

Want to invest your CPF-OA at lowest fees? Use POEMS.

Description

default watermark

Why Iâ??ve decided to invest my CPF-OA now

Ever since our government announced that the CPF Special Account (SA) would be closed, Iâ??ve been thinking hard about how to invest my CPF funds for higher returns.

It now makes little sense to continue transferring funds from my Ordinary Account (OA) to my SA; now that the closure (from age 55) will see all SA savings transferred to the Retirement Account (RA) up to the Full Retirement Sum (FRS), and any remaining savings returned to the OA.

And at that age, my remaining investment horizon and risk appetite will be significantly lower.

Having my money earn just 2.5% per annum â?? barely beating inflation â?? does not sound like a good plan to me. Hence, I started investing my CPF-OA monies this year.

This article documents my thought process and reasoning, and I hope it helps any of you who are wondering if you should start to invest your CPF too.

Buying the S&P 500 with my CPF-OA

Since my CPF-OA funds are illiquid and cannot be withdrawn until I turn 55, this means I have a long investment runway ahead of me.

Considering how my CPF-OA investible money is not nearly as significant as my own cash investments, I decided that the best way forward would be to invest in a diversified fund, and ideally one requiring minimal effort. I wanted an investment that I can just â??buy and forgetâ?• , rather than volatile stocks that I need to keep monitoring in case the markets turn volatile.

So I decided to invest in the **Amundi Prime USA Fund.**

If youâ??ve never heard of it before, it is essentially *the* lowest cost unit trust that provides access to S&P 500 returns. As retail investors, we can use our CPF-OA and/or SRS monies to invest in it, easily beating the 2.5% and 0.05% p.a. respective returns weâ??d otherwise earn.

About the Amundi Prime USA Fund

The fund is managed by Amundi, recognised globally as one of the largest passi

It tracks the Solactive GBS United States Large & Mid Cap Index, which has his

Amundi charges an incredibly low expense ratio of just 0.05% p.a. for this fund. This is significantly lower than many other unit trusts and mu **even lower than the popular S&P 500 ETF CSPX favoured by non-US investors.**

When it comes to investing oneâ??s CPF, most people today either use a robo platform or go through their bank. This particular Amundi fund can only be found on limited platforms, meaning you wonâ??t be able to buy it through your usual fintech brokerage or any other local robo-advisory platform either.

default watermark

Yet, I was not keen on either method, because they would mean having to accept higher fees. With robo-advisory platforms, in particular, there are recurring fees to be paid as your portfolio size grows bigger and even in years of inactivity.

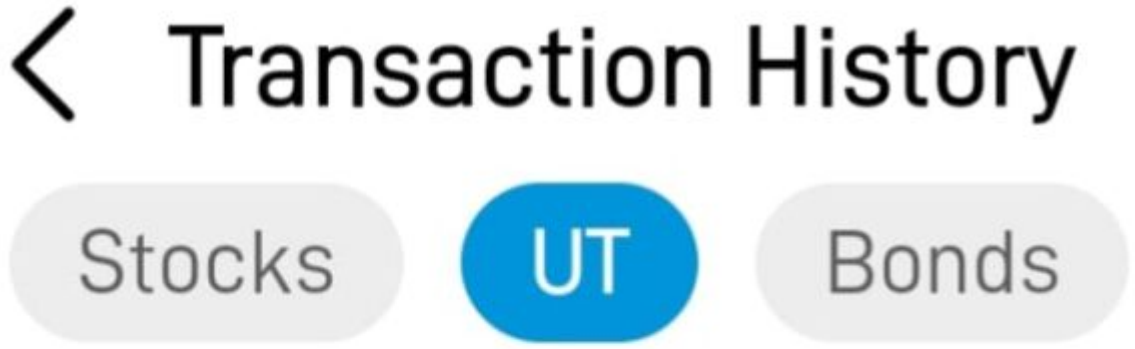
Instead, I wanted a way to invest that would provide me with:

- **Low fees**
- **No recurring platform fees**
- **No incremental fees as my portfolio grows**
- **No charges for simply holding my investments** without transactions
- **Access to a local helpline** or support desk familiar with CPF investing

So when a fellow investor friend told me that she was switching to POEMS for her CPF investments, I realised my wishes have finally been answered.

Imagine my shock when I saw that I could buy the Amundi Prime USA Fund on POEMS with **no platform charges, no sales fees, and no additional costs** beyond what is already in the fundâ??s Net Asset Value (NAV)â?¦ letâ??s just say I nearly fell off my chair.

Thatâ??s when I decided to swoop in during Aprilâ??s Liberation Day crash and deployed the majority of my investible CPF-OA funds into buying the **Amundi Prime USA Fund in SGD,** to take advantage of the dip in the S&P 500.



