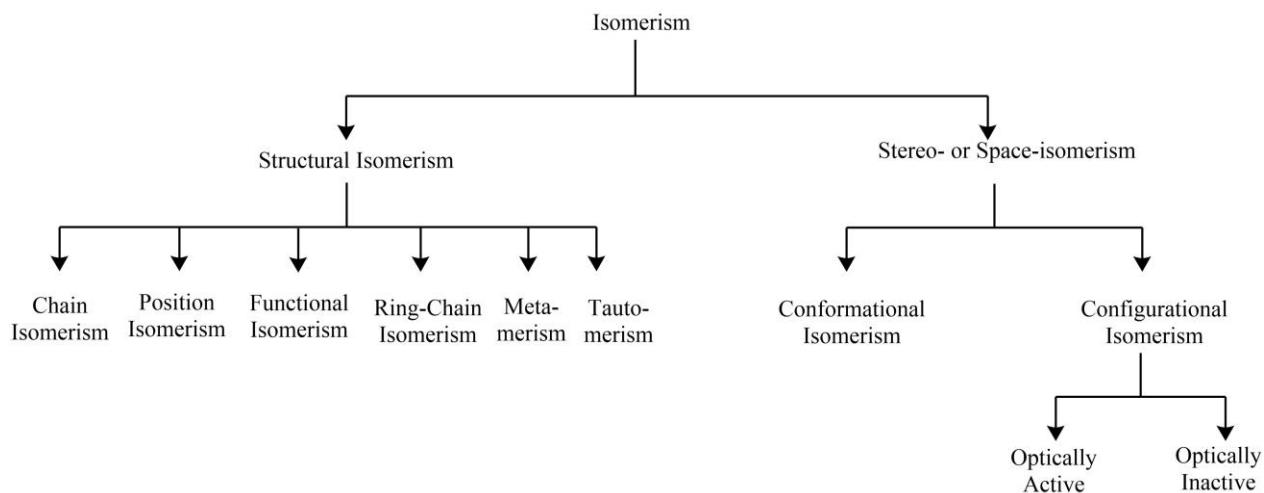


❖ Geometrical Isomerism in Alkenes and Oximes

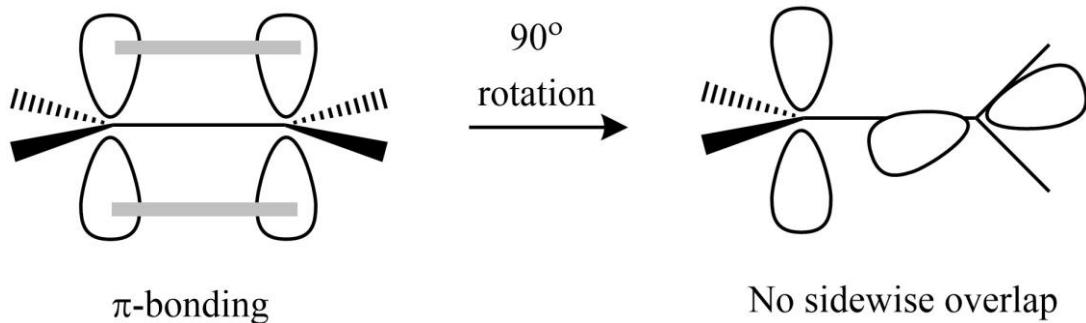
Before we study the geometrical isomerism in alkenes and oximes, we need to recall the general flow chart for different kinds of isomerisms first.



Since stereoisomerism can either be conformational or configurational, the latter possibility is of more importance in the case of oximes and alkenes as the rotation about the double bond is restricted. In this section, we will discuss the geometrical or configurational isomers of alkenes and oximes one by one.

➤ Geometrical Isomerism due to Double Bond

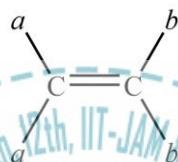
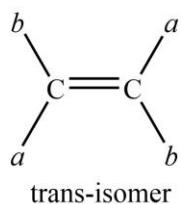
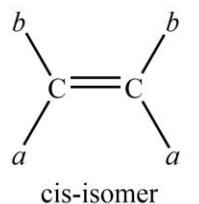
The carbon atom in alkenes is an sp^2 -hybridized one, and therefore, it has a half-filled atomic orbital perpendicular to the molecular plane. After using all its three hybrid orbitals for σ -bonding, the half-filled p_z orbital can be used for side-wise overlap to form a π -bond. Nevertheless, if we rotate one of the half-filled p_z by an angle of 90° , it will not be able to do so anymore.



