

## Short Summary of IUPAC Nomenclature of Organic Compounds

### Introduction

The purpose of the IUPAC system of nomenclature is to establish an international standard of naming compounds to facilitate communication. The goal of the system is to give each structure a unique and unambiguous name, and to correlate each name with a unique and unambiguous structure.

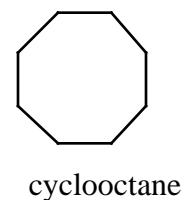
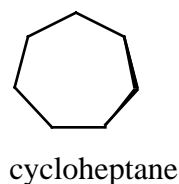
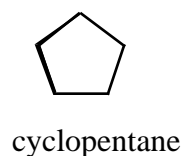
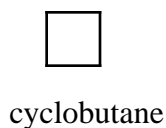
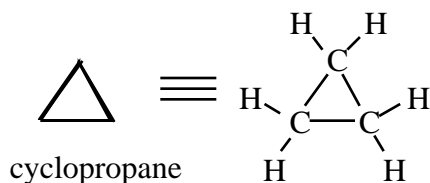
### I. Fundamental Principle

IUPAC nomenclature is based on naming a molecule's longest chain of carbons connected by single bonds, whether in a continuous chain or in a ring. All deviations, either multiple bonds or atoms other than carbon and hydrogen, are indicated by prefixes or suffixes according to a specific set of priorities.

### II. Alkanes and Cycloalkanes

Alkanes are the family of saturated hydrocarbons, that is, molecules containing carbon and hydrogen connected by single bonds only. These molecules can be in continuous chains (called linear or acyclic), or in rings (called cyclic or alicyclic). The names of alkanes and cycloalkanes are the root names of organic compounds. Beginning with the five-carbon alkane, the number of carbons in the chain is indicated by the Greek or Latin prefix. Rings are designated by the prefix "cyclo". (In the geometrical symbols for rings, each apex represents a carbon with the number of hydrogens required to fill its valence.)

CH <sub>4</sub>	methane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>10</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	dodecane
CH <sub>3</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	ethane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>11</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	tridecane
CH <sub>3</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	propane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>12</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	tetradecane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	butane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>18</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	icosane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>3</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	pentane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>19</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	heneicosane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>4</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	hexane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>20</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	docosane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>5</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	heptane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>21</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	tricosane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>6</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	octane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>28</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	triacontane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>7</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	nonane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>29</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	hentriacontane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>8</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	decane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>38</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	tetracontane
CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>9</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	undecane	CH <sub>3</sub> [CH <sub>2</sub> ] <sub>48</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	pentacontane



**III. Nomenclature of Molecules Containing Substituents and Functional Groups****A. Priorities of Substituents and Functional Groups**

LISTED HERE FROM HIGHEST TO LOWEST PRIORITY, except that the substituents within Group C have equivalent priority.

**Group A—Functional Groups Indicated By Prefix Or Suffix**

<u>Family of Compound</u>	<u>Structure</u>	<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Suffix</u>
Carboxylic Acid	$\begin{array}{c} \text{O} \\    \\ \text{R}-\text{C}-\text{OH} \end{array}$	carboxy-	-oic acid (-carboxylic acid)
Aldehyde	$\begin{array}{c} \text{O} \\    \\ \text{R}-\text{C}-\text{H} \end{array}$	oxo- (formyl)	-al (carbaldehyde)
Ketone	$\begin{array}{c} \text{O} \\    \\ \text{R}-\text{C}-\text{R} \end{array}$	oxo-	-one
Alcohol	$\text{R}-\text{O}-\text{H}$	hydroxy-	-ol
Amine	$\text{R}-\text{N} \begin{array}{l} / \\ \backslash \end{array}$	amino-	-amine

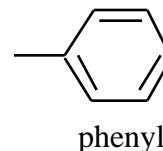
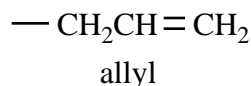
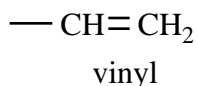
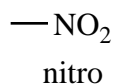
**Group B—Functional Groups Indicated By Suffix Only**

