

1,1'-Binaphthyl ligands with bulky 3,3'-tertiaryalkyl substituents for the asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes

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Abstract—The BINOL ligand (*R*)-**2** that contains bulky 3,3'-tertiaryalkyl groups shows improved catalytic properties over the previously reported 3,3'-substituted BINOL ligands in the asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes. It catalyzes the phenylacetylene addition to aromatic aldehydes with high enantioselectivity (86–94% ee) and good yields without using Ti(O^{*i*}Pr)₄ and a Lewis base additive. The catalytic properties of several analogs of (*R*)-**2** in the asymmetric alkyne addition to aldehydes have also been studied.
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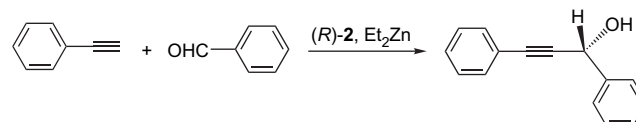
1. Introduction

Chiral propargylic alcohols are versatile precursors to many organic compounds.^{1,2} One efficient way to synthesize this class of compound is by the catalytic asymmetric alkyne addition to aldehydes. Recent research activity in this area has led to the development of a number of highly enantioselective catalysts.^{3–12} Among these, using 1,1'-bi-2-naphthol (BINOL) and its derivatives has attracted our particular attention.^{5–7} We found that BINOL in combination with Et₂Zn and Ti(O^{*i*}Pr)₄ can catalyze the highly enantioselective reaction of alkynes with aromatics, aliphatic and α,β -unsaturated aldehydes.⁵ We also synthesized the BINOL derivative (*S*)-**1** that contained two bulky 3,3'-anisyl substituents.⁶ This compound was found to catalyze the asymmetric alkynylzinc addition to aromatic aldehydes without Ti(O^{*i*}Pr)₄. Although using (*S*)-**1** simplified the catalytic process, its enantioselectivity and productivity were still limited. For example, the reaction of phenylacetylene with 1-naphthylaldehyde catalyzed by (*S*)-**1** in combination with Et₂Zn showed 45% yield and 80% ee. Therefore, we propose to further improve the catalytic properties of (*S*)-**1** by studying the BINOL derivative (*R*)-**2** that contains the bulky 3,3'-tertiaryalkyl substituents very close to the BINOL center. Herein, our use of (*R*)-**2** and its analogs in the asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes is reported. This chiral ligand has shown improved catalytic properties over (*S*)-**1**.

2. Results and discussion

2.1. Asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes using (*R*)-**2**

Compound (*R*)-**2** was prepared from (*R*)-BINOL following the procedure recently reported.¹³ We first tested the use of (*R*)-**2** in combination with Et₂Zn to catalyze the reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde to make 1,3-diphenyl-2-propyn-1-ol without using Ti(O^{*i*}Pr)₄ (Scheme 1). The results are summarized in Table 1. Similar to (*S*)-**1**, (*R*)-**2** showed much greater enantioselectivity in THF than in other solvents. The optimized conditions were identified by using (*R*)-**2** (30 mol %) to catalyze the reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde in THF at 0 °C, which gave the propargylic alcohol product with 91% ee (entry 11). The configuration of the product was *R* as determined by comparing the HPLC (ChiralDiacel OD column) data with the literature.^{5e}



Scheme 1. Reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde in the presence of (*R*)-**2** and Et₂Zn.

We used (*R*)-**2** to catalyze the reaction of phenylacetylene with various aromatic aldehydes by applying the conditions of entry 11 in Table 1. As shown in Table 2, high enantioselectivity was observed for the reactions of phenylacetylene