Hence, we can conclude that groups attached to sp^2 -hybridized carbon cannot be exchanged simply by rotating about the double bond as it is restricted by the orbital picture. This eliminates the possibility of conformational isomerism, and therefore, we are only left with the case of the configurational one.

➤ **Condition for Geometrical Isomerism arising from Double Bond**

The presence of a double bond does not ensure the existence of geometrical isomers but some other conditions must also be satisfied. The primary condition is that two carbons of the double bond must have different kinds of substituents not only to carbons but to each other also.

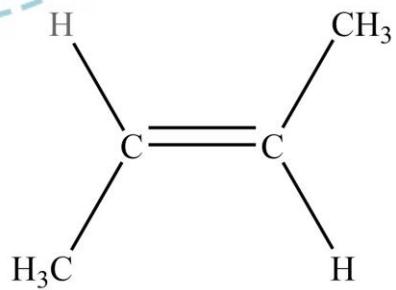
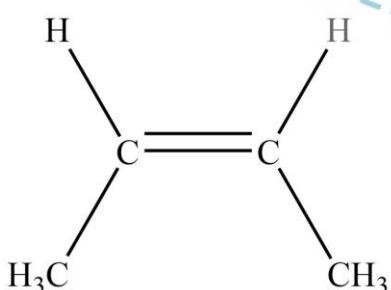


In other words, we can also say that no geometrical isomerism will be observed if one or both carbons carry the same kind of substituents.

➤ **Geometrical Isomerism in Alkenes**

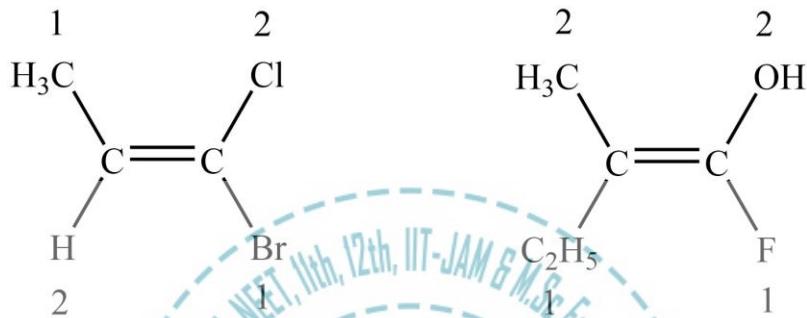
The geometrical isomers of alkenes are primarily labeled as cis-trans or Z-E types, depending upon the nature of the groups on each side of the double bond.

1. Geometrical isomerism in disubstituted alkenes (cis-trans nomenclature): If the alkene under consideration is a disubstituted one, we can label it as cis or trans isomer, depending upon their mutual orientation.

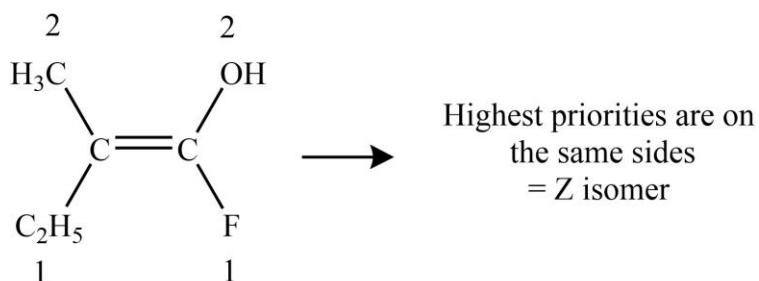
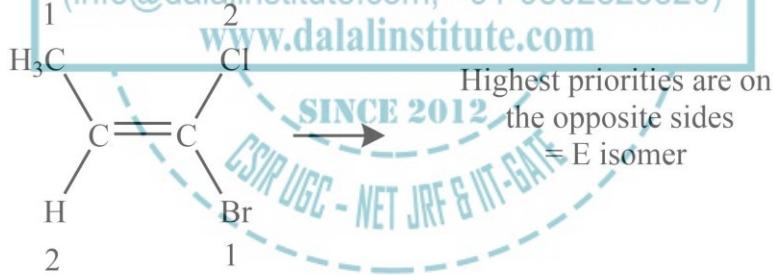


2. Geometrical isomerism tri- or tetra-substituted alkenes (Z-E nomenclature): If the alkene under consideration is a tri- or tetra-substituted one, we cannot label it as cis or trans isomer, and therefore, we need to follow a special system for such compounds, called Z-E nomenclature. This system of nomenclature is also based upon the Chan-Ingold-Prelog system of priority assignment. The main postulates of the Z-E system of nomenclature are given below.

i) Priorities are assigned to different groups individually at both ends as per the sequence rule from the Chan-Ingold-Prelog system.



ii) Once the priorities are assigned, check if groups with higher priorities are on the same or opposite side of the double bond. If they are on the same side, the system is ‘Z’; and if they are on the opposite side, the compound should be labeled as ‘E’ isomer.