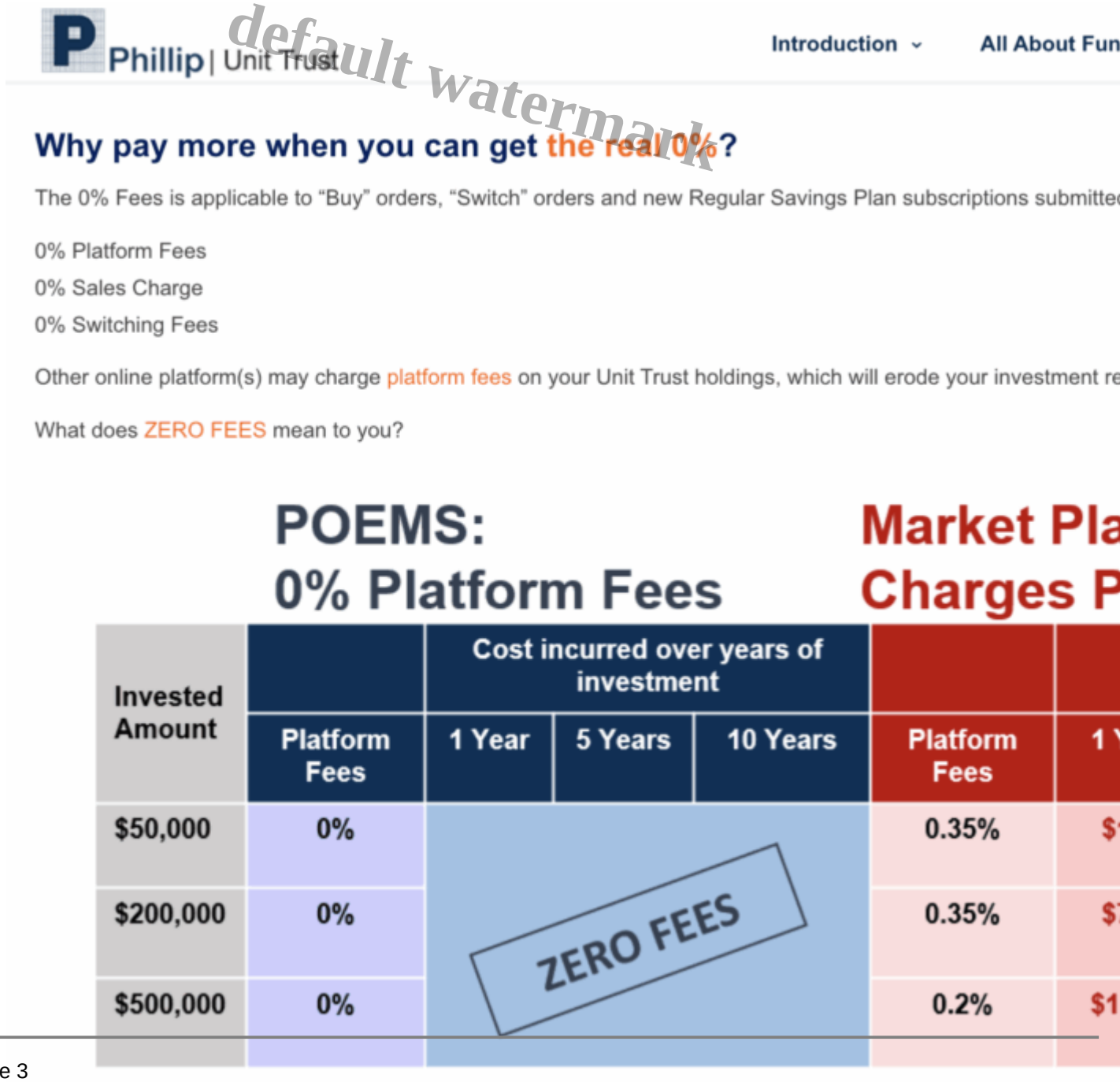
Hereâ??s a snapshot of my trade in April. Looks like I managed to catch the exact bottom! ð???

Whatâ??s more, since the unit trust is traded in SGD, I donâ??t have to worry about forex spreads due to exchange rate fluctuations each time I buy or sell. My entire portfolio tracking and calculation is based in SGD, rather than having to convert multiple times at the point of purchase and sale.

Why POEMS is the best, low-cost broker for CPF investments

If youâ??re looking to invest your CPF or SRS into the S&P 500 or globally diversified funds, then you may want to check out the **Amundi Prime USA Fund** and **Amundi Index MSCI World Fund**, which offers the cheapest and most diversified exposure in its class.

And since POEMS does not charge any fees for unit trusts investments, this can translate into significant cost savings over an investorâ??s lifetime.



Screenshot taken from POEMS website: https://unittrust.poems.com.sg/zero-fees

If youâ??re like me, and intend to invest your CPF (or SRS) monies over 10 years or more, then saving on these fees really should matter to you.

It might sound too good to be true, and perhaps youâ??re just like me, wonderingâ?¦*whatâ??s the catch?*

I reached out to POEMSâ?? management to ask them, and hereâ??s their answer:

Zero fees? Whatâ??s the catch?

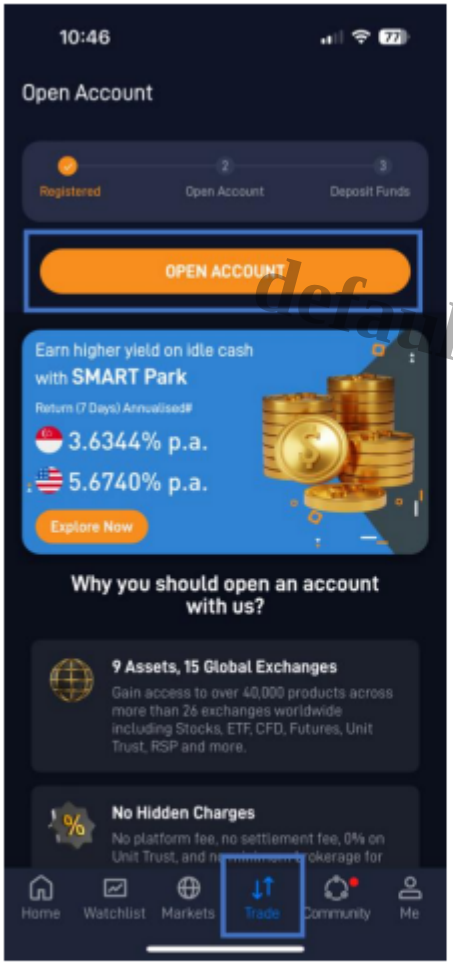
`POEMS: "Weâ??ve been serving investors in Singapore for many years, and our mi`

Aside from zero fees on all unit trusts, POEMS also provides easy access to a variety of international markets (see list here), including the popular Ireland-domiciled ETFs that many non-US investors prefer.



Step-by-step guide to investing your CPF through POEMS

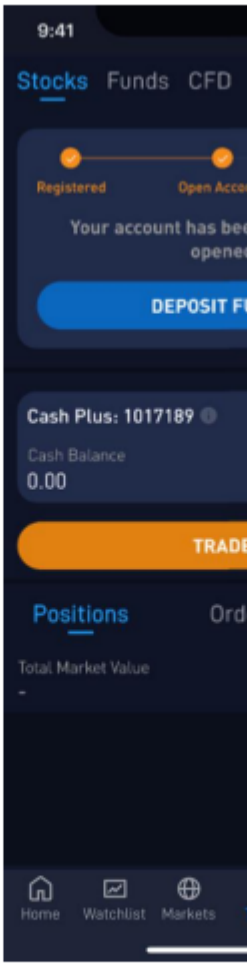
If youâ??re opening a POEMS account for the first time, you can download the **POEMS Mobile 3** App and register with your SingPass.



Step 1: Head to the "Trade" tab and select Open Account button.



Step 2: Open a POEMS Account either using Myinfo or online form.



Step 3: Upon su opening, you ca funds into your

default watermark

Step 1: Select your account type

- I recommend **opening both accounts** so that you have access to *both* low-cost trading *as well as* CDP linkage.
- Otherwise, select the **Cash Plus Account** if you *only* want to invest your CPF and are happy not owning any of your Singapore stocks in your own CDP account.



Step 2: Choose your desired facilities

Make sure you tick all of the below checkboxes if you want to get your welcome bonuses! *(Psst, having access doesnâ??t mean you have to use them all)*



Step 3: Transfer at least $3,000 into your Cash Plus Account to qualify for the welcome gifts here.

Use PayNow to transfer almost instantaneously with no fees.

Current promotion: You can receive $50 to $150 worth of Amazon / Microsoft shares once you fulfil the (easy) criteria!

Note: If youâ??re buying a CPF investment like me, the funds will be deducted

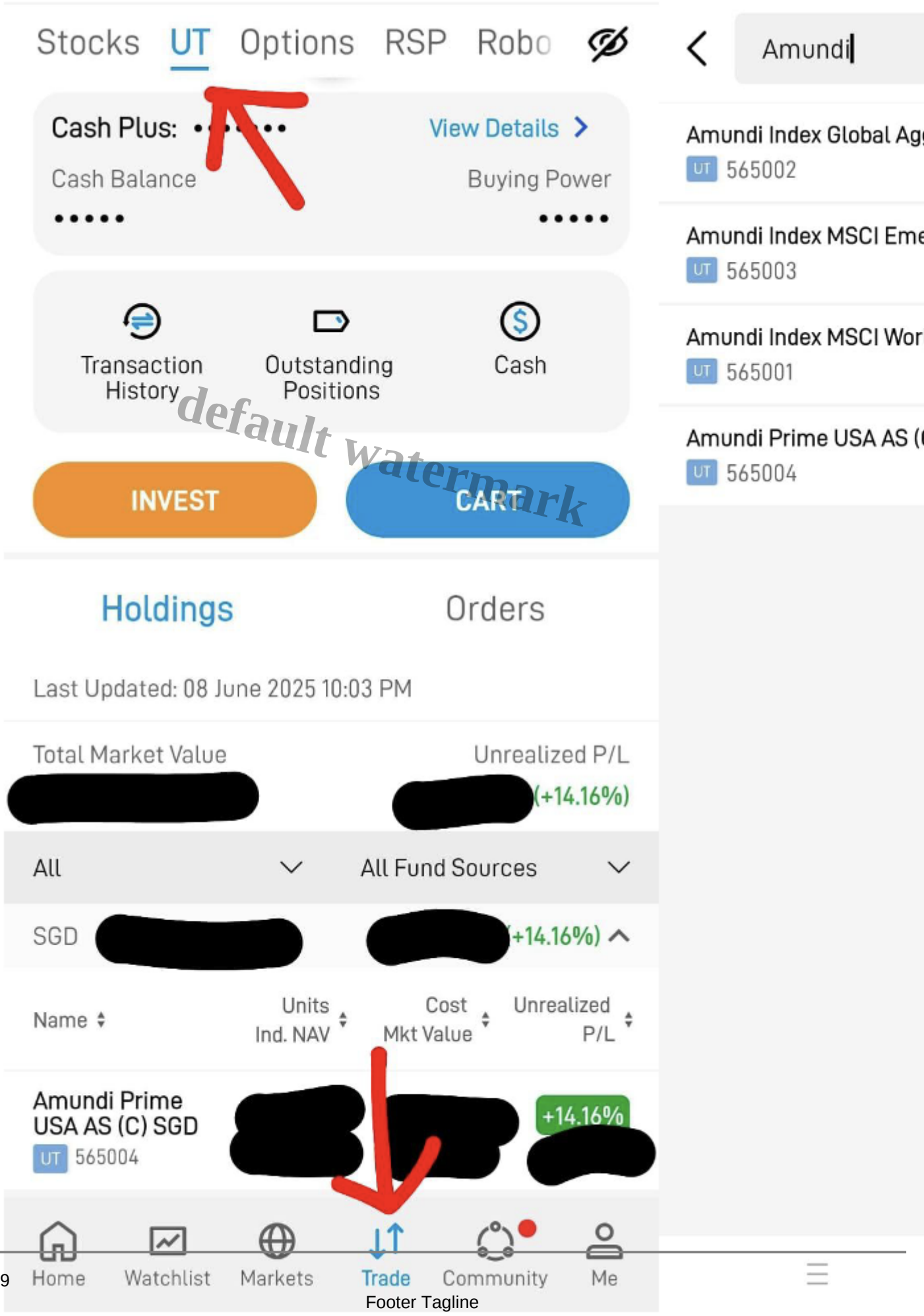
As for any unused cash, it will continue to earn POEMSâ?? Smart Park rates unl

Pro Tip: Check and ensure your CPA-OA has enough funds (in excess of $20,000) for the deduction, otherwise, the transaction will fail and you will still be charged processing fees by your bank!

Step 4: Tap on Trade > UT > Search for your desired fund

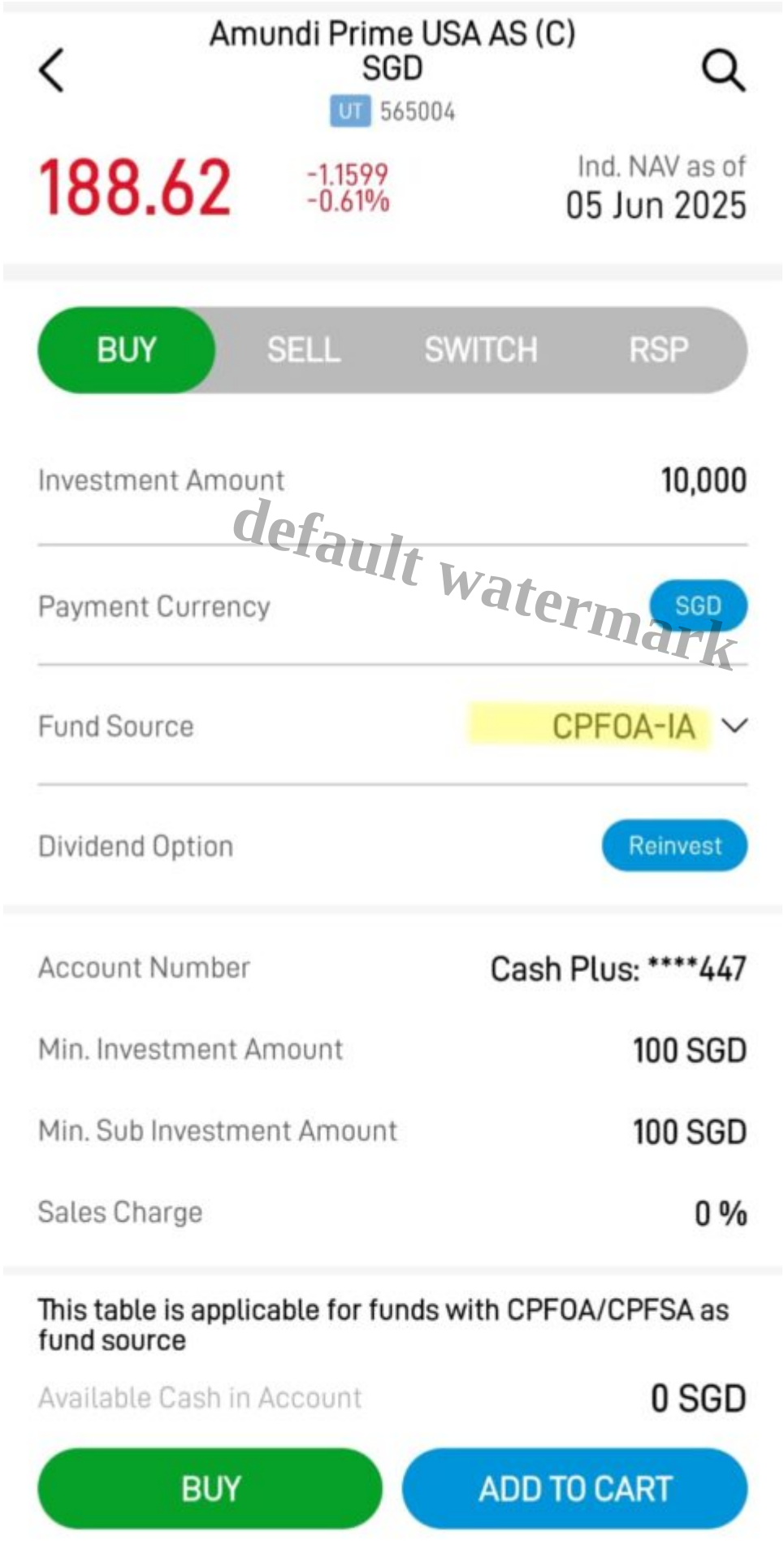
Hereâ??s a screenshot of how it looks on my POEMS Mobile 3 app when I try to buy more units of **Amundi Prime USA** or **Amundi MSCI World Fund**.

default watermark


Stocks
UT
Options
RSP
Robo
Cash Plus:
View Details
Cash Balance
Buying Power
Transaction History
Outstanding Positions
Cash
default watermark
INVEST
CART
Holdings
Orders
Last Updated: 08 June 2025 10:03 PM
Total Market Value
Unrealized P/L
(+14.16%)
All
All Fund Sources
SGD
+14.16%)
Name
Units
Ind. NAV
Cost
Mkt Value
Unrealized
P/L
Amundi Prime USA AS (C) SGD
UT 565004
+14.16%
Home
Watchlist
Markets
Trade
Community
Me
Amundi
Amundi Index Global Ag
UT 565002
Amundi Index MSCI Eme
UT 565003
Amundi Index MSCI Wor
UT 565001
Amundi Prime USA AS (
UT 565004

Click Buy/Sell, enter your amount, and choose CPF for your fund source.

default watermark


Amundi Prime USA AS (C)
SGD
UT 565004
188.62
-1.1599
-0.61%
Ind. NAV as of
05 Jun 2025
BUY
SELL
SWITCH
RSP
Investment Amount
10,000
default watermark
Payment Currency
SGD
Fund Source
CPFOA-IA
Dividend Option
Reinvest
Account Number
Cash Plus: ****447
Min. Investment Amount
100 SGD
Min. Sub Investment Amount
100 SGD
Sales Charge
0 %
This table is applicable for funds with CPFOA/CPFSA as fund source
Available Cash in Account
0 SGD
BUY
ADD TO CART

If youâ??re buying on your desktop web login instead, click on **Trade > Unit Trust >** type â??Amundiâ? • in the search bar and you should find it.



Step 5: Sit back and let POEMS handle the rest!

With that, youâ??ve successfully transacted your CPF investment and POEMS will liaise with your bank for the rest.

Q: How much fees can I expect to be charged?

While POEMS does not charge anything for CPF investments in unit trusts, you will still need to pay agent bank fees for executing the service.

Iâ??ve consolidated the applicable fees below â?? note that these apply regardless of your choice of brokerage.

Bank	Application fee per transaction for 1,000 units of Shares / ETFs / Unit Trusts / Government Bonds	Service charge (per counter, per quarter)	Minimum service fee
DBS	$2.73 (max $27.25)	$2.18	$5.45
OCBC	$2.73 (max $27.25)	$2.18	$0
UOB	$2.18 (max $21.80)	$2.18	$0

Q: Why open both account types?

The **POEMS Cash Plus account** is a pre-funded custodian account. This means you will need to ensure you have the cash ready *before* executing the trades, and ownership is managed on your

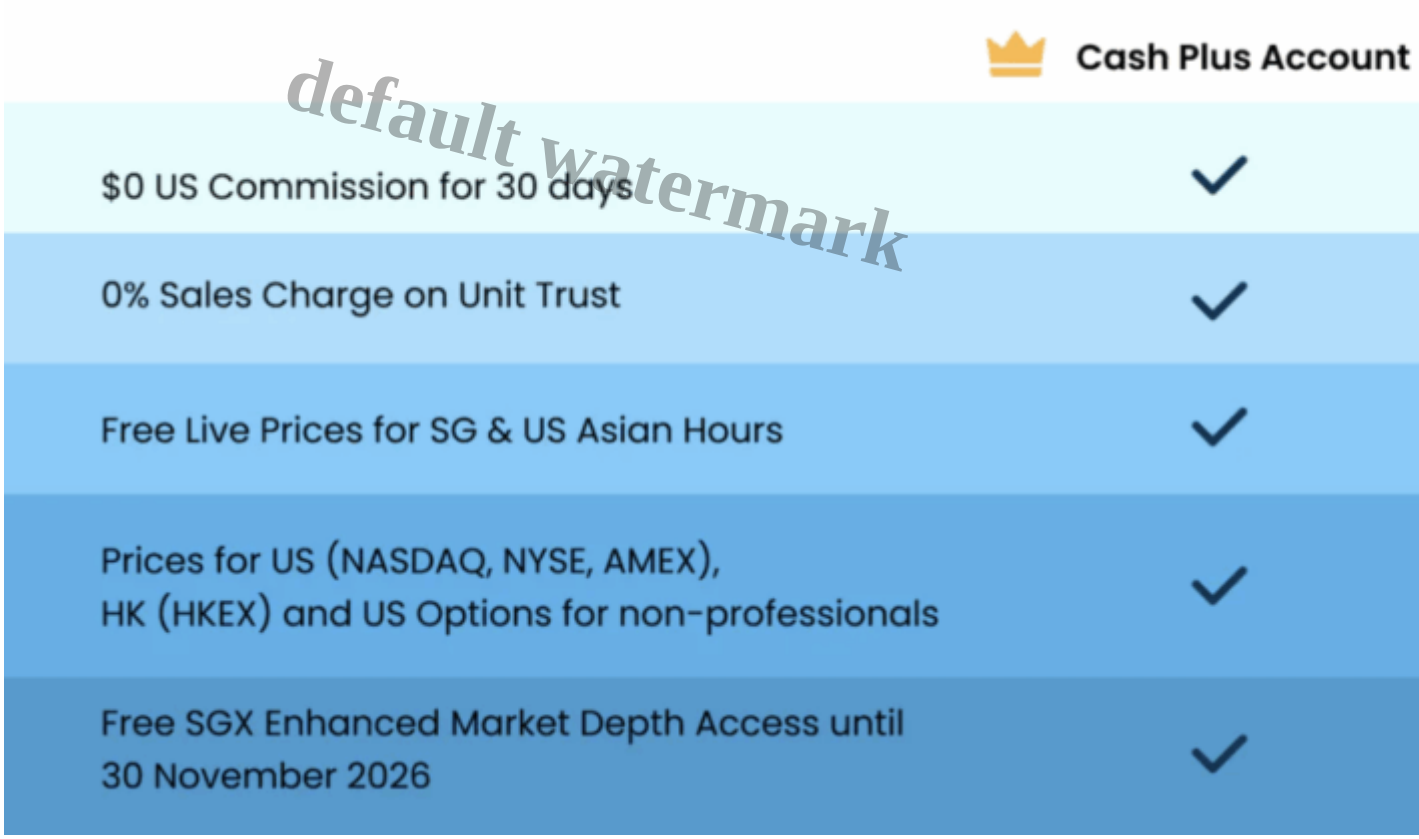
behalf.

- As all foreign assets are held in custody (this applies across all brokers in Singapore), custody fees for foreign market counters apply; e.g. $2 per counter per month for CSPX.
- Get this waived off if your total assets invested via POEMS exceed $250,000.

Because POEMS Cash Plus charges lower commission rates for access to both Singapore and overseas markets, youâ??ll definitely want to have this account ready to strike when market opportunities arise.

Thatâ??s how I managed to catch Aprilâ??s bottom â?? a feat that wouldnâ??t have been possible if I had waited for the crash to come before opening my account.

Pro Tip: Avoid custodian fees by making at least 6 trades per quarter.



The **POEMS Cash Management account** allows you to buy first and pay later, while also enjoying direct CDP ownership.

If youâ??re a Singapore investor, I strongly recommend opening the Cash Management Account as well because it comes in handy for local investments that youâ??d want to keep under *your own* name in the CDP. This also means you donâ??t pay CDP fees even during inactive quarters, just like me!

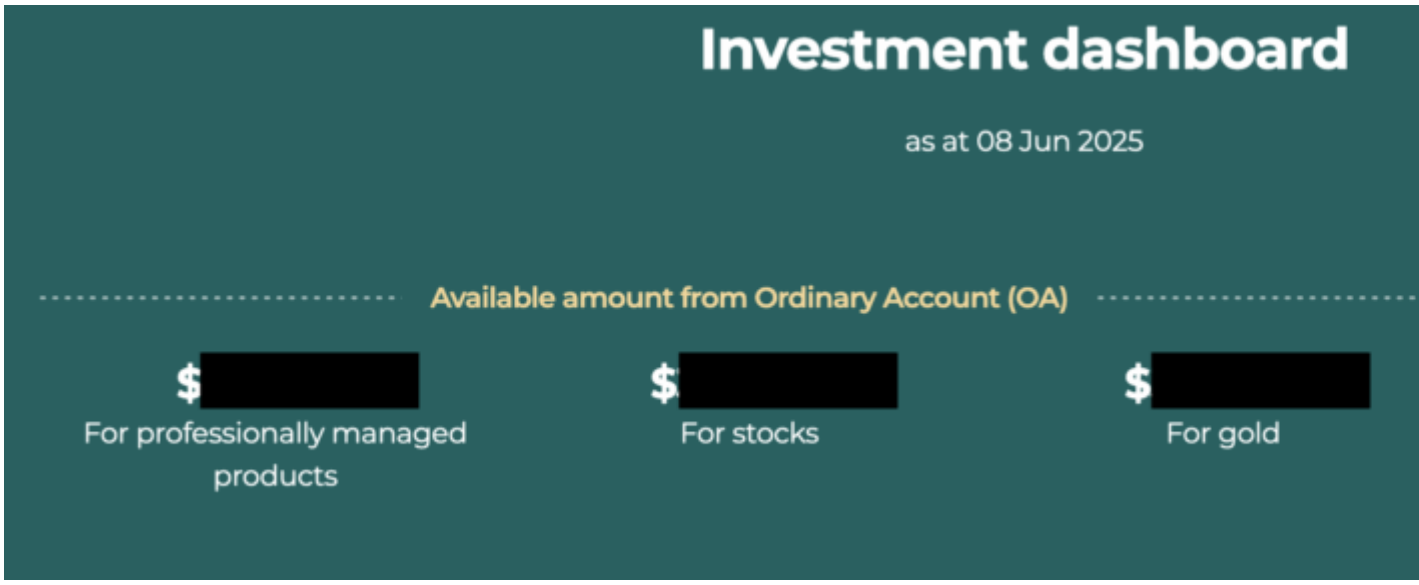
For first-time CPF investors:

Before you can invest your CPF monies through POEMS, you will first need to:

1. Open a CPF Investment Account (CPF-IA) with an authorised agent bank (i.e. DBS/OCBC/UOB).
2. Complete the Self-Awareness Questionnaire (SAQ) on the CPF website.
3. Link your CPF-IA to your chosen brokerage account (e.g. POEMS) for funds deduction.
4. Execute your trade on your brokerage and select CPF as the source of funds deduction.

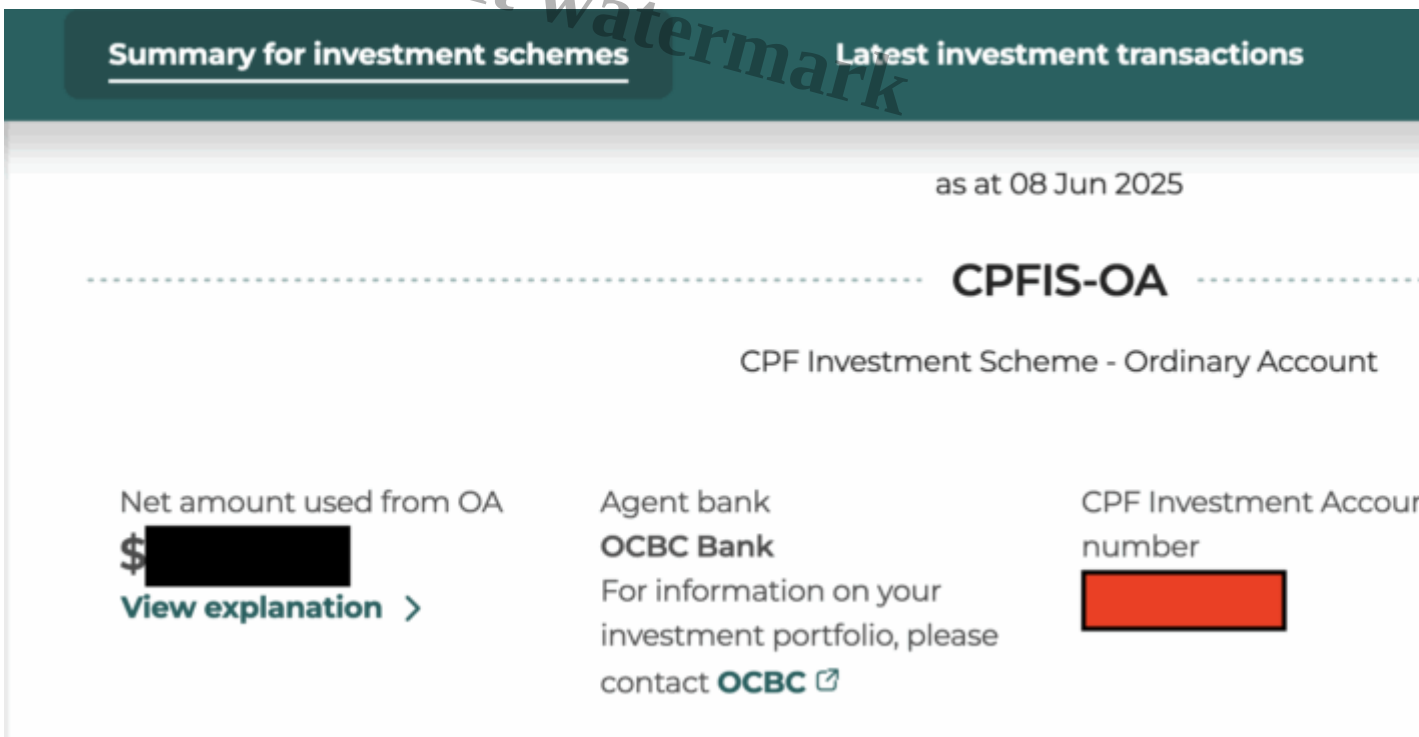
To obtain your CPF-IA number, log in to your CPF portal and click on **my CPF > Investment**.