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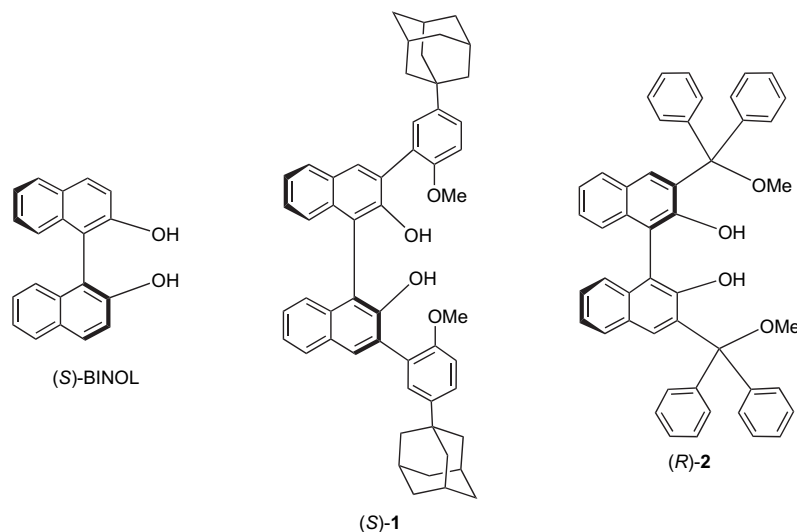


Table 1. Results for the reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde catalyzed by (*R*)-2^a

Entry	(<i>R</i>)-2 (mol %)	Solvent	<i>T</i> (°C)	ee (%)
1 ^b	20	CH ₂ Cl ₂	0	3
2 ^b	20	Toluene	0	10
3 ^b	20	Ether	0	47
4 ^b	20	THF	0	74
5 ^c	20	THF	0	53
6	20	THF	0	85
7	20	THF	30	55
8	20	THF	−21	89
9	15	THF	0	80
10	25	THF	0	89
11	30	THF	0	91
12	35	THF	0	91

^a Unless indicated otherwise the following procedure was used. (*R*)-2 and Et₂Zn (2 equiv) in THF (3 mL) were stirred at rt for 1 h, and then phenylacetylene (1.5 equiv) was added. After an additional hour, benzaldehyde was added at 0 °C.

^b (*R*)-2, Phenylacetylene, and Et₂Zn in solvent were stirred at rt for 2 h. Then benzaldehyde was added at 0 °C.

^c Phenylacetylene and Et₂Zn in THF (1 mL) were stirred at rt for 1 h, and then (*R*)-2 in THF (2 mL) was added. After an additional hour, benzaldehyde was added at 0 °C.

with benzaldehydes containing *ortho*-, *meta*-, *para*-, electron-withdrawing, and electron-donating substituents. For the reaction of 1-naphthylaldehyde, good enantioselectivity (90% ee) and yield (70%) were also obtained, which is significantly improved over the use of (*S*)-1. In general, using

(*R*)-2 gave more consistently good yields and significantly reduced the ZnEt₂ addition side products often observed when using (*S*)-1.

2.2. Asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes using the analogs of (*R*)-2

In order to better assess the various factors that influence the enantioselectivity of (*R*)-2, we prepared several analogs of (*R*)-2, including (*R*)-3,^{13,14} (*R*)-4,¹³ and (*R*)-5,¹⁵ and studied their use for the reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde in the presence of Et₂Zn by applying the conditions of entry 11 in Table 1. In Table 3, the results using (*R*)-3, (*R*)-4, and (*R*)-5 as the catalysts are summarized and are compared with that of (*R*)-2.

Compound (*R*)-3 not only showed greatly reduced enantioselectivity over (*R*)-2 but also gave the product with the opposite configuration. This indicates that the structures of the catalytic sites are very different for these two compounds. When (*R*)-2 is treated with Et₂Zn, deprotonation of the two hydroxyl groups of (*R*)-2 may require 2 equiv of Et₂Zn to generate the zinc complex 6. When (*R*)-3 is treated with Et₂Zn, its four hydroxyl groups will require 4 equiv of Et₂Zn for deprotonation and the resulting zinc complex could have at least three isomeric structures 7–9 without including the isomers containing a zinc atom bridging the two