3. Geometrical isomerism in compounds with two or more double bonds: If the alkene under consideration has two or more double bonds, the number of geometrical isomers depends not only upon the number of double bonds only but also upon whether the ends are symmetrical or not. This can be classified into two categories as discussed below.

i) *When ends are unsymmetrical:* If the ends of the alkenes are unsymmetrical, the total number of geometrical isomers (whether the number is odd or even) is given by the following equation.

$$N_{\text{isomer}} = 2^n \quad (7)$$

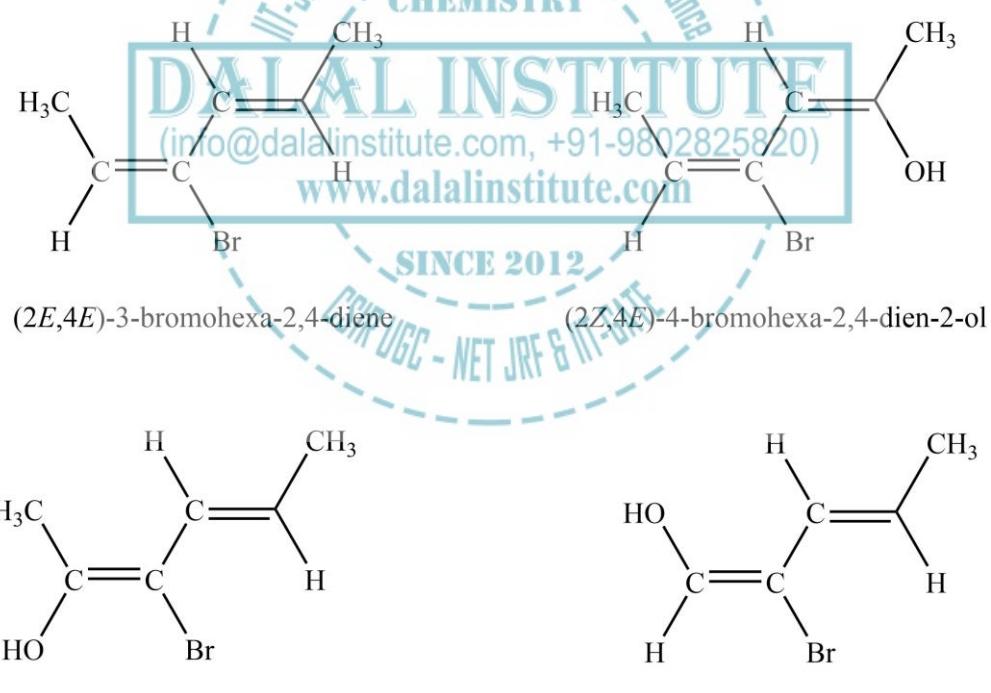
Where n represents the number of double bonds.

ii) *When ends are symmetrical:* If the ends of the alkenes are symmetrical, the total number of geometrical isomers (whether the number is odd or even) is given by the following equation.

$$N_{\text{isomer}} = 2^{n-1} + 2^{\frac{(n-2)-1}{2}} \quad \text{if } n = \text{even} \quad (8)$$

$$N_{\text{isomer}} = 2^{n-1} + 2^{\frac{(n-2)+1}{2}} \quad \text{if } n = \text{odd} \quad (9)$$

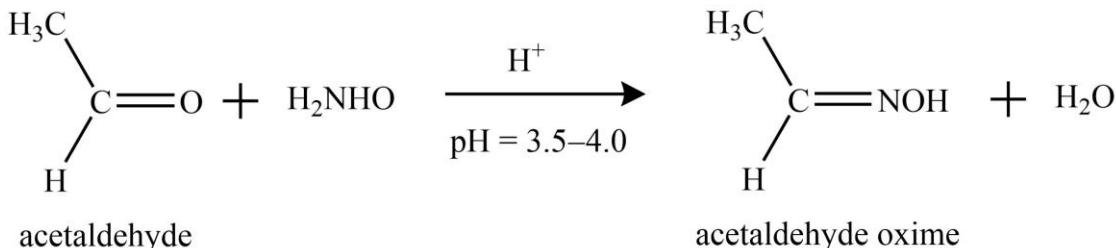
Where n represents the number of double bonds.



