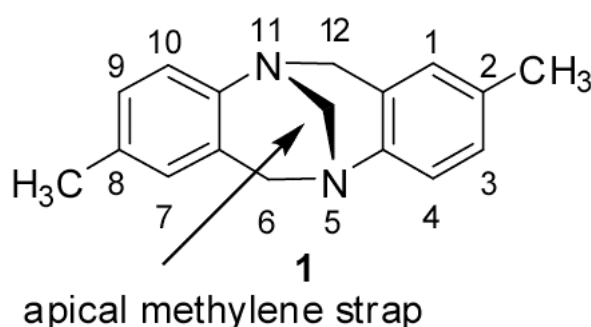


# Getting a handle on Tröger's base chemistry

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Tröger's base **1** is a C<sub>2</sub> symmetric chiral diamine that was first prepared in 1887 from the acid-catalysed reaction of *p*-toluidine (4-methylaniline) and formaldehyde.



Compounds based on this framework are of interest because of their potential to function as artificial receptors and catalysts in asymmetric transformations.

The syntheses of a large number of Tröger's base analogues have been reported from anilines with different substituents at the 2- and 8-positions, however the yields are generally poor when the aniline is substituted with an electron-withdrawing group and this has greatly restricted the type of functionality available on the aromatic rings.

Recent advances in introducing ester, formyl and nitro groups, among others, will be discussed, together with the results of efforts to vary the nature of the apical methylene strap. These new modifications are expected to lead to the development of new areas of application for Tröger's base analogues.