<u>Family of Compound</u>	<u>Structure</u>	<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Suffix</u>
Alkene	$\begin{array}{c} \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ \text{C}=\text{C} \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \end{array}$	-----	-ene
Alkyne	$-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$	-----	-yne

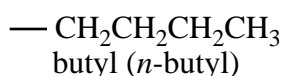
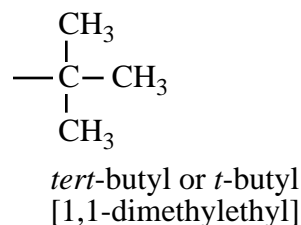
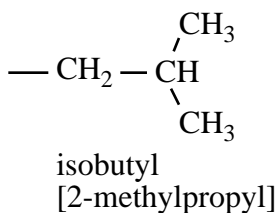
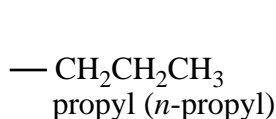
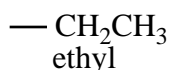
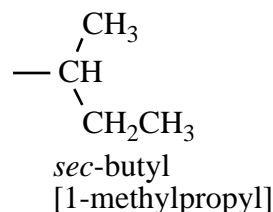
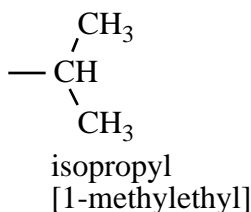
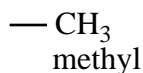
**Group C—Substituents Indicated by Prefix Only**

<u>Substituent</u>	<u>Structure</u>	<u>Prefix</u>	<u>Suffix</u>
Alkyl (see list below)	$\text{R}-$	alkyl-	-----
Alkoxy	$\text{R}-\text{O}-$	alkoxy-	-----
Halogen	$\text{F}-$	fluoro-	-----
	$\text{Cl}-$	chloro-	-----
	$\text{Br}-$	bromo-	-----
	$\text{I}-$	iodo-	-----

Group C continued on next page

**Group C—Substituents, continued**Miscellaneous substituents and their prefixes

Common alkyl groups—replace “ane” ending of alkane name with “yl”. Alternate names for complex substituents are given in brackets.

**B. Naming Substituted Alkanes and Cycloalkanes—Group C Substituents Only**

1. Organic compounds containing substituents from Group C are named following this sequence of steps, as indicated on the examples below:

- Step 1. Find the longest continuous carbon chain. Determine the root name for this parent chain. In cyclic compounds, the ring is usually considered the parent chain, unless it is attached to a longer chain of carbons; indicate a ring with the prefix “cyclo” before the root name. (When there are two longest chains of equal length, use the chain with the greater number of substituents.)

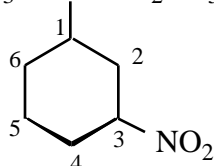
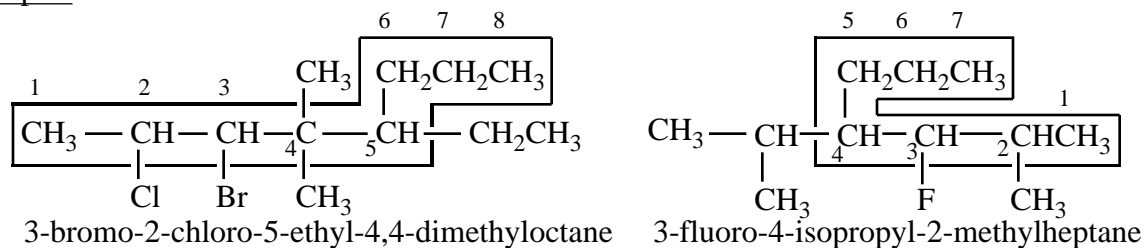
- Step 2. Number the chain in the direction such that the position number of the first substituent is the smaller number. If the first substituents from either end have the same number, then number so that the second substituent has the smaller number, *etc.*

- Step 3. Determine the name and position number of each substituent. (A substituent on a nitrogen is designated with an “N” instead of a number; see Section III.D.1. below.)