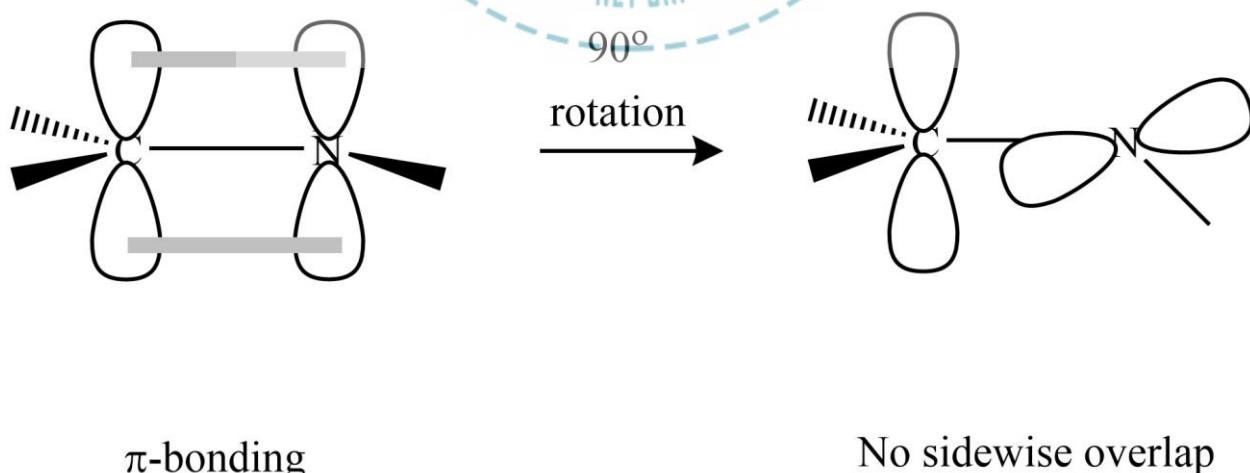
It is also obvious from the structures given above that besides tri- and tetra-substituted alkenes, the E-Z system of nomenclature also finds its application in compounds with many double bonds.

➤ **Geometrical Isomerism in Oximes**

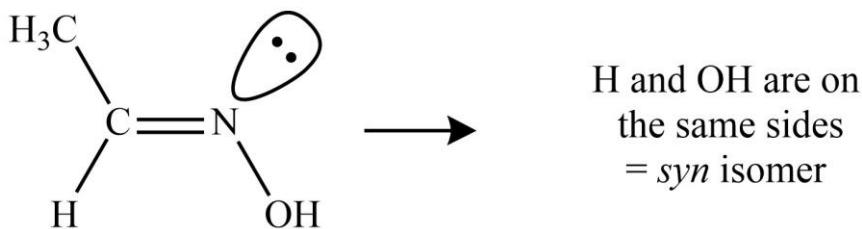
Oximes are compounds that have a carbon-nitrogen double bond, and can easily be prepared by treating hydroxylamine with ketones or aldehydes in somewhat acidic solutions.



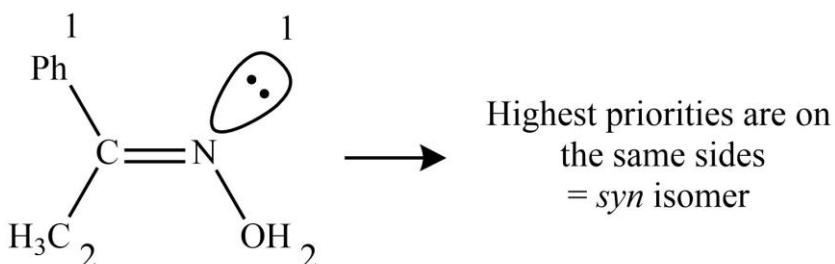
The carbon atom in oxime is an sp^2 -hybridized one, and therefore, it has a half-filled atomic orbital perpendicular to the molecular plane. After using all its three hybrid orbitals for σ -bonding, the half-filled p_z orbital can be used for side-wise overlap to form a π -bond. Nevertheless, if we rotate one of the half-filled p_z by an angle of 90° , it will not be able to do so anymore because the nitrogen atom is also sp^2 -hybridized with lone pair residing in one of the hybrid orbitals.



