
19.5.5.3.2	Variation 2:	Using Alkali Metal Cyanides .....	182
19.5.5.3.3	Variation 3:	By Palladium- and Nickel-Catalyzed Substitutions .....	184
19.5.5.3.4	Variation 4:	By Microwave-Assisted Cyanations .....	189
19.5.5.3.5	Variation 5:	By Electrophilic Cyanation .....	190
19.5.5.4	Method 4:	From Heterocyclic Halides .....	191
19.5.6	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Oxygen Functions</b> L. R. Subramanian		
19.5.6	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Oxygen Functions</b> ... 197		
19.5.6.1	Method 1:	Substitution of a Hydroxy Group in a One-Pot Procedure ...	197
19.5.6.2	Method 2:	Substitution of Hydroxy Derivatives .....	202
19.5.6.2.1	Variation 1:	Displacement of Alkyl Sulfonates .....	202
19.5.6.2.2	Variation 2:	Displacement of Alkenyl Sulfonates .....	203
19.5.6.2.3	Variation 3:	Displacement of Aryl Sulfonates .....	204
19.5.6.3	Method 3:	Substitution of a Carbonyl Group by Direct Displacement ...	208

<b>19.5.7</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Sulfur Functions</b>		
	L. R. Subramanian		
<b>19.5.7</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Sulfur Functions</b>		215
<b>19.5.7.1</b>	Method 1:	Displacement of a Sulfanyl Group	215
<b>19.5.7.2</b>	Method 2:	Displacement of a Sulfonyl Group	215
<b>19.5.8</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Nitrogen Functions</b>		
	L. R. Subramanian		
<b>19.5.8</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Substitution of Nitrogen Functions</b>		217
<b>19.5.8.1</b>	Method 1:	By Replacement of Amines	217
<b>19.5.8.1.1</b>	Variation 1:	From Aliphatic and Alicyclic Amines	217
<b>19.5.8.1.2</b>	Variation 2:	From Aromatic Amines	221
<b>19.5.8.2</b>	Method 2:	By Replacement of a Nitro Group	223
<b>19.5.8.3</b>	Method 3:	By Fragmentation and Rearrangement Reactions	225
<b>19.5.8.3.1</b>	Variation 1:	From Beckmann Fragmentation of Oximes and Derivatives	225
<b>19.5.8.3.2</b>	Variation 2:	Miscellaneous Reactions	230
<b>19.5.9</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to a Carbonyl Group</b>		
	M. North		
<b>19.5.9</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to a Carbonyl Group</b>		235
<b>19.5.9.1</b>	Cyanohydrins Derived from Aldehydes		235
<b>19.5.9.1.1</b>	Method 1:	Addition without External Stereocontrol	235
<b>19.5.9.1.2</b>	Method 2:	Addition to Achiral Substrates in the Presence of a Chiral Catalyst	243
<b>19.5.9.1.2.1</b>	Variation 1:	Use of (R)-Oxynitrilase Enzymes	244
<b>19.5.9.1.2.2</b>	Variation 2:	Use of (S)-Oxynitrilase Enzymes	247
<b>19.5.9.1.2.3</b>	Variation 3:	Use of Cyclic Dipeptides as Catalysts	249
<b>19.5.9.1.2.4</b>	Variation 4:	Use of Chiral Titanium Complexes as Catalysts	251
<b>19.5.9.1.2.5</b>	Variation 5:	Use of Chiral Aluminum Complexes as Catalysts	260
<b>19.5.9.1.2.6</b>	Variation 6:	Use of Other Chiral Metal Complexes as Catalysts	262
<b>19.5.9.2</b>	Cyanohydrins Derived from Ketones		266
<b>19.5.9.2.1</b>	Method 1:	Addition without External Stereocontrol	266
<b>19.5.9.2.2</b>	Method 2:	Addition to Achiral Substrates in the Presence of a Chiral Catalyst	272
<b>19.5.9.2.2.1</b>	Variation 1:	Use of Oxynitrilase Enzymes	272
<b>19.5.9.2.2.2</b>	Variation 2:	Use of Metal-Based Catalysts	275
<b>19.5.9.2.2.3</b>	Variation 3:	Use of Chiral Lewis Bases	277

<b>19.5.10</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to an Imino Group</b>		
	M. North		
<b>19.5.10</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to an Imino Group</b>		<b>285</b>
<b>19.5.10.1</b>	$\alpha$ -Aminonitriles Derived from Aldimines		285
<b>19.5.10.1.1</b>	Method 1: Addition without Stereocontrol		285
<b>19.5.10.1.1.1</b>	Variation 1: Strecker Reactions under Aqueous Conditions		286
<b>19.5.10.1.1.2</b>	Variation 2: Strecker Reactions under Nonaqueous Conditions		287
<b>19.5.10.1.1.3</b>	Variation 3: Using Trimethylsilyl Cyanide		289
<b>19.5.10.1.1.4</b>	Variation 4: Addition of Cyanide to Aldimines Derived from Chiral Aldehydes		290
<b>19.5.10.1.2</b>	Method 2: Addition to Substrates Containing a Chiral Auxiliary on the Nitrogen Atom		291
<b>19.5.10.1.2.1</b>	Variation 1: Use of (1-Phenylethyl)amine		291
<b>19.5.10.1.2.2</b>	Variation 2: Use of 2-Phenylglycinol		292
<b>19.5.10.1.2.3</b>	Variation 3: Use of Phenylglycinamide		293
<b>19.5.10.1.2.4</b>	Variation 4: Use of Sugar-Derived Auxiliaries		293
<b>19.5.10.1.2.5</b>	Variation 5: Use of an $\alpha$ -Aminonitrile as a Chiral Auxiliary		294
<b>19.5.10.1.3</b>	Method 3: Addition to Achiral Substrates in the Presence of a Chiral Catalyst		295
<b>19.5.10.1.3.1</b>	Variation 1: Use of Nonmetallic Catalysts		295
<b>19.5.10.1.3.2</b>	Variation 2: Catalysis by Aluminum Complexes		297
<b>19.5.10.1.3.3</b>	Variation 3: Catalysis by First-Row Transition-Metal Complexes		299
<b>19.5.10.1.3.4</b>	Variation 4: Catalysis by Zirconium Complexes		300
<b>19.5.10.2</b>	$\alpha$ -Aminonitriles Derived from Ketimines		301
<b>19.5.10.2.1</b>	Method 1: Addition without Stereocontrol		301
<b>19.5.10.2.1.1</b>	Variation 1: Use of Ultrasound		301
<b>19.5.10.2.1.2</b>	Variation 2: Using Trimethylsilyl Cyanide		301
<b>19.5.10.2.1.3</b>	Variation 3: Other Addition Reactions		302
<b>19.5.10.2.2</b>	Method 2: Addition to Substrates Containing a Chiral Auxiliary on the Nitrogen Atom		303
<b>19.5.10.3</b>	Products Derived from Other Compounds Containing a C=N Bond		303
<b>19.5.10.3.1</b>	Method 1: Products Derived from Hydrazones		303
<b>19.5.10.3.1.1</b>	Variation 1: Processes Using Trimethylsilyl Cyanide		303
<b>19.5.10.3.1.2</b>	Variation 2: Reaction under Phase-Transfer Conditions		304
<b>19.5.10.3.2</b>	Method 2: Products Derived from Nitrones		305
<b>19.5.10.3.3</b>	Method 3: Products Derived from Sulfinimines		306
<b>19.5.10.3.4</b>	Method 4: Products Derived from Oximes		307