- Step 4. Indicate the number of identical groups by the prefixes di, tri, tetra, *etc.*

- Step 5. Place the position numbers and names of the substituent groups, in alphabetical order, before the root name. In alphabetizing, ignore prefixes like *sec*-, *tert*-, di, tri, *etc.*, but include iso and cyclo. Always include a position number for each substituent, regardless of redundancies.

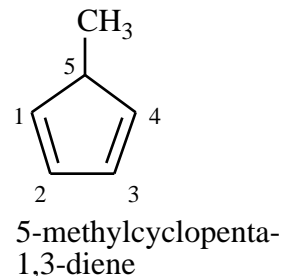
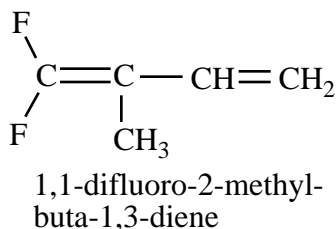
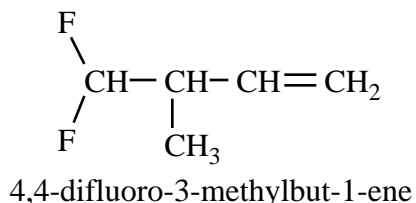
Examples



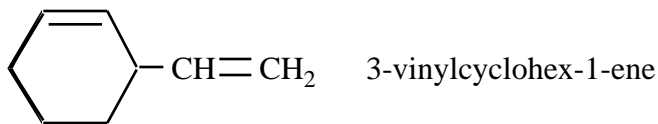
1-*sec*-butyl-3-nitrocyclohexane  
(numbering determined by the alphabetical order of substituents)

C. Naming Molecules Containing Functional Groups from Group B—Suffix Only

1. Alkenes—Follow the same steps as for alkanes, except:
  - a. Number the chain of carbons *that includes the C=C* so that the C=C has the lower position number, since it has a higher priority than any substituents;
  - b. Change “ane” to “ene” and assign a position number to the first carbon of the C=C;
  - c. Designate geometrical isomers with a *cis,trans* or *E,Z* prefix.



Special case: When the chain cannot include the C=C, a substituent name is used.

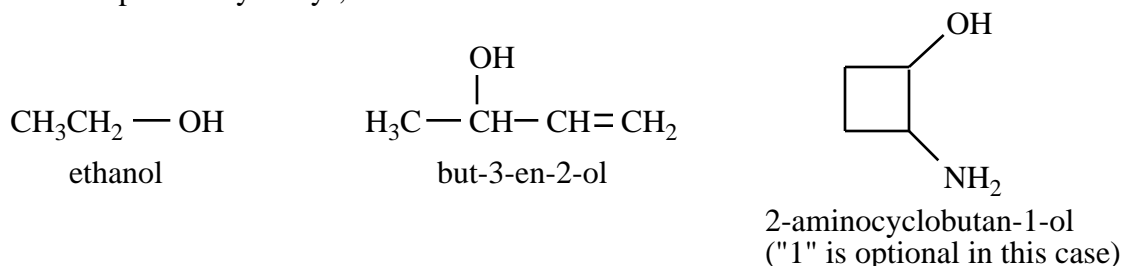


2. Alkynes—Follow the same steps as for alkanes, except:
  - a. Number the chain of carbons *that includes the C≡C* so that the functional group has the lower position number;
  - b. Change “ane” to “yne” and assign a position number to the first carbon of the C≡C.