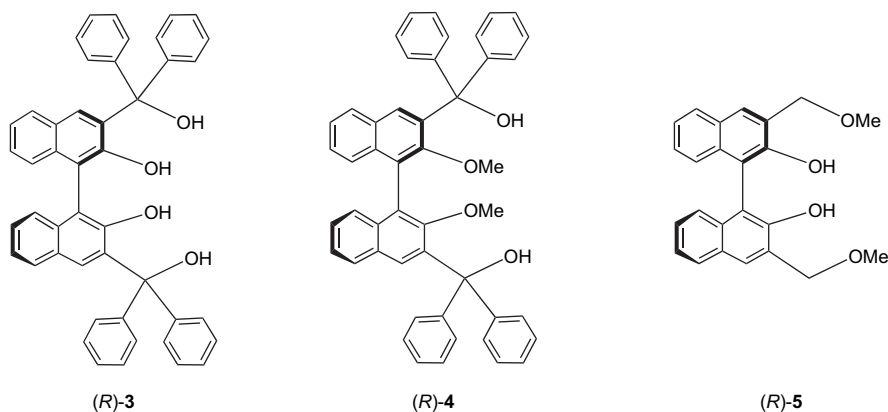
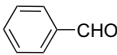
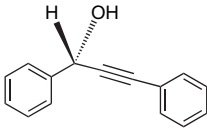
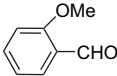
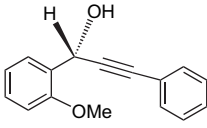
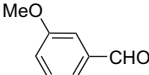
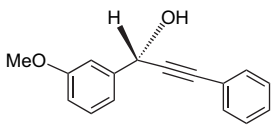

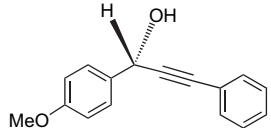
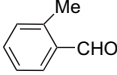
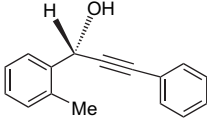
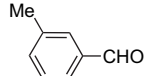
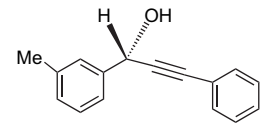
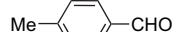
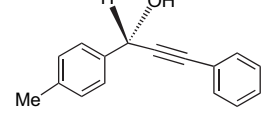
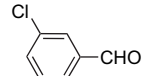
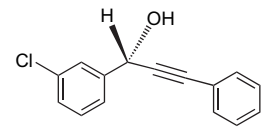
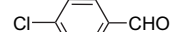
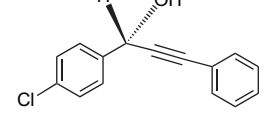
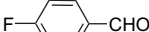
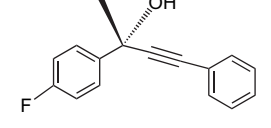
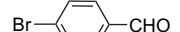
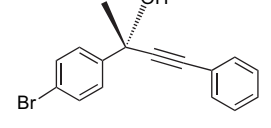
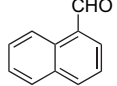
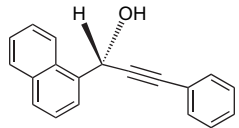
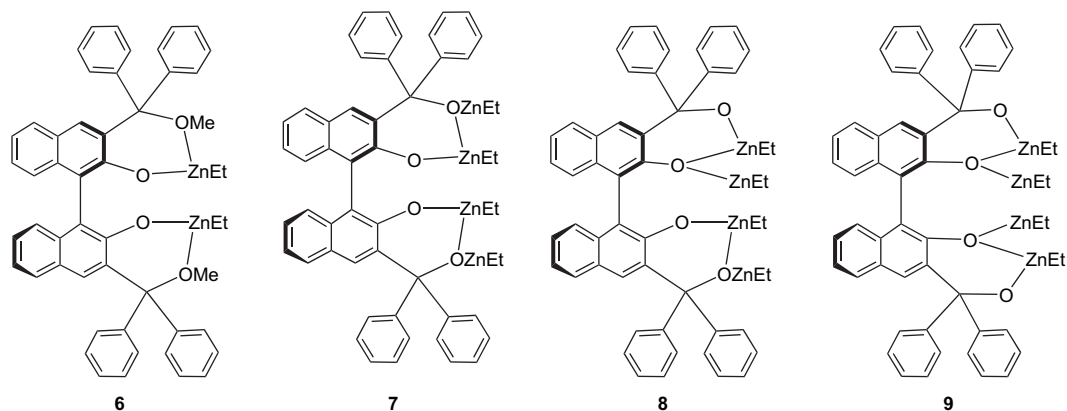