Now, if the H and OH are on the same side of the double bond, the compound will be called as *syn*; whereas if H and OH are on the opposite side of the double bond, the compound should be labeled as *anti*.



The nomenclature rule using H and OH is only applicable to aldoximes and cannot be applied to ketoximes because there is no H present. In such cases, we need to use priorities assignment using the Chan-Ingold-Prelog system with lone pair having the highest priority.



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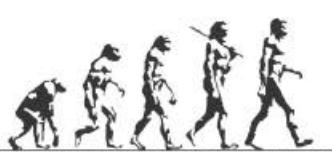
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A TEXTBOOK OF ORGANIC CHEMISTRY

Volume I

MANDEEP DALAL



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Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1	11
Nature of Bonding in Organic Molecules	11
❖ Delocalized Chemical Bonding	11
❖ Conjugation	14
❖ Cross Conjugation	16
❖ Resonance.....	18
❖ Hyperconjugation	27
❖ Tautomerism.....	31
❖ Aromaticity in Benzenoid and Nonbenzenoid Compounds	33
❖ Alternant and Non-Alternant Hydrocarbons	35
❖ Huckel's Rule: Energy Level of π -Molecular Orbitals	37
❖ Annulenes.....	44
❖ Antiaromaticity.....	46
❖ Homoaromaticity.....	48
❖ PMO Approach.....	50
❖ Bonds Weaker Than Covalent	58
❖ Addition Compounds: Crown Ether Complexes and Cryptands, Inclusion Compounds, Cyclodextrins	65
❖ Catenanes and Rotaxanes	75
❖ Problems.....	79
❖ Bibliography	80
CHAPTER 2	81
Stereochemistry	81
❖ Chirality.....	81
❖ Elements of Symmetry	86
❖ Molecules with More Than One Chiral Centre: Diastereomerism	90
❖ Determination of Relative and Absolute Configuration (Octant Rule Excluded) with Special Reference to Lactic Acid, Alanine & Mandelic Acid	92
❖ Methods of Resolution.....	102
❖ Optical Purity	104
❖ Prochirality	105
❖ Enantiotopic and Diastereotopic Atoms, Groups and Faces	107
❖ Asymmetric Synthesis: Cram's Rule and Its Modifications, Prelog's Rule	113
❖ Conformational Analysis of Cycloalkanes (Upto Six Membered Rings).....	116
❖ Decalins	122
❖ Conformations of Sugars	126
❖ Optical Activity in Absence of Chiral Carbon (Biphenyls, Allenes and Spiranes)	132
❖ Chirality Due to Helical Shape	137
❖ Geometrical Isomerism in Alkenes and Oximes	140
❖ Methods of Determining the Configuration	146

❖ Problems.....	151
❖ Bibliography	152
CHAPTER 3	153
Reaction Mechanism: Structure and Reactivity	153
❖ Types of Mechanisms	153
❖ Types of Reactions	156
❖ Thermodynamic and Kinetic Requirements.....	159
❖ Kinetic and Thermodynamic Control	161
❖ Hammond's Postulate.....	163
❖ Curtin-Hammett Principle	164
❖ Potential Energy Diagrams: Transition States and Intermediates	166
❖ Methods of Determining Mechanisms	168
❖ Isotope Effects	172
❖ Hard and Soft Acids and Bases.....	174
❖ Generation, Structure, Stability and Reactivity of Carbocations, Carbanions, Free Radicals, Carbenes and Nitrenes.....	176
❖ Effect of Structure on Reactivity	200
❖ The Hammett Equation and Linear Free Energy Relationship.....	203
❖ Substituent and Reaction Constants.....	209
❖ Taft Equation.....	215
❖ Problems.....	219
❖ Bibliography	220
CHAPTER 4	221
Carbohydrates	221
❖ Types of Naturally Occurring Sugars	221
❖ Deoxy Sugars	227
❖ Amino Sugars	229
❖ Branch Chain Sugars	230
❖ General Methods of Determination of Structure and Ring Size of Sugars with Particular Reference to Maltose, Lactose, Sucrose, Starch and Cellulose.....	231
❖ Problems.....	239
❖ Bibliography	240
CHAPTER 5	241
Natural and Synthetic Dyes	241
❖ Various Classes of Synthetic Dyes Including Heterocyclic Dyes	241
❖ Interaction Between Dyes and Fibers	245
❖ Structure Elucidation of Indigo and Alizarin	247
❖ Problems.....	252
❖ Bibliography	253
CHAPTER 6	254
Aliphatic Nucleophilic Substitution	254
❖ The SN_2 , SN_1 , Mixed SN_1 and SN_2 , SN_i , SN'_1 , SN'_2 , SN_i' and SET Mechanisms.....	254

❖ The Neighbouring Group Mechanisms	263
❖ Neighbouring Group Participation by π and σ Bonds	265
❖ Anchimeric Assistance	269
❖ Classical and Nonclassical Carbocations	272
❖ Phenonium Ions	283
❖ Common Carbocation Rearrangements	284
❖ Applications of NMR Spectroscopy in the Detection of Carbocations	286
❖ Reactivity – Effects of Substrate Structure, Attacking Nucleophile, Leaving Group and Reaction Medium	288
❖ Ambident Nucleophiles and Regioselectivity	294
❖ Phase Transfer Catalysis	297
❖ Problems	300
❖ Bibliography	301
CHAPTER 7	302
Aliphatic Electrophilic Substitution	302
❖ Bimolecular Mechanisms – SE_2 and SE_1	302
❖ The SE_1 Mechanism	305
❖ Electrophilic Substitution Accompanied by Double Bond Shifts	307
❖ Effect of Substrates, Leaving Group and the Solvent Polarity on the Reactivity	308
❖ Problems	310
❖ Bibliography	311
CHAPTER 8	312
Aromatic Electrophilic Substitution	312
❖ The Arenium Ion Mechanism	312
❖ Orientation and Reactivity	314
❖ Energy Profile Diagrams	316
❖ The Ortho/Para Ratio	317
❖ <i>ipso</i> -Attack	319
❖ Orientation in Other Ring Systems	320
❖ Quantitative Treatment of Reactivity in Substrates and Electrophiles	321
❖ Diazonium Coupling	325
❖ Vilsmeier Reaction	326
❖ Gattermann-Koch Reaction	327
❖ Problems	329
❖ Bibliography	330
CHAPTER 9	331
Aromatic Nucleophilic Substitution	331
❖ The $ArSN_1$, $ArSN_2$, Benzyne and S_RN_1 Mechanisms	331
❖ Reactivity – Effect of Substrate Structure, Leaving Group and Attacking Nucleophile	336
❖ The von Richter, Sommelet-Hauser, and Smiles Rearrangements	339
❖ Problems	343
❖ Bibliography	344

CHAPTER 10	345
Elimination Reactions	345
❖ The E ₂ , E ₁ and E ₁ CB Mechanisms	345
❖ Orientation of the Double Bond.....	348
❖ Reactivity – Effects of Substrate Structures, Attacking Base, the Leaving Group and The Medium	352
❖ Mechanism and Orientation in Pyrolytic Elimination	355
❖ Problems.....	358
❖ Bibliography	359
CHAPTER 11	360
Addition to Carbon-Carbon Multiple Bonds	360
❖ Mechanistic and Stereochemical Aspects of Addition Reactions Involving Electrophiles, Nucleophiles and Free Radicals.....	360
❖ Regio- and Chemoselectivity: Orientation and Reactivity	370
❖ Addition to Cyclopropane Ring	374
❖ Hydrogenation of Double and Triple Bonds	375
❖ Hydrogenation of Aromatic Rings.....	377
❖ Hydroboration	378
❖ Michael Reaction.....	379
❖ Sharpless Asymmetric Epoxidation	380
❖ Problems.....	382
❖ Bibliography	383
CHAPTER 12	384
Addition to Carbon-Hetero Multiple Bonds	384
❖ Mechanism of Metal Hydride Reduction of Saturated and Unsaturated Carbonyl Compounds, Acids, Esters and Nitriles	384
❖ Addition of Grignard Reagents, Organozinc and Organolithium Reagents to Carbonyl and Unsaturated Carbonyl Compounds	400
❖ Wittig Reaction.....	406
❖ Mechanism of Condensation Reactions Involving Enolates: Aldol, Knoevenagel, Claisen, Mannich, Benzoin, Perkin and Stobbe Reactions	411
❖ Hydrolysis of Esters and Amides.....	433
❖ Ammonolysis of Esters.....	437
❖ Problems.....	439
❖ Bibliography	440
INDEX.....	441



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