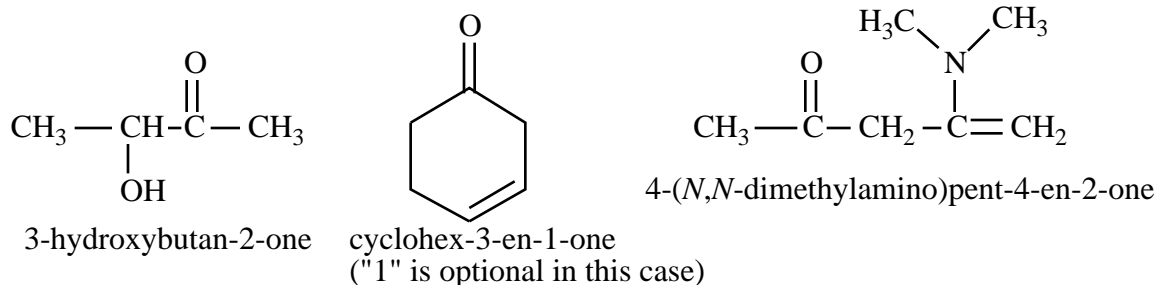
Note: The Group B functional groups (alkene and alkyne) are considered to have equal priority: in a molecule with both a double and a triple bond, whichever is closer to the end of the chain determines the direction of numbering. In the case where each would have the same position number, the double bond takes the lower number. In the name, “ene” comes before “yne” because of alphabetization. See examples on next page.



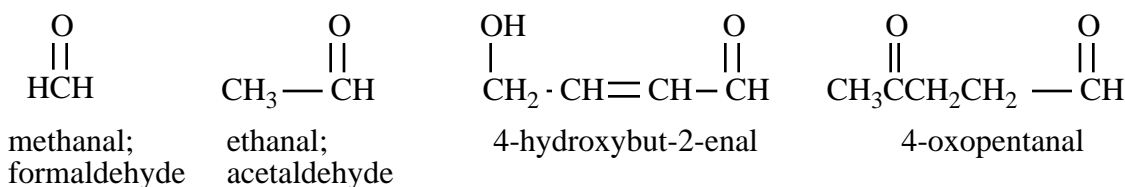
2. Alcohols: prefix: hydroxy-; suffix: -ol



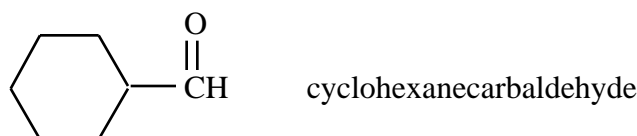
3. Ketones: prefix: oxo-; suffix: -one



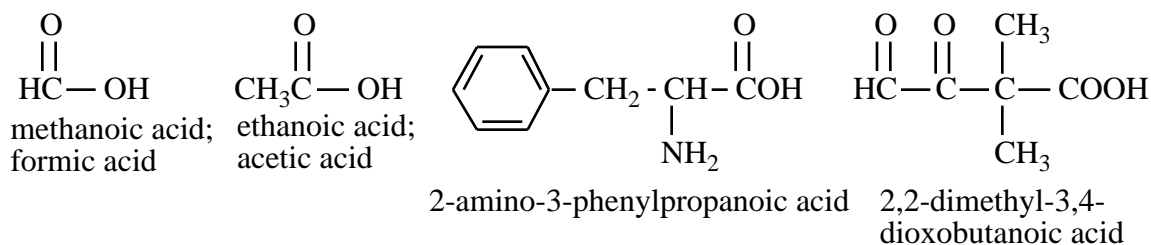
4. Aldehydes: prefix: oxo-, or formyl- (O=CH-); suffix: -al (abbreviation: —CHO).  
An aldehyde can only be on carbon 1, so the "1" is generally omitted from the name.



Special case: When the chain cannot include the carbon of the CHO, the suffix "carbaldehyde" is used:

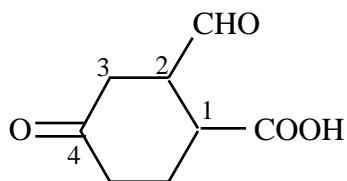


5. Carboxylic Acids: prefix: carboxy-; suffix: -oic acid (abbreviation: —COOH).  
A carboxylic acid can only be on carbon 1, so the "1" is generally omitted from the name.



(Note: Chemists traditionally use, and IUPAC accepts, the names "formic acid" and "acetic acid" in place of "methanoic acid" and "ethanoic acid".)