<b>19.5.11</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Conjugate Addition</b>		
	J. Podlech		
<b>19.5.11</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Conjugate Addition</b>		311
<b>19.5.11.1</b>	Method 1:	Hydrocyanation of $\alpha,\beta$ -Unsaturated Carbonyl Compounds	311
<b>19.5.11.1.1</b>	Variation 1:	Using Alkali Metal Cyanides	311
<b>19.5.11.1.2</b>	Variation 2:	Using Acetone Cyanohydrin	313
<b>19.5.11.1.3</b>	Variation 3:	Using Trimethylsilyl Cyanide	314
<b>19.5.11.1.4</b>	Variation 4:	Using Dialkylaluminum Cyanide or Hydrogen Cyanide/ Trialkylaluminum Compounds	315
<b>19.5.11.1.5</b>	Variation 5:	Using Organic Isocyanides	322
<b>19.5.12</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to Alkynes</b>		
	J. Podlech		
<b>19.5.12</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to Alkynes</b>		325
<b>19.5.12.1</b>	Method 1:	Hydrocyanation of Alkynes	325
<b>19.5.12.2</b>	Method 2:	Addition of Trimethylsilyl Cyanide or Tributylstannanecarbonitrile to Alkynes	328
<b>19.5.12.2.1</b>	Variation 1:	Addition to Terminal Arylalkynes	329
<b>19.5.12.2.2</b>	Variation 2:	Addition to Ynamines	329
<b>19.5.13</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to Alkenes</b>		
	J. Podlech		
<b>19.5.13</b>	<b>Introduction of the Cyano Group by Addition to Alkenes</b>		333
<b>19.5.13.1</b>	Method 1:	Hydrocyanation of Alkenes and Arylalkenes	334
<b>19.5.13.1.1</b>	Variation 1:	Hydrocyanation of Alkenes	334
<b>19.5.13.1.2</b>	Variation 2:	Hydrocyanation of Arylalkenes	336
<b>19.5.13.2</b>	Method 2:	Hydrocyanation of Conjugated and Isolated Dienes	337
<b>19.5.13.3</b>	Method 3:	Enantioselective Hydrocyanation of Alkenes	340
<b>19.5.14</b>	<b>Synthesis from Nitriles with Retention of the Cyano Group</b>		
	S.-I. Murahashi		
<b>19.5.14</b>	<b>Synthesis from Nitriles with Retention of the Cyano Group</b>		345
<b>19.5.14.1</b>	Method 1:	Reaction of $\alpha$ -Cyano Carbanions with Electrophiles	345
<b>19.5.14.1.1</b>	Variation 1:	Alkylation by Alkyl Halides	345
<b>19.5.14.1.2</b>	Variation 2:	Alkylation by Alcohols	347
<b>19.5.14.1.3</b>	Variation 3:	Alkylation by Organoboranes	348
<b>19.5.14.1.4</b>	Variation 4:	Reaction with Epoxides	348
<b>19.5.14.1.5</b>	Variation 5:	Reaction with Carboxylic Acid Derivatives	349
<b>19.5.14.1.6</b>	Variation 6:	Reaction with Carbonyl Compounds (Aldol Reaction)	349

19.5.14.1.7	Variation 7:	Reaction of Active Methylene Compounds Bearing a Cyano Group with Carbonyl Compounds (Knoevenagel Reaction) .....	351
19.5.14.1.8	Variation 8:	Reaction with Alkenes and Alkynes Bearing Electron-Withdrawing Groups (Michael Addition) .....	354
19.5.14.1.9	Variation 9:	Reaction with Nitriles (Thorpe–Ziegler Reaction) .....	356
19.5.14.2	Method 2:	Wittig Reaction .....	358
19.5.14.3	Method 3:	Reaction of Organozinc Compounds Bearing Cyano Groups with Electrophiles .....	360
19.5.14.4	Method 4:	Reaction of Organocopper Compounds Bearing Cyano Groups with Electrophiles .....	361
19.5.14.5	Method 5:	Addition of Radicals Bearing Cyano Groups by Reductive Coupling .....	362
19.5.14.6	Method 6:	Friedel–Crafts Reaction .....	363
19.5.14.7	Method 7:	Addition of Carbenes Bearing Cyano Groups .....	363
19.5.14.8	Method 8:	Addition to Alkenenitriles .....	364
19.5.14.8.1	Variation 1:	Conjugate Addition of Ketone and Ester Enolates to Alkenenitriles (Cyanoethylation) .....	364
19.5.14.8.2	Variation 2:	Conjugate Addition of Enamines to Alkenenitriles (Cyanoethylation) .....	365
19.5.14.8.3	Variation 3:	Conjugate Addition of Metalated Nitriles to Alkenenitriles ...	367
19.5.14.8.4	Variation 4:	Conjugate Addition of Metalated Nitroalkanes and Metalated Sulfones and Sulfoxides to Alkenenitriles .....	368
19.5.14.8.5	Variation 5:	Addition of Diazonium Salts to Alkenenitriles (Meerwein Reaction) .....	369
19.5.14.8.6	Variation 6:	Conjugate Addition of Grignard Reagents to Alkenenitriles ..	369
19.5.14.8.7	Variation 7:	Conjugate Addition with Organocopper Reagents .....	370
19.5.14.8.8	Variation 8:	Conjugate Addition with Organozinc Reagents .....	371
19.5.14.8.9	Variation 9:	Nickel-Catalyzed Addition to Alkenenitriles .....	372
19.5.14.8.10	Variation 10:	Palladium-Catalyzed Addition to Benzyldienemalononitrile ..	373
19.5.14.8.11	Variation 11:	Conjugate Addition of Allylsilanes to Alkenenitriles .....	373
19.5.14.8.12	Variation 12:	Conjugate Addition of Thiols to Alkenenitriles .....	374
19.5.14.8.13	Variation 13:	Conjugate Addition of Amines to Alkenenitriles .....	374
19.5.14.8.14	Variation 14:	Cyanoselenation of Alkenes .....	375
19.5.14.8.15	Variation 15:	[2 + 2] Cycloadditions of Alkenenitriles .....	376
19.5.14.8.16	Variation 16:	1,3-Dipolar Cycloadditions .....	377
19.5.14.8.17	Variation 17:	The Diels–Alder Reaction .....	378
19.5.14.8.18	Variation 18:	Dimerization and Condensation of Nitriles .....	379
19.5.14.9	Method 9:	Metal-Catalyzed Reaction of Alkenes Bearing Cyano Groups ..	380
19.5.14.9.1	Variation 1:	The Heck–Mizoroki Reaction .....	380
19.5.14.9.2	Variation 2:	Palladium-Catalyzed Allylation of Nitriles .....	382
19.5.14.9.3	Variation 3:	Catalytic Dimerization of Propenenitrile .....	383
19.5.14.9.4	Variation 4:	Metathesis Reaction of Alkenenitriles .....	383
19.5.14.9.5	Variation 5:	Ruthenium-Catalyzed Addition of Alcohols to Alkenenitriles ..	384
19.5.14.10	Method 10:	Addition to Alkynenitriles .....	384
19.5.14.11	Method 11:	Metal-Catalyzed Cross-Coupling Reactions .....	386