Table 2. Results for phenylacetylene addition to aldehydes catalyzed by (*R*)-2

Entry	Aldehyde	Product	Isolated yield (%)	ee (%)
1			81	91
2			76	87
3			75	94
4			70	86
5			67	90
6			71	90
7			77	88
8			80	86
9			75	92
10			80	90
11			75	92
12			70	90



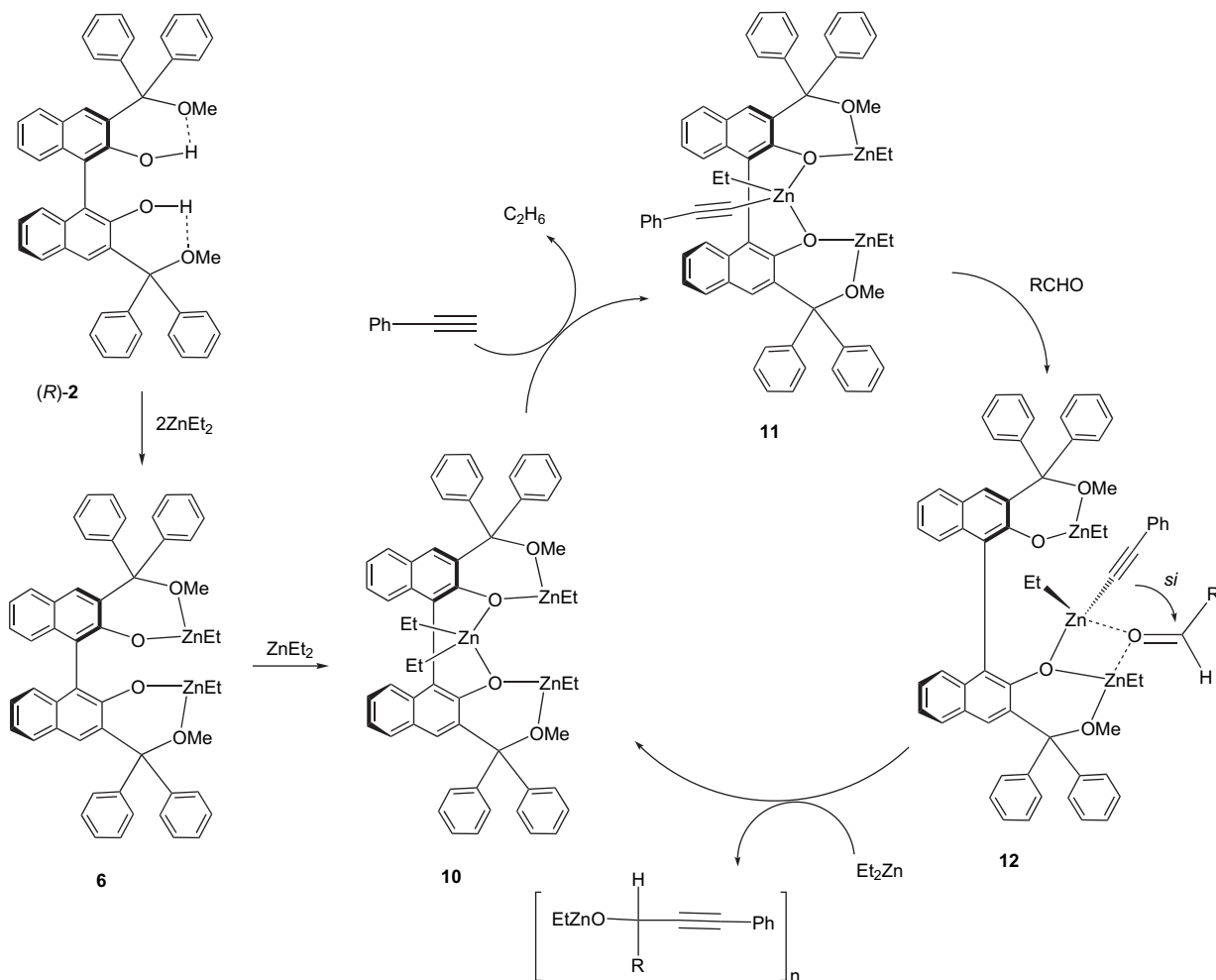
central oxygens. An aldehyde molecule could be activated by coordinating to one or two of the Lewis acidic zinc centers in **6–9** for the subsequent alkyne addition reaction.

Table 3. Results for the reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde in the presence of the chiral ligands and Et_2Zn

Entry	Catalyst	ee (%)	Configuration
1	(<i>R</i>)- 2	91	<i>R</i>
2	(<i>R</i>)- 3	28	<i>S</i>
3	(<i>R</i>)- 4	No reaction	
4	(<i>R</i>)- 5	32	<i>R</i>

Because many of the zinc centers in **7–9** have very different steric and electronic environments from those in **6**, it could explain the very different catalytic properties between (*R*)-**2** and (*R*)-**3**.

Compound (*R*)-**5** showed greatly reduced enantioselectivity in comparison with (*R*)-**2** (entry 4, Table 3). This demonstrates that the bulky diphenyl substituents on each of the 3,3'-bis(methoxymethyl) groups are important for the high stereo selectivity. The same product configuration for (*R*)-**2** and (*R*)-**5** suggests a similar catalyst structure. The loss

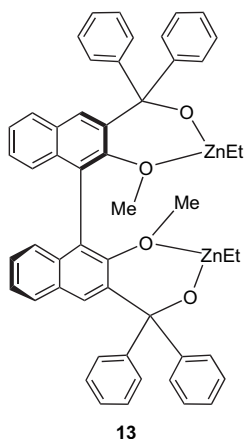


Scheme 2. A proposed mechanism for the catalytic asymmetric reaction of phenylacetylene with aldehydes in the presence of (*R*)-**2** and Et_2Zn .

of catalytic activity found for (*R*)-**4** indicates that this ligand cannot form a catalytically active site.

On the basis of the study of ligands (*R*)-**2**, (*R*)-**3**, (*R*)-**4**, and (*R*)-**5**, a reaction mechanism for the catalytic asymmetric alkyne addition to aldehydes in the presence of (*R*)-**2** could be proposed (Scheme 2). Reaction of (*R*)-**2** with excess Et_2Zn will generate **10** via **6**. The Lewis base activated Et_2Zn unit in **10** can react with phenylacetylene to generate the zinc acetylide in **11**. Coordination of an aldehyde with the two tricoordinated zinc centers in **11** will give **12**. Migration of the phenylacetylide to the activated aldehyde carbonyl followed by displacement by Et_2Zn will regenerate **10** and form the zinc propargyloxide product.

When (*R*)-**4** is treated with 2 equiv of ZnEt_2 , complex **13** could be generated. Because of the two central methyl groups in **13**, the two central oxygen atoms are both sterically and electronically unfavorable to coordinate to ZnEt_2 for the formation of an intermediate like **10**. In **10**, the two central basic oxygen atoms coordinate with Et_2Zn and activate the subsequent deprotonation of phenylacetylene. Without such activation, (*R*)-**4** cannot produce the nucleophilic alkynylzinc reagent. This could explain the inactivity of (*R*)-**4** for the catalytic asymmetric alkyne addition.