Special case: When the chain numbering cannot include the carbon of the COOH, the suffix "carboxylic acid" is used. See example on next page.



2-formyl-4-oxocyclohexanecarboxylic acid  
("formyl" is used to indicate an aldehyde as a substituent when its carbon cannot be in the chain numbering)

### E. Naming Carboxylic Acid Derivatives

The six common groups derived from carboxylic acids are salts, anhydrides, esters, acyl halides, amides, and nitriles. Salts and esters are most important.

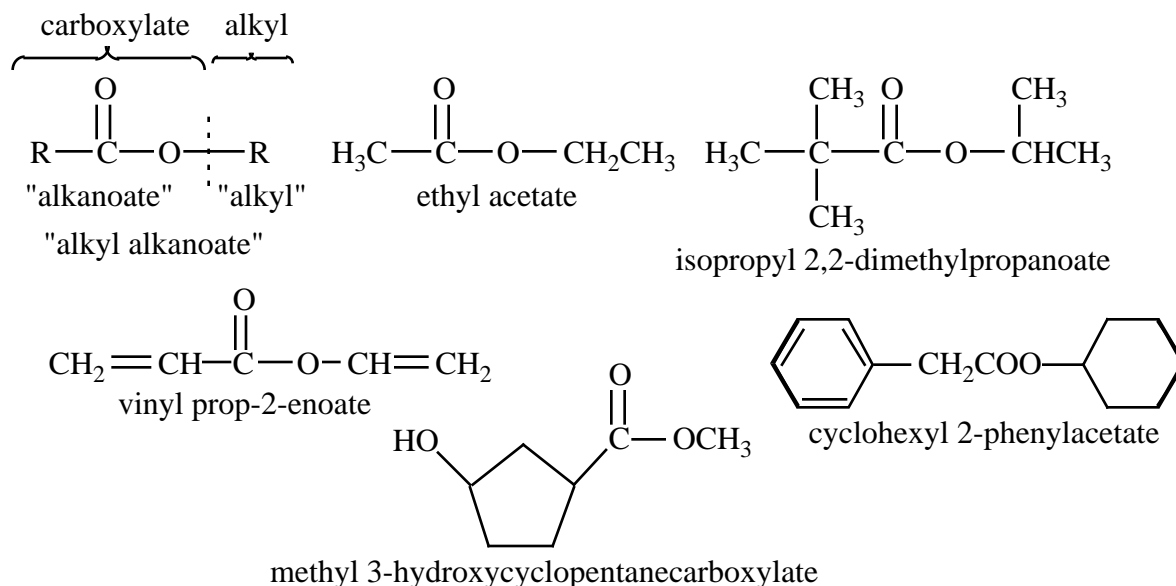
#### 1. Salts of Carboxylic Acids

Salts are named with cation first, followed by the anion name of the carboxylic acid, where "ic acid" is replaced by "ate" :

acetic acid	becomes	acetate
butanoic acid	becomes	butanoate
cyclohexanecarboxylic acid	becomes	cyclohexanecarboxylate

#### 2. Esters

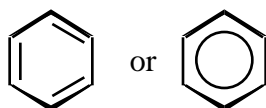
Esters are named as "organic salts" that is, the alkyl name comes first, followed by the name of the carboxylate anion. (common abbreviation: —COOR)



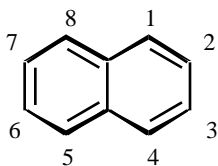
## IV. Nomenclature of Aromatic Compounds

"Aromatic" compounds are those derived from benzene and similar ring systems. As with aliphatic nomenclature described above, the process is: determining the root name of the parent ring; determining priority, name, and position number of substituents; and assembling the name in alphabetical order. *Functional group priorities are the same in aliphatic and aromatic nomenclature.*

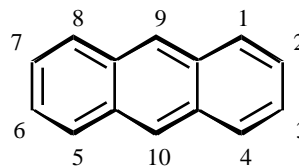
A. Common Parent Ring Systems



benzene



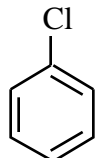
naphthalene



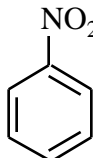
anthracene

B. Monosubstituted Benzenes

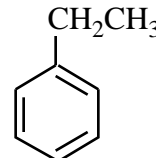
1. Most substituents keep their designation, followed by the word “benzene”:



chlorobenzene

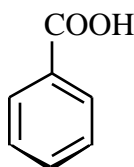


nitrobenzene

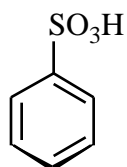


ethylbenzene

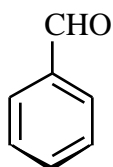
2. Some common substituents change the root name of the ring. IUPAC accepts these as root names, listed here in decreasing priority:



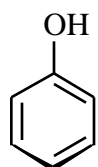
benzoic acid



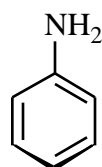
benzene-sulfonic acid



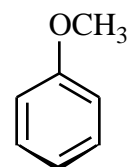
benzaldehyde



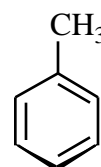
phenol



aniline



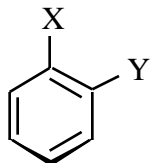
anisole



toluene

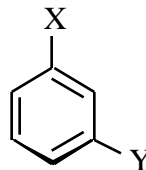
C. Disubstituted Benzenes

1. Designation of substitution—only three possibilities:

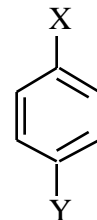


common:  
IUPAC:

*ortho*-  
1,2-

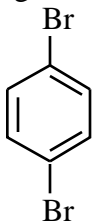


*meta*-  
1,3-

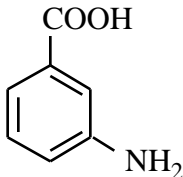


*para*-  
1,4-

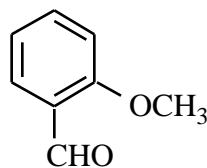
2. Naming disubstituted benzenes—Priorities determine root name and substituents



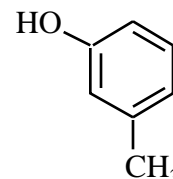
1,4-dibromobenzene



3-aminobenzoic acid



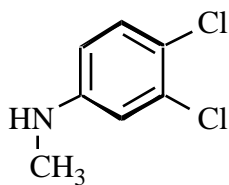
2-methoxybenzaldehyde



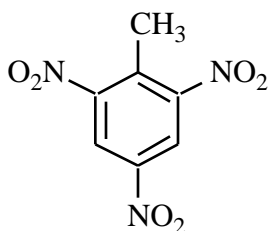
3-methylphenol



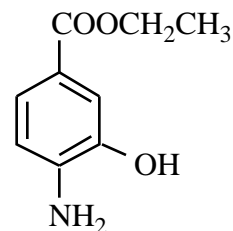
D. Polysubstituted Benzenes



3,4-dichloro-*N*-methylaniline



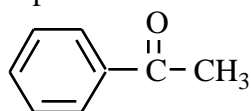
2,4,6-trinitrotoluene  
(TNT)



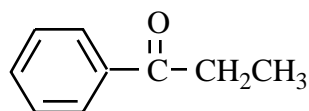
ethyl 4-amino-3-hydroxybenzoate

E. Aromatic Ketones

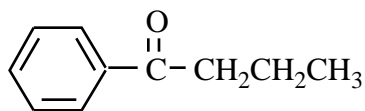
A special group of aromatic compounds are ketones where the carbonyl is attached to at least one benzene ring. Such compounds are named as “phenones”, the prefix depending on the size and nature of the group on the other side of the carbonyl. These are the common examples:



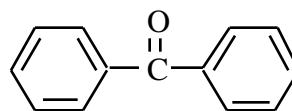
acetophenone



propiophenone



butyrophenone



benzophenone

Courtesy of Dr. Jan Simek, California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo