ments comprising initially reacting stoichiometric amounts of the mono-sodium derivative of acetoacetic methyl ester and methyl halide in an excess of anhydrous alcohol and at temperatures from room temperature up to 90° C., to form methyl methyl acetoacetic acid ester, and then adding the so formed methyl ester to benzyl chloride over a period of two hours while maintaining the temperature of the reacting materials at 48–53° C., then allowing the mixture to stand for several hours to reach room temperature, distilling off excess alcohol until liquid temperature of 83° C. is reached, cooling the residual reaction product including benzyl methyl acetoacetic methyl ester to 20° C., adding excess water to dissolve out salt, purifying the oily reaction product with caustic soltion and water, then fractionating to remove excess benzyl chloride.

2. Process according to claim 1 in which the methyl halide is methyl chloride.

3. In the synthesis of isomer-free benzyl methyl acetoacetic methyl ester from mono-sodium acetoacetic methyl ester, the improvements comprising reacting the mono sodium acetoacetic methyl ester with methyl chloride to form methyl acetoacetic acid ester, forming the sodium salt of the so-formed methyl ester, and then reacting the sodium salt with benzyl chloride.

4. The method of preparing isomer-free benzyl methyl acetoacetic methyl ester, comprising reacting stoichiometrical amounts of methyl chloride and acetoacetic ester sodium salt to form methyl acetoacetic acid ester, purifying the ester and forming its sodium salt, and adding the sodium salt to a methanol solution of benzyl chloride over a two-hour period and at temperatures of 48–53° C.

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