2.3. Asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes using (*R*)-**3** in the presence of Lewis base additives

As described in the previous section, the tetrahydroxyl ligand (*R*)-**3** shows very poor enantioselectivity for the phenylacetylene addition to benzaldehyde. Since the tetrahydroxyl functions of (*R*)-**3** are similar to those of TADDOLs that have shown high enantioselectivity in many asymmetric reactions including the asymmetric organozinc additions,¹⁶ we attempted to improve the reaction catalyzed by (*R*)-**3** with the addition of various Lewis bases. Table 4 summarizes the results for the reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde catalyzed by (*R*)-**3** in combination with ZnEt_2 (2.0 equiv) and a Lewis base at room temperature. The Lewis bases were added while (*R*)-**3** and Et_2Zn were mixed. We found that addition of 2 equiv Et_3N boosted the ee up to 80% (entry 9). With or without the Lewis bases, the configuration of the propargylic alcohol product remained as *S* as determined by comparing the HPLC data with those reported.^{10e}

Table 4. Reaction of phenylacetylene with benzaldehyde catalyzed by using (*R*)-**3**, ZnEt_2 , and a Lewis Base

Entry	(<i>R</i>)- 3 (equiv)	Additive ^a (equiv)	ee (%)
1	0.2	HMPA (2)	15(<i>S</i>)
2	0.2	DMSO (2)	7(<i>S</i>)
3	0.2	Pyridine (2)	9(<i>S</i>)
4	0.2	Ph_3PO (2)	7(<i>S</i>)
5	0.2	IM (2)	22(<i>S</i>)
6	0.2	DMBA (2)	66(<i>S</i>)
7	0.2	DMA (2)	76(<i>S</i>)
8	0.2	NMM (2)	77(<i>S</i>)
9	0.2	Et_3N (2)	80(<i>S</i>)
10	0.2	Et_3N (1)	77(<i>S</i>)
11	0.2	Et_3N (4)	77(<i>S</i>)

^a IM: Imidazole. DMBA: *N,N*-dimethylbenzylamine. DMA: *N,N*-dimethylaniline. NMM: *N*-methylmorpholine.

Table 5. Results for phenylacetylene addition to aldehydes catalyzed by using (*R*)-**3**, ZnEt_2 , and Et_3N

Entry	Aldehyde	Product	Yield (%)	ee (%)
1			83	80 (<i>S</i>)
2			76	86
3			74	76
4			65	66
5			76	70
6			84	69
7			83	50
8			75	57
9			78	51

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Entry	Aldehyde	Product	Yield (%)	ee (%)
10			83	54
11			75	65

The conditions in entry 9 of Table 4 were used for the reaction of phenylacetylene with other aromatic aldehydes. As the results summarized in Table 5 show, up to 86% ee was observed for the reaction with the *ortho*-substituted benzaldehyde (entry 2, Table 5). Generally, the ee's were above 50% for the reaction of a variety of aromatic aldehydes and cinnamaldehyde.

The Lewis base Et₃N probably coordinates to the zinc centers in the zinc complexes of (*R*)-**3**, such as 7–9. This could modify the structure of the catalyst and lead to the higher enantioselectivity than without the additive. However, the enantioselectivity of (*R*)-**3** even with the additive is still significantly lower than that of (*R*)-**2** in almost all the cases.

3. Summary

We have synthesized the BINOL ligand (*R*)-**2** that contains bulky 3,3'-tertiaryalkyl groups. This compound shows improved catalytic properties over the previously reported 3,3'-substituted BINOL ligands in the asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes. It can catalyze the phenylacetylene addition to aromatic aldehydes with high enantioselectivity without using Ti(O^{*i*}Pr)₄ and a Lewis base additive. Several analogs of (*R*)-**2** have also been synthesized and their catalytic properties in the asymmetric alkyne addition to aldehydes have been studied.

4. Experimental section

4.1. General data

All the solvents were dried according to the standard methods prior to use. Aldehydes were purchased from Lancaster and used directly. Diethylzinc (1.1 M in toluene) and deuterated chloroform was purchased from Aldrich Chemical Co. ^{*n*}BuLi (2.5 M in hexane) was purchased from ACROS Chemical Co.

4.1.1. A typical experimental procedure for the asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes by using (*R*)-2**.** Under argon, diethylzinc (2.0 equiv) was added to a solution of (*R*)-**2** (0.3 equiv) in THF (3 mL, distilled over sodium) in a 10-mL flask. After the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1 h, phenylacetylene (1.5 equiv) was added and the

stirring continued for an additional hour. Then, an aldehyde (0.25 mmol) was added at 0 °C, and the reaction mixture was stirred for 36–40 h. The reaction was quenched with saturated NH₄Cl. The resulting mixture was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and the extract was dried over MgSO₄. After removal of the volatile solvent under reduced pressure, the residue was passed through a short silica gel column eluted with 2–10% ethyl acetate in petrol ether to afford the propargylic alcohol product. The enantiomeric purity of the product was determined by using HPLC Chiralcel OD column.

