Directed ortho-Lithiation of Benzamides

**Significance:** Snieckus and co-workers reported a regiospecific ortho-lithiation of various \( \text{N,N-diethylbenzamides} \) using sec-BuLi and TMEDA in THF. The formed lithiated species were trapped with a range of electrophiles and the desired products were obtained in moderate to excellent yield.

**Comment:** The authors demonstrated the utility of this methodology for the synthesis of naturally occurring alkaloids. Thus, a formylated product was converted by successive reduction and cyclization into meconine in 90% yield. Subsequent hydrolysis furnished opianic acid in 50% yield.

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**Further transformations:**

1. NaBH₄, EtOH, 25 °C, 24 h
2. TsOH, PhMe, reflux, 24 h

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**Key words:** lithiation, ortho-functionalization, benzamides