19.5.14.11.1	Variation 1:	Cross Coupling Using Organozinc Compounds Bearing Cyano Groups	386
19.5.14.11.2	Variation 2:	Cross Coupling of Organoboranes with Organic Halides	388
19.5.14.11.3	Variation 3:	Cross Coupling Using Organotin Compounds	389
19.5.14.11.4	Variation 4:	Cross Coupling Using Organosilicon Compounds	390
19.5.14.11.5	Variation 5:	Direct Catalytic Arylation of Cyanoesters	390
19.5.14.12	Method 12:	Reduction of Alkenenitriles	391
19.5.14.13	Method 13:	Oxidation of Nitrile Compounds	393
19.5.14.14	Method 14:	Synthesis of Polycyano Compounds	394

**19.5.15 Applications of Nitriles as Reagents for Organic Synthesis with Loss of the Nitrile Functionality (Including Cycloaddition Reactions)**  
S. J. Collier and P. Langer

19.5.15	<b>Applications of Nitriles as Reagents for Organic Synthesis with Loss of the Nitrile Functionality (Including Cycloaddition Reactions)</b>		403
19.5.15.1	Method 1:	Base-Mediated One-Pot Reactions of Nitriles	403
19.5.15.2	Method 2:	Nitriles as Reagents in Reactions of Three or More Components	405
19.5.15.2.1	Variation 1:	Reactions with One Nitrile Molecule	405
19.5.15.2.2	Variation 2:	Reactions with Two Nitrile Molecules	407
19.5.15.2.3	Variation 3:	Reactions with Three or More Nitrile Molecules	410
19.5.15.3	Method 3:	Cycloaddition Reactions	411
19.5.15.3.1	Variation 1:	[2 + 2 + 2]-Self-Cyclotrimerization Reactions	411
19.5.15.3.2	Variation 2:	[2 + 2 + 2]-Cyclotrimerization Reactions of Nitriles and Alkynes	412
19.5.15.3.3	Variation 3:	[4 + 2]-Cycloaddition Reactions	416
19.5.15.3.4	Variation 4:	[3 + 2]-Cycloaddition Reactions	419
19.5.15.3.5	Variation 5:	[2 + 2]-Cycloaddition Reactions	422

**19.6 Product Class 6: Phosphaalkynes (Alkylidynephosphines)**  
U. Bergsträßer

19.6	<b>Product Class 6: Phosphaalkynes (Alkylidynephosphines)</b>		427
19.6.1	Synthesis of Product Class 6		428
19.6.1.1	Method 1:	Elimination of Hydrogen Halides	428
19.6.1.1.1	Variation 1:	From Alkyldichlorophosphines	428
19.6.1.1.2	Variation 2:	From Substituted (Dihalomethyl)phosphines	428
19.6.1.2	Method 2:	Elimination of Organometallic Compounds	430
19.6.1.2.1	Variation 1:	Of Chlorotrimethylsilane	430
19.6.1.2.2	Variation 2:	Of Hexamethyldisiloxane	430
19.6.1.2.3	Variation 3:	Of Lithium Trimethylsilanolate	432
19.6.1.3	Method 3:	Rearrangement of Halophosphaalkenes	432
19.6.1.4	Method 4:	Rearrangement of Alkynylphosphines	433
19.6.1.5	Method 5:	Rearrangement of Phosphiranes or Allylphosphines by Flash-Vacuum Pyrolysis	434

19.6.1.6	Method 6:	Rearrangement of 1-Aza-3-phosphaallenes	434
19.6.1.7	Methods 7:	Other Methods	435
19.6.2	Applications of Product Class 6 in Organic Synthesis		436
19.6.2.1	Method 1:	Cycloaddition Reactions of Phosphaalkynes	436
19.6.2.1.1	Variation 1:	[2 + 1] Cycloadditions	436
19.6.2.1.2	Variation 2:	[3 + 2] Cycloadditions	436
19.6.2.1.3	Variation 3:	[4 + 2] Cycloadditions	437
19.6.2.2	Method 2:	1,2-Addition Reactions of Phosphaalkynes	438
19.6.2.2.1	Variation 1:	Addition of Enophiles	438
19.6.2.2.2	Variation 2:	Addition of Organometallic Groups	438
19.6.2.3	Method 3:	Phosphaalkynes as Ligands in Transition-Metal Complexes	439
19.6.2.4	Method 4:	Cyclooligomerization Reactions of Phosphaalkynes	440
19.7	<b>Product Class 7: Isocyanides and Related Compounds</b>		
	M. Suginome and Y. Ito		
19.7	<b>Product Class 7: Isocyanides and Related Compounds</b>		445
19.7.1	<b>Product Subclass 1: Carbon-Bound Isocyanides</b>		446
19.7.1.1	Synthesis of Product Subclass 1		446
19.7.1.1.1	Method 1:	Nucleophilic Substitution of Halides with Metal Cyanides	446
19.7.1.1.1.1	Variation 1:	From Halides and Equivalents	446
19.7.1.1.1.2	Variation 2:	From Epoxides and Oxetanes	450
19.7.1.1.2	Method 2:	Reduction of Isocyanates and Related Compounds	453
19.7.1.1.3	Method 3:	Reduction of Carbamates	455
19.7.1.1.4	Method 4:	Dehalogenation of Isocyanide Dihalides	455
19.7.1.1.5	Method 5:	Dehydration of Formamides	456
19.7.1.1.5.1	Variation 1:	With Phosgene	457
19.7.1.1.5.2	Variation 2:	With Trichloromethyl Chloroformate (Diphosgene)	457
19.7.1.1.5.3	Variation 3:	With Bis(trichloromethyl) Carbonate (Triphosgene)	459
19.7.1.1.5.4	Variation 4:	With Thionyl Chloride/Dimethylformamide (Vilsmeier Reagent)	460
19.7.1.1.5.5	Variation 5:	With Phosphoryl Chloride	461
19.7.1.1.5.6	Variation 6:	With Arenesulfonyl Chlorides	466
19.7.1.1.5.7	Variation 7:	With Other Reagents	468
19.7.1.1.6	Method 6:	By $\alpha$ -Elimination Reactions Involving Fragmentation of Heterocyclic Compounds	472
19.7.1.1.7	Method 7:	Addition of Cyanides to Alkenes	475
19.7.1.1.8	Method 8:	Reaction of Dihalocarbenes with Primary Amines	478
19.7.1.1.9	Method 9:	From Other Isocyanides through Their $\alpha$ -Anions	480
19.7.1.1.9.1	Variation 1:	Reaction with Alkyl Halides and Epoxides	480
19.7.1.1.9.2	Variation 2:	Reaction with Carbonyl Compounds and Michael Acceptors	484
19.7.1.1.9.3	Variation 3:	Elimination and C=C Transposition Reactions	486
19.7.1.2	Applications of Product Subclass 1 in Organic Synthesis		488
19.7.1.2.1	Method 1:	Simple $\alpha$ -Additions	488



19.7.1.2.1.1	Variation 1:	Addition of Brønsted Acids .....	488
19.7.1.2.1.2	Variation 2:	Addition of Hydrogen—Heteroatom Bonds and Heteroatom—Heteroatom Bonds .....	489
19.7.1.2.1.3	Variation 3:	Addition of Metal Hydrides and Bimetals .....	490
19.7.1.2.1.4	Variation 4:	Addition of Organometallic Compounds .....	491
19.7.1.2.1.5	Variation 5:	Oxidative $\alpha$ -Additions Including the Addition of Halogen-Containing Reagents .....	494
19.7.1.2.1.6	Variation 6:	Addition of Acid Chlorides and Related Compounds .....	494
19.7.1.2.1.7	Variation 7:	Synthesis of Heteroaromatic Compounds by Intramolecular $\alpha$ -Addition Reactions of <i>ortho</i> -Functionalized Aryl Isocyanides .....	495
19.7.1.2.1.8	Variation 8:	Addition to $\pi$ -Systems (Including Aromatic Compounds) ....	496
19.7.1.2.2	Method 2:	Cyclizations Utilizing Isocyanides as One-Carbon Donors ....	497
19.7.1.2.3	Method 3:	The Passerini Reaction and Ugi Reaction: Multicomponent Couplings by an $\alpha$ -Addition Reaction .....	499
19.7.1.2.3.1	Variation 1:	The Passerini Reaction: Synthesis of $\alpha$ -Acyloxycarboxamides by the Three-Component Coupling of an Isocyanide, a Carbonyl Compound, and a Carboxylic Acid .....	500
19.7.1.2.3.2	Variation 2:	The Ugi Reaction: Synthesis of $\alpha$ -Acylaminocarboxamides by the Four-Component Coupling of an Isocyanide, a Carbonyl Compound, an Amine, and a Carboxylic Acid ....	504
19.7.1.2.4	Method 4:	Cycloadditions via $\alpha$ -Isocyanomethyl Anions .....	509
19.7.1.2.5	Method 5:	Transition-Metal Catalysis Involving Activation of C—H Bonds $\alpha$ to the Isocyano Group .....	512
19.7.1.2.6	Method 6:	Oligomerization and Polymerization .....	514
19.7.1.2.6.1	Variation 1:	Of Monoisocyanides .....	514
19.7.1.2.6.2	Variation 2:	Of Diisocyanides .....	515
19.7.1.2.7	Method 7:	Reactions Accompanied by Cleavage of the C—NC Linkage: Isomerization to Nitriles and Removal of the Isocyano Group .....	516
19.7.1.2.8	Method 8:	Use of Transition-Metal Complexes of Isocyanide as Catalysts .....	518
19.7.2	<b>Product Subclass 2: Oxygen-, Sulfur-, Nitrogen-, and Phosphorus-Bound Isocyanides</b> .....		520
19.7.2.1	Synthesis of Product Subclass 2 .....		521
19.7.2.1.1	Method 1:	Dehydration .....	521
19.7.2.1.2	Method 2:	Fragmentation of Heterocyclic Compounds .....	523
19.7.2.1.3	Methods 3:	Miscellaneous Methods .....	523
<b>Keyword Index</b> .....			531
<b>Author Index</b> .....			557
<b>Abbreviations</b> .....			589

## Introduction

S.-I. Murahashi

This volume covers the synthesis of compounds with three carbon–heteroatom bonds which include nitrile oxides, nitrile sulfides, nitrile imines, nitrilium salts, nitrile ylides, nitriles, phosphalkynes, and carbon- and heteroatom-bound isocyanides. These are shown in Table 1, together with the sections in which they appear.

**Table 1** Structures and Nomenclature for the Three Carbon–Heteroatom Bond Containing Compounds Covered in Volume 19

Product Class	Structural Formula	Section
nitrile oxides	$R^1C\equiv N^+-O^-$	19.1.1
nitrile sulfides	$R^1C\equiv N^+-S^-$	19.1.2
nitrile imines	$R^2C\equiv N^+-N^-R^1$	19.2
nitrilium salts	$R^2C\equiv N^+-R^1$	19.3
nitrile ylides	$R^2C\equiv N^+-C^-R^1$	19.4
nitriles	$R^1C\equiv N$	19.5
phosphalkynes	$R^1C\equiv P$	19.6
isocyanides	$R^1N=C$	19.7.1
heteroatom-bound isocyanides	$YN=C$ (Y = N, S, O, P)	19.7.2

References to reviews on these specific functional groups are given in each section. Discussion of each specific group is generally subdivided into methods that have been selected as the most useful for the preparation of the product class or subclass in question. Each method is presented separately as follows:

1. Introduction: comparison with other methods.
2. Presentation of the scope of the method to include background, discussion of representative examples, safety; mechanistic information where relevant to the use of the method in synthesis; a table of examples (for selected methods); reaction schemes.
3. Representative experimental procedures.

In some cases, methods are further subdivided into variations on a method, each variation being presented according to the above format.

The coverage is not exhaustive, rather the most useful and reliable methods for the synthesis of each functional group have been selected. In some cases, methods that are recommended for limited use, or that have not yet been fully developed, are listed at the end of a section for reference. Tables and representative experimental procedures are given to illustrate the applicability of each approach.

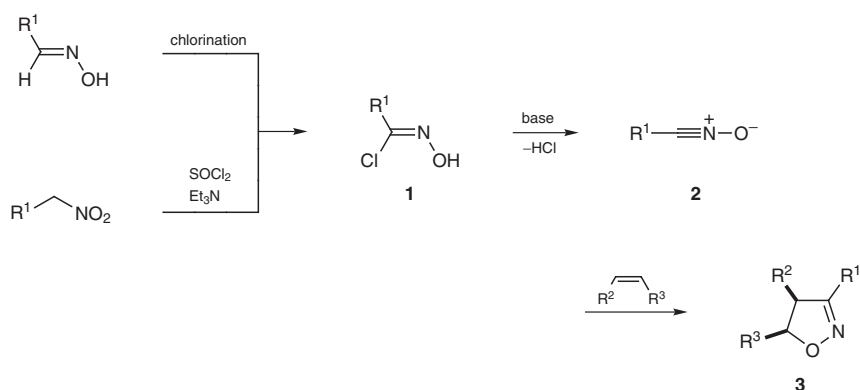
This introduction will outline the individual product classes together with highlighted synthetic methods.

Nitrile oxides are 1,3-dipoles containing the same array of atoms in the functional group as nitrones, but at one oxidation level higher. Nitrile oxides **2** are readily prepared, mainly from hydroximoyl halides **1**, which are obtained through the halogenation of ald-

*for references see p 14*

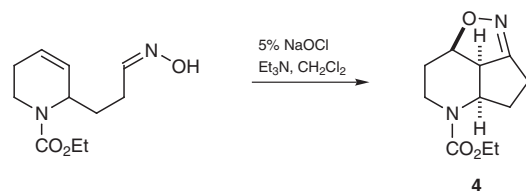
oximes with a variety of halogenating reagents<sup>[1]</sup> or by treatment of activated nitroalkanes with thionyl chloride in the presence of triethylamine (Scheme 1).<sup>[2]</sup> As they are difficult to isolate and store, nitrile oxides are normally generated in the presence of a reactive dipolarophile, giving the appropriate adduct directly; however, some nitrile oxides with bulky substituents are stable. Cycloaddition to a substituted ethene proceeds regioselectively, and the products are highly useful as precursors for a variety of other compounds and their functionality is readily unmasked. Typically, metal ion promoted cycloadditions to give dihydroisoxazoles **3** are highly useful reactions (Scheme 1). Stereospecific syntheses of dihydroisoxazoles can be achieved using effective chiral auxiliaries and metal ions. Typically, in the presence of magnesium ions the cycloaddition of nitrile oxides to allylic alcohols proceeds in a highly *syn*-selective manner when  $\alpha$ -chiral dipolarophiles are used.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Scheme 1** Synthesis of Nitrile Oxides from Hydroximoyl Halides and Stereospecific 1,3-Dipolar Addition to Alkenes<sup>[2–4]</sup>



Nitrile oxides can also be prepared directly by oxidation of aldoximes with sodium hypochlorite or *N*-bromosuccinimide in the presence of a base such as triethylamine. Such oxidations are normally combined with cycloaddition reactions with a suitable dipolarophile already present in the same pot. One typical example is the intramolecular cycloaddition of an aldoxime to give tricycle **4**, which contains the ring skeleton of natural product streptazolin (Scheme 2).<sup>[5]</sup>

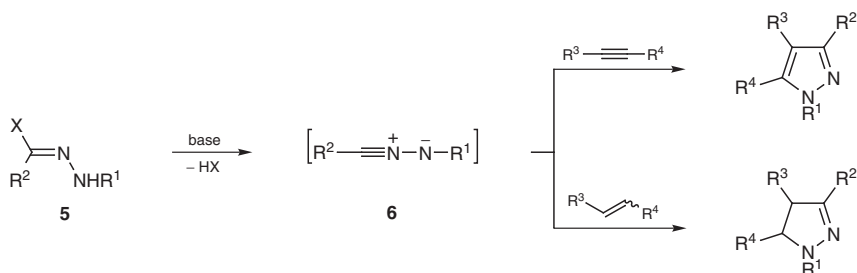
**Scheme 2** Direct Synthesis of a Nitrile Oxide and Its Application in the Partial Synthesis of Streptazolin<sup>[5]</sup>



Nitrile sulfides are unstable and it is impossible to isolate them. Nitrile sulfides are generated by the thermal decomposition of five-membered heterocyclic compounds, such as 1,3,4-oxathiazol-2-one, and trapped immediately with a suitable dipolarophile, thereby providing access to several classes of heterocycles that are obtained only with difficulty by other means.

Nitrile imines **6**, which can be generated by the base-induced dehydrohalogenation of stable hydrazoneyl halides **5**, are trapped by a variety of 1,3-dipolarophiles such as alkenes and alkynes to afford 4,5-dihydropyrazoles and pyrazoles, respectively (Scheme 3).<sup>[6,7]</sup>

**Scheme 3** Generation of Nitrile Imines from Hydrazoneyl Halides and Entrapment with Alkenes and Alkynes<sup>[6,7]</sup>



Nitrilium salts are intermediates in a number of reactions that include the Beckmann rearrangement producing amides from oximes,<sup>[8,9]</sup> the Ritter reaction producing amides from alcohols and nitriles,<sup>[10–12]</sup> the von Braun amide degradation reaction producing alkyl halides and nitriles,<sup>[13]</sup> the Bischler–Napieralski reaction producing dihydroisoquinolines and related ring-fused imines from amides and arenes,<sup>[13]</sup> the Hoesch acylation reaction from arenes and nitriles,<sup>[14]</sup> the Gattermann formylation reaction of arenes and heteroarenes,<sup>[15]</sup> and the Schmidt reaction producing amides from ketones and hydrazoic acid.<sup>[16]</sup> In most cases, the nitrilium ions are formed and reacted instantly, but stable nitrilium salts can be isolated. The acid-mediated dehydration of oximes is better known as the Beckmann rearrangement. N-Alkylation of nitriles provides one of the most convenient and direct routes to nitrilium salts. Nitrilium salts are also prepared by the interaction of alkyl chloroformates with Lewis acid complexes of nitriles.

Nitrile ylides are 1,3-dipoles and can be prepared by several methods<sup>[7,17]</sup> including the elimination of hydrogen chloride from imidoyl chlorides, the reaction of carbenes and carbenoids with nitriles, and the photochemical ring opening of aziridines. Pyrroles and dihydropyrroles are obtained by the 1,3-dipolar cycloaddition of nitriles ylides with alkynes and alkenes.

Nitriles are an extremely important class of compounds in organic synthesis. Nitriles have a strong dipole, oriented with the negative end toward the nitrogen, and the cyano group is recognized as a powerful electron-withdrawing substituent. Nitriles have unique properties, and thus various reactions for the synthesis and the unique transformations of nitriles have been developed.

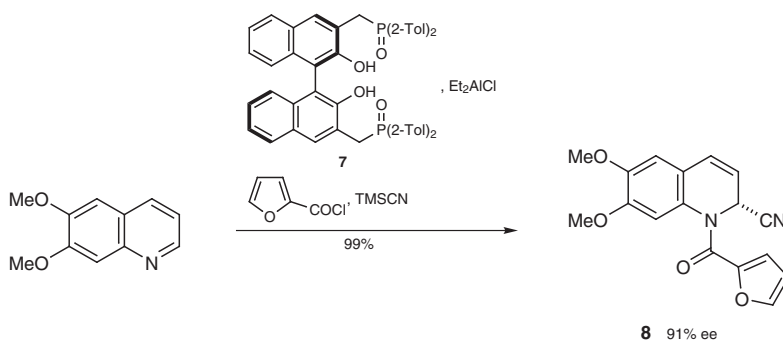
A typical method for the synthesis of nitriles is the construction of the cyano group by functional group transformation from various starting materials, such as aldehydes, carboxylic acids and their derivatives, hydrazones, aldoximes, carboxamides, and thioamides.<sup>[18–20]</sup>

The oxidation of hydrazones and aldoximes are important synthetic routes to nitriles, although the direct conversion of aldehydes in a one-pot reaction can be carried out by oxidation of the in situ formed aldimines. One of the most typical transformations is the preparation of nitriles by nucleophilic substitution of alkyl, allyl, and benzyl halides (at the  $\text{sp}^3$ -carbon–halogen bonds) with various cyanide reagents.<sup>[21,22]</sup> Substitution at the  $\text{sp}^2$ -carbon–halogen bonds is very difficult; however, the palladium-catalyzed coupling reaction of *Z*- and *E*-vinyl halides with sodium cyanide in the presence of 18-crown-6 was introduced in 1977 as the first transition-metal-catalyzed cyanation reaction of  $\text{sp}^2$ -carbon–halogen bonds to give *Z*- and *E*-vinyl cyanides stereospecifically.<sup>[23]</sup> This reaction

led to the discovery of palladium- and nickel-catalyzed cyanations of aryl halides and vinyl and aryl trifluoromethanesulfonates. The conversion of the aryl chlorides into aryl cyanides is very convenient.<sup>[24]</sup>

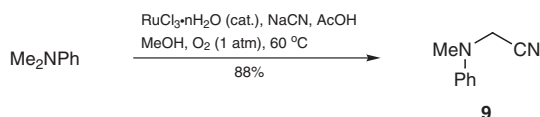
Aromatic and heteroaromatic nitriles can be prepared by direct cyanation of aromatic and heteroaromatic compounds with cyanogen bromide or trichloroacetonitrile in the presence of Friedel–Crafts catalysts.<sup>[25]</sup> Heterocyclic *N*-oxides such as pyridine, quinone, pyrazine, pyrimidine, quinoxaline, or isoquinoline *N*-oxide undergo reaction with trimethylsilyl cyanide in the presence of a base to give the cyanation products directly. The reactions of pyridine 1-oxide with dimethylcarbamoyl chloride and trimethylsilyl cyanide give the corresponding carbonitriles in excellent yields (modified Reissert–Henze reaction).<sup>[26]</sup> Catalytic asymmetric Reissert-type reactions of quinoline and isoquinoline derivatives using a Lewis acid–Lewis base bifunctional catalyst are highly useful; for example, with a catalyst obtained from ligand **7** and diethylaluminum chloride,<sup>[27]</sup> 1-(2-furylcarbonyl)-6,7-dimethoxy-1,2-dihydroquinoline-2-carbonitrile (**8**) is obtained in 91% ee (Scheme 4).

**Scheme 4** Aluminum-Catalyzed Asymmetric Reissert-Type Reaction of a Quinoline<sup>[27]</sup>



Direct cyanation of the  $\text{sp}^{\text{C}}\text{--H}$  bond of acetylenes is performed by treatment with copper(I) cyanide and chlorotrimethylsilane,<sup>[28]</sup> or butyllithium and phenyl cyanate.<sup>[29]</sup> Direct cyanation of the  $\text{sp}^3\text{C--H}$  bond is extremely difficult; however, aerobic oxidative cyanation of tertiary amines with sodium cyanide has been demonstrated. Thus, the treatment of *N,N*-dimethylaniline with catalytic ruthenium(III) chloride hydrate and sodium cyanide under molecular oxygen (1 atm) gives  $\alpha$ -cyanated amine **9** (Scheme 5), which is the precursor of amino acids and 1,2-diamines, in excellent yields. The direct C–H activation of an amine  $\alpha$  to nitrogen with a ruthenium catalyst forms the intermediate iminium ion and this is the key step of this interesting reaction.<sup>[30]</sup>

**Scheme 5** Aerobic Ruthenium-Catalyzed Oxidative Cyanation of a Tertiary Amine with Sodium Cyanide<sup>[30]</sup>



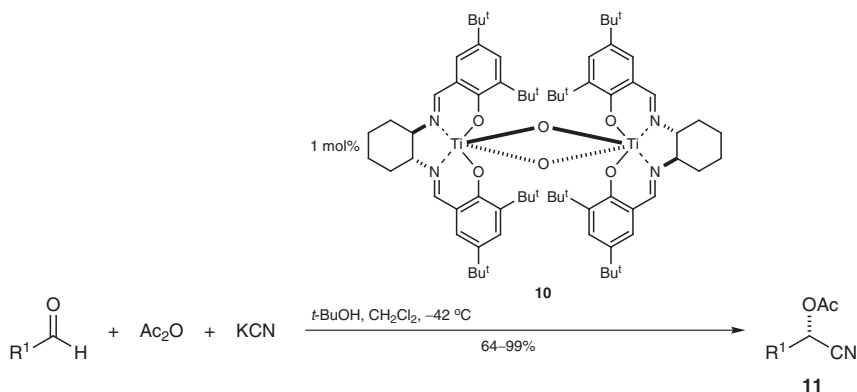
Introduction of the cyano group by substitution of the metals in organometallic compounds can also be used for nitrile synthesis. Typically, the substitution reaction of organozinc or copper compounds with tosyl cyanide is highly useful.<sup>[31]</sup>

Nitriles can also be synthesized by the transformation of other substrates such as amines, alcohols, and nitro compounds. The oxidative transformation of primary amines to nitriles is performed by aerobic oxidation of primary amines in the presence of a hydroxyapatite-bound ruthenium complex [Ru-HAP(II)], which is prepared by mixing calcium hydroxyapatite  $[\text{Ca}_{10}(\text{PO}_4)_6(\text{OH})_2]$  with aqueous ruthenium(III) chloride.<sup>[32]</sup>

The synthesis of cyanohydrins and especially the asymmetric synthesis of these compounds are extremely important; therefore, many methods have been developed.<sup>[33]</sup> The cyanohydrins of aldehydes are prepared upon treatment with potassium or sodium cyanide/18-crown-6, acetone cyanohydrins with a metal complex catalyst, and trimethylsilyl cyanide with a catalyst. The most significant advances in the area of cyanohydrin chemistry since 1985 have been the development of catalysts for the asymmetric addition of cyanide to aldehydes. The reaction can be induced by a variety of catalysts, of which enzymes, synthetic peptides, and chiral metal complexes are the three most common.<sup>[34–38]</sup>

The cyclic dipeptide containing histidine residue catalyzes the asymmetric addition of hydrogen cyanide to benzaldehyde, giving optically active mandelonitrile with up to 90% ee.<sup>[39]</sup> A number of organometallic reagents based on chiral complexes of titanium,<sup>[40–42]</sup> aluminum, lanthanide,<sup>[41,43,44]</sup> and other metals<sup>[45]</sup> have been found to catalyze the asymmetric addition of hydrogen cyanide or trimethylsilyl cyanide to aldehydes. Typically, the chiral titanium–salen complex **10** catalyzes the asymmetric addition of potassium cyanide and acetic anhydride to aldehydes affording the cyanohydrin acetates **11** with high enantioselectivities (Scheme 6).

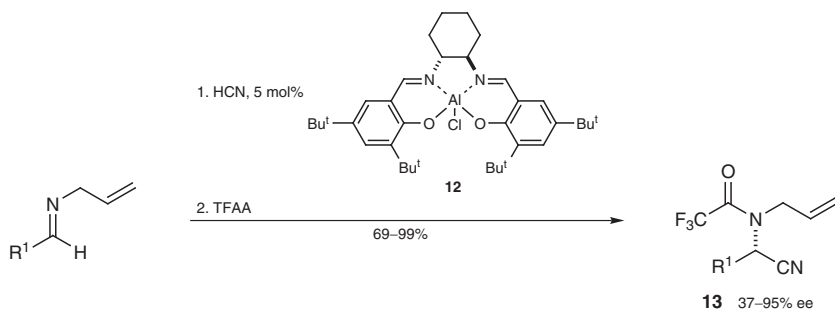
**Scheme 6** Titanium-Catalyzed Asymmetric Addition of Potassium Cyanide and Acetic Anhydride to Aldehydes<sup>[43,44]</sup>



The Strecker reaction is a three-component condensation reaction between a carbonyl compound, an amine, and a cyanide to produce an  $\alpha$ -aminonitrile. The reaction proceeds via in situ formation of an imine, followed by addition of cyanide to the imine.

The asymmetric addition of cyanide to imines is important in organic synthesis.<sup>[46–50]</sup> The enantioselective addition of hydrogen cyanide or trimethylsilyl cyanide to imines in the presence of a chiral catalyst such as a cyclic dipeptide,<sup>[51]</sup> or an aluminum,<sup>[52,53]</sup> titanium,<sup>[54]</sup> or zirconium<sup>[55]</sup> complex is very important in the synthesis of optically active  $\alpha$ -aminonitriles. Typically, enantioselective addition of hydrogen cyanide to imines gives aminonitriles **13** using 5 mol% of the chiral aluminum–salen complex **12** (Scheme 7).<sup>[52]</sup>

**Scheme 7** Enantioselective Addition of Hydrogen Cyanide to Imines Catalyzed by a Chiral Aluminum–Salen Complex<sup>[52]</sup>

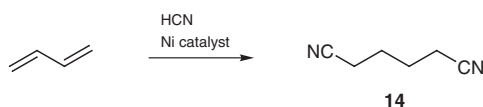


Hydrocyanation of  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated carbonyl compounds and related compounds is performed upon treatment with diethylaluminum cyanide (prepared from HCN and Et<sub>3</sub>Al), trimethylsilyl cyanide and a Lewis acid, or acetone cyanohydrin. Hydrogen cyanide itself is normally incapable of adding to Michael acceptors.

The hydrocyanation of alkynes is a very important and useful process since it generates highly versatile  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated nitriles from easily accessible starting materials. The tetrakis(triphenyl phosphite)nickel(II)-catalyzed hydrocyanation of diphenylacetylene gives 1,2-diphenylethanenitrile selectively.<sup>[56,57]</sup>

The Dupont process for the synthesis of adiponitrile (hexanedinitrile, **14**) from buta-1,3-diene is the most important application of hydrocyanation. The overall reaction consists of three stages, the first being the synthesis of a mixture of pent-3-enenitrile and 2-methylbut-3-enenitrile (7:3) by the nickel-catalyzed addition of 1 equivalent of hydrogen cyanide to buta-1,3-diene. The isomeric nitriles are separated by distillation, and the unwanted branched product is isomerized in a second step using a similar nickel(0) catalytic system in the presence of a Lewis acid. In the final part of the process, the mixture of unbranched pentenenitriles is isomerized and concomitantly hydrocyanated resulting in the product adiponitrile (**14**) with selectivities of up to 90% (Scheme 8).<sup>[58–60]</sup>

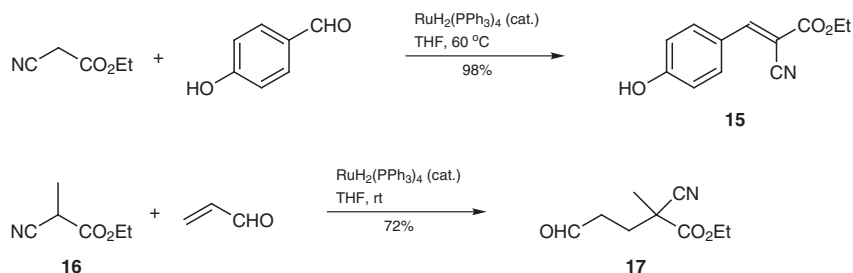
**Scheme 8** Nickel-Catalyzed Hydrocyanation of Buta-1,3-diene To Give Adiponitrile<sup>[58–60]</sup>



There are many methods for the synthesis of nitriles from other nitriles with retention of the cyano group. The reactions of  $\alpha$ -cyano carbanions with electrophiles are one of the fundamental synthetic routes to nitriles, which include reaction with alkyl halides, epoxides, the aldol reaction, the Knoevenagel reaction, the Michael reaction, and the Thorpe–Ziegler reaction. Usually  $\alpha$ -cyano carbanions can be generated upon treatment of nitriles with strong bases such as lithium diisopropylamide and potassium *tert*-butoxide; however, C–H activation  $\alpha$  to the nitrogen of nitriles with a low-valent transition-metal catalyst such as dihydridotetrakis(triphenylphosphine)ruthenium(II) is highly useful. The aldol reaction, the Knoevenagel reaction, and the Michael reaction of nitriles can be carried out in a highly selective manner with low-valent transition-metal complexes such as dihydridotetrakis(triphenylphosphine)ruthenium(II) as the redox Lewis acid catalyst under neutral and mild reaction conditions.<sup>[61,62]</sup> Typically, the reaction of ethyl cyanoacetate with 4-hydroxybenzaldehyde gives the product **15** in 98% yield (Scheme 9). The reaction can be carried out under neutral conditions and acidic substrates are tolerated in the

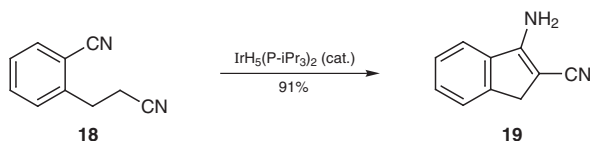
reaction. Another example is the Michael addition of ethyl 2-cyanopropanoate (**16**) to a base-sensitive substrate of prop-2-enal to give **17** (Scheme 9). These reactions provide non-salt processes that are environmentally benign.<sup>[63]</sup>

**Scheme 9** Ruthenium-Catalyzed Aldol Condensation and Michael Addition<sup>[61,62]</sup>



The Thorpe–Ziegler reaction has been carried out using a stoichiometric amount of a strong base, such as sodium hydride, to give aminonitriles from dinitriles; however, pentahydrido-bis(triisopropylphosphine)iridium(V) can be used instead of a strong base, and the catalytic reaction of **18** can be carried out to give **19** under neutral conditions (Scheme 10).<sup>[64]</sup>

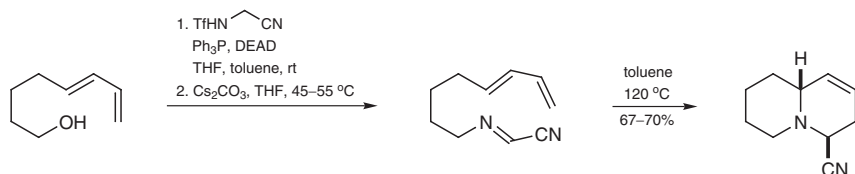
**Scheme 10** Iridium-Catalyzed Thorpe–Ziegler Condensation of a Nitrile<sup>[64]</sup>



Conjugate additions of reactive nucleophiles to alkenes or alkynes are important C–C and carbon–heteroatom bond-forming reactions for making a variety of nitriles.<sup>[65,66]</sup> Various nucleophiles such as oxo enolates, ester enolates, enamines, metalated nitriles, metalated nitroalkanes, organometallic compounds, allylsilanes, thiols, and amines add to alkenenitriles selectively to give numerous nitrile compounds.