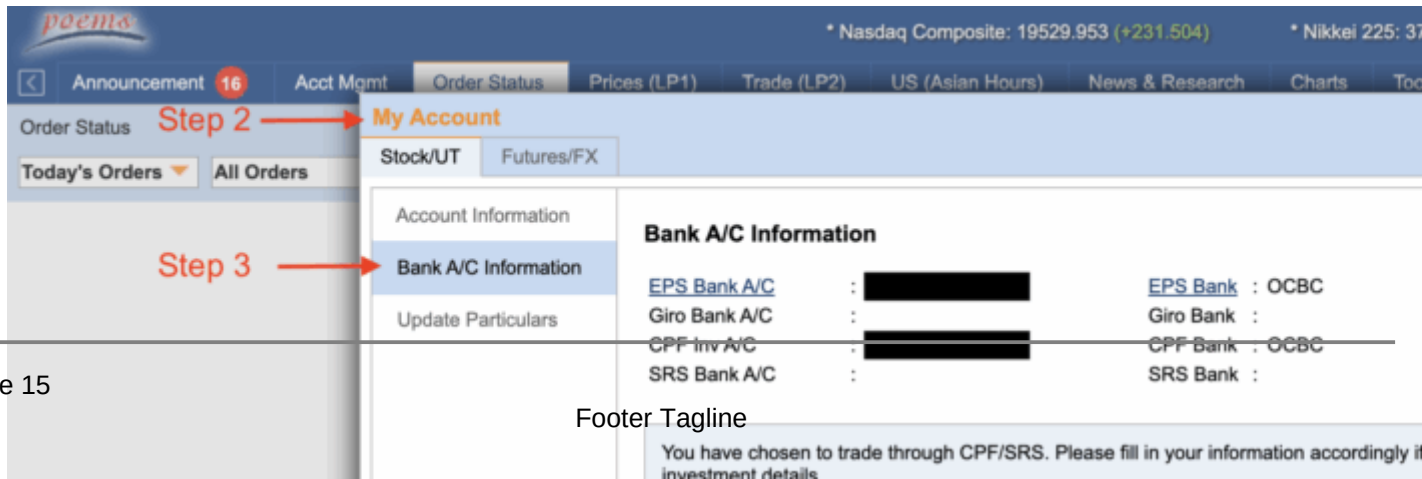


The red block below is where you can retrieve your CPF Investment Account number with your selected agent bank. This is the number you link into POEMS.

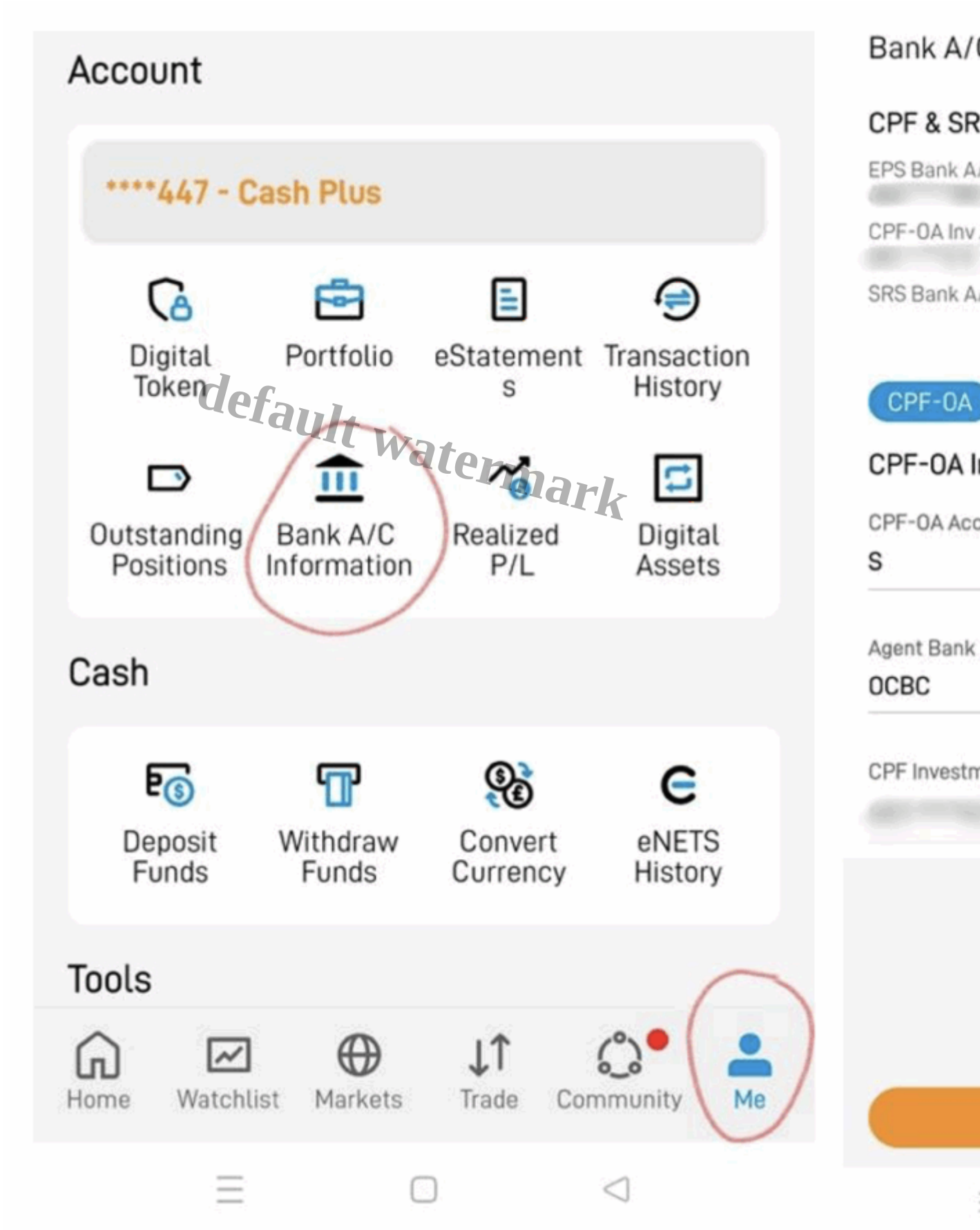
default watermark



Youâ??ll have to login to your POEMS account and click on **My Settings > My Account > Bank A/C Information,** where you can key in your details to complete the link.



How it looks on the desktop.



How it looks on the app.

For experienced CPF investors:

If youâ??ve already invested your CPF with another brokerage, the good news is that youâ??re not limited to using just one broker. You can switch or rotate between several brokerages depending on platform access and fees.

To enjoy zero fees when investing your CPF funds through POEMS (like I did), you can jump straight to Step 3 and link your CPF-IA before executing your purchase order.

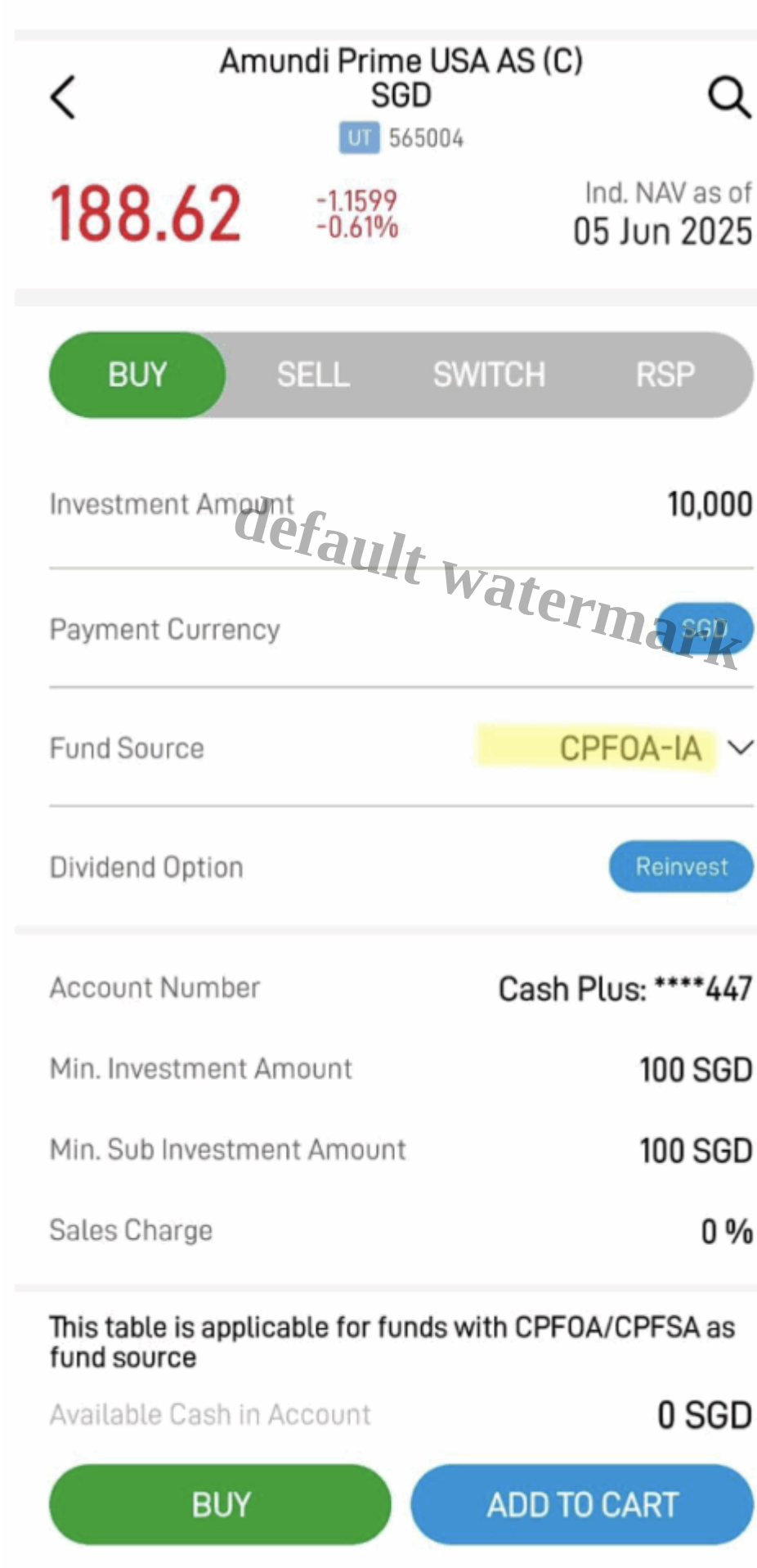
Beyond the first trade, if you prefer to automate your CPF-OA purchases and apply dollar-cost averaging, you can set up a Regular Savings Plan (RSP) on POEMS. This will automatically purchase fund units on the 7th of each month on your behalf.

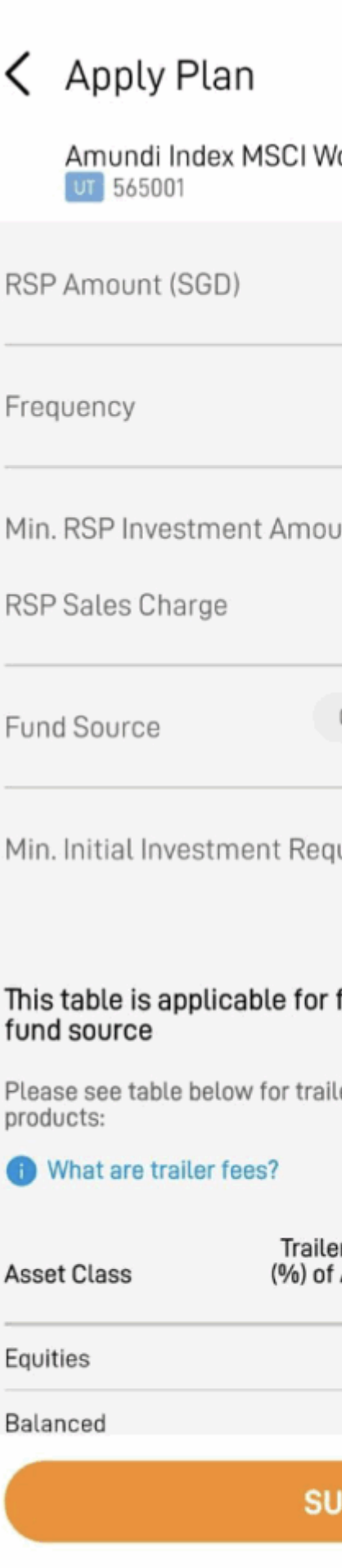
How to automate your CPF investments with POEMS

default watermark

If you prefer to have POEMS invest on your behalf regularly, you can set up a recurring CPF investment on POEMS in two ways.

Either click on â??RSPâ?• (instead of the â??Buyâ?• icon) on your preferred fund page itself, or head back to the Homepage, click on RSP, and set your preferred amount, frequency and fund source.





default watermark

Make sure you check that your CPF has enough fees to avoid failed transaction processing costs charged by your bank!

CONCLUSION: Use POEMS for the lowest-cost access to US and international market funds for your CPF/SRS investments

In this day and age, retail investors like us are spoilt for choice, as various brokerages compete for our attention and business.

Iâ??ll admit that although Iâ??ve had a POEMS account for years, I stopped using it when I switched to the new-age digital fintech brokerages in recent years. However, over the years, the limitations of these platforms became clearer to me:

- Limited market access â?? usually only the US, Hong Kong and Singapore included
- No CDP linkage â?? you canâ??t