4.1.2. A typical experimental procedure for the asymmetric alkyne addition to aromatic aldehydes by using (*R*)-3** and Et₃N.** Under an argon atmosphere, diethylzinc (2.0 equiv) was added to a solution of (*R*)-**3** (0.2 equiv) in THF (3 mL, distilled over sodium) in a 10-mL flask, and then Et₃N (2 equiv) was added. After the mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1 h, phenylacetylene (1.5 equiv) was added and the stirring continued for an additional hour. Then, an aldehyde (0.25 mmol) was added at 0 °C, and the reaction mixture was stirred for 36–40 h. The reaction was quenched with saturated NH₄Cl. The resulting mixture was extracted with CH₂Cl₂ and the extract was dried over MgSO₄. After removal of the volatile solvent under reduced pressure, the residue was passed through a short silica gel column eluted with 2–10% ethyl acetate in petrol ether to afford the propargylic alcohol product. The enantiomeric purity of the product was determined by using HPLC Chiralcel OD column.

4.1.3. General procedure for the preparation of racemic propargylic alcohol. All the racemic propargylic alcohols were prepared for the HPLC analysis according to the following procedure. Under argon, ^{*n*}BuLi (0.12 mL, 2.5 M in hexane) was added into a solution of phenylacetylene (0.35 mmol) in 3 mL tetrahydrofuran in a 10-mL round bottom flask. After stirring for 3 h, an aldehyde (0.25 mmol) was added and the reaction was continuously stirred for 8 h. The reaction mixture was quenched with ice, extracted with methylene chloride, and the extract was dried over MgSO₄. After the volatile solvent was removed under reduced pressure, the residue was passed through a short silica gel eluted with 2–10% ethyl acetate in petrol ether to afford the desired racemic product.

4.1.4. Determination of the ee's of the chiral propargylic alcohol products formed by using (*R*)-2** as the catalyst.** All the ee's were determined by Chiral HPLC: Chiralcel OD column and 254 nm UV detector. The solvents used were hexane/2-propanol=9/1 at 1.0 mL/min unless indicated otherwise.

1,3-Diphenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: *t*_{major}=9.5 min (*R*), and *t*_{minor}=16.9 min (*S*).

1-(2-Methoxyphenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: *t*_{major}=10.9 min, and *t*_{minor}=13.5 min.

1-(3-Methoxyphenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: *t*_{major}=12.7 min, and *t*_{minor}=21.6 min.

1-(4-Methoxyphenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: *t*_{major}=10.8 min, and *t*_{minor}=22.7 min.

1-(2-Methylphenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: *t*_{major}=7.2 min, and *t*_{minor}=14.3 min.

1-(3-Methylphenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: *t*_{major}=8.0 min, and *t*_{minor}=17.5 min.

1-(4-Methylphenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: $t_{\text{major}}=7.3$ min, and $t_{\text{minor}}=14.0$ min.
1-(3-Chlorophenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: $t_{\text{major}}=7.6$ min, and $t_{\text{minor}}=22.9$ min.
1-(4-Chlorophenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: $t_{\text{major}}=7.5$ min, and $t_{\text{minor}}=21.1$ min.
1-(4-Bromophenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: $t_{\text{major}}=7.9$ min, and $t_{\text{minor}}=23.0$ min.
1-(4-Fluorophenyl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: $t_{\text{major}}=7.1$ min, and $t_{\text{minor}}=18.3$ min.
1-(Naphthalen-1-yl)-3-phenyl-prop-2-yn-1-ol. Retention time: $t_{\text{major}}=9.8$ min, and $t_{\text{minor}}=19.1$ min (10% *i*-PrOH in hexane at 1.2 mL/min).

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References and notes

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