[2+2] Cycloaddition, 1,3-dipolar cycloaddition, and the Diels–Alder reaction are convenient for the stereoselective synthesis of cyclic compounds bearing a nitrile. Iminoacetoneitriles, which are readily prepared from alcohols, are useful azodienophiles for intramolecular hetero-Diels–Alder reactions (Scheme 11).<sup>[67]</sup>

**Scheme 11** Aza-Diels–Alder Reaction of an Iminoacetoneitrile<sup>[67]</sup>



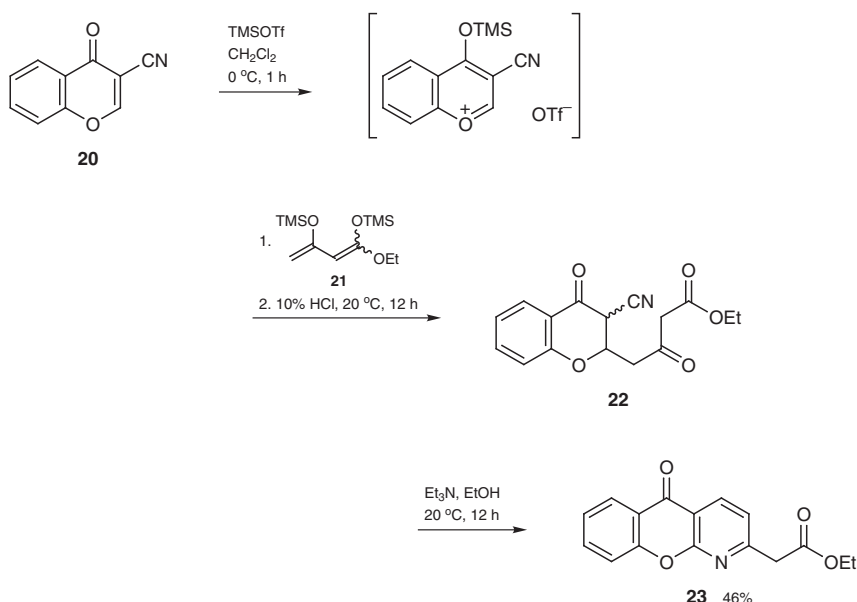
The Heck–Mizoroki reaction, palladium- and nickel-catalyzed cross-coupling reactions with various organometallic compounds, and palladium-catalyzed reactions of allyl esters are extremely useful for the synthesis of nitrile compounds, especially alkenenitriles.



Nitriles have unique properties, and, therefore, various transformations of nitriles have been developed. Functional group transformations of nitriles to amines, imines, aldehydes, ketones, amides, amidines, amidrazones, imidates, and carboxylic acids are widely known, and these transformations have been described in sections of other volumes within *Science of Synthesis*.

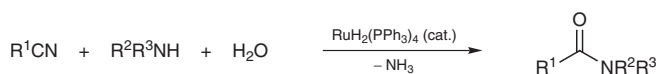
The applications of nitriles in the construction of more complex molecules are also described in this volume. Three-component reactions, one-pot cyclization, cycloaddition, and domino reactions are often used for the synthesis of various heterocyclic compounds. Typically, the reaction of **20** with trimethylsilyl trifluoromethanesulfonate, followed by disiloxidiene **21** affords the open-chain product **22**. Treatment of **22** with triethylamine affords the benzopyrano[2,3-*b*]pyridine **23** (Scheme 12).<sup>[68]</sup>

**Scheme 12** Reaction of 4-Oxo-4*H*-1-benzopyran-3-carbonitrile with a Disiloxo-1,3-diene<sup>[68]</sup>

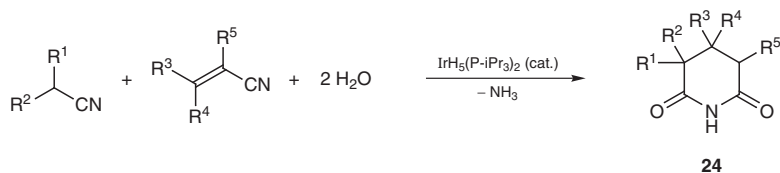


One of the unique properties of nitriles is their ability to strongly coordinate to metals. Using this property, new types of practical catalytic reactions of nitriles have been developed. Typically, the ruthenium-catalyzed reaction of amines, nitriles, and water under neutral reaction conditions to give amides and ammonia is an extremely useful reaction which can also be applied to the synthesis of polyamides from diamines and dinitriles (Scheme 13).<sup>[63,69]</sup>

**Scheme 13** Ruthenium-Catalyzed Amidation of Nitriles with Amines and Water<sup>[69]</sup>

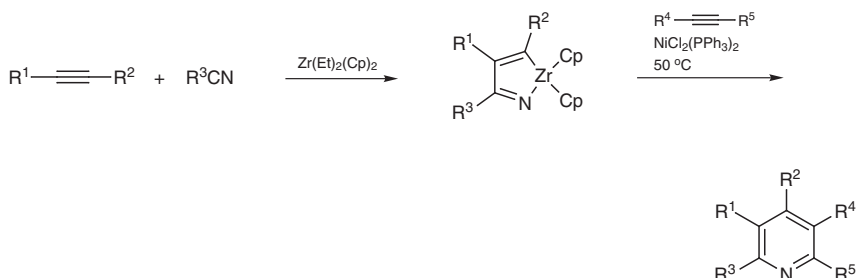


A novel three-component reaction involving nitriles, alkenenitriles, and water in the presence of pentahydridobis(triisopropylphosphine)iridium(V) as a Lewis acid and base ambiphilic catalyst affords glutarimides **24**, which are versatile intermediates in the synthesis of biologically active compounds (Scheme 14).<sup>[64]</sup>

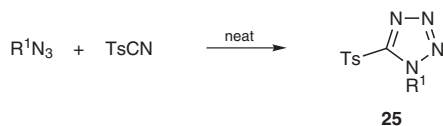
**Scheme 14** Iridium-Catalyzed Three-Component Reaction of Nitriles, Alkenenitriles, and Water To Give Glutarimides<sup>[64]</sup>

A wide range of pyridines have been prepared by the [2+2+2] cyclotrimerization of nitriles and alkynes. Cobalt complexes are the most common catalysts.<sup>[70]</sup> The complex fused heterocycles can be prepared using cobalt-catalyzed cycloaddition reactions.<sup>[71]</sup>

Two alternative approaches to the cyclotrimerization were reported, although both result in the formation of a stoichiometric transition-metal species. Thus, titanium(II) alkoxide [prepared in situ from  $Ti(OiPr)_4$  and  $iPrMgCl$ ]<sup>[72]</sup> and bis( $\eta^5$ -cyclopentadienyl)(diethyl)zirconium(IV)<sup>[73]</sup> promote this type of reaction (Scheme 15).

**Scheme 15** Zirconium-Mediated Pyridine Synthesis<sup>[73]</sup>

Demko and Sharpless demonstrated the formation of substituted tetrazoles from nitriles and azides by heating neat tosyl cyanide with an unhindered azide, giving quantitative conversion into the 1-substituted 5-tosyltetrazole **25** (Scheme 16), which can be readily elaborated by nucleophilic substitution of the tosyl group.<sup>[74]</sup> This is a “click chemistry” transformation in that no solvent is required.

**Scheme 16** The “Click Chemistry” Approach to Tetrazoles<sup>[74]</sup>

Phosphaalkynes are unstable molecules, and their chemistry resembles that of alkynes rather than nitriles. The  $P\equiv C$  bond system shows a pronounced tendency to undergo cycloaddition and cyclooligomerization reactions.

Methylidynephosphine (**26**), ethylidynephosphine (**27**), and fluoromethylidynephosphine (**28**) (Scheme 17) can be generated and characterized, but must be stored under dry argon at low temperature.<sup>[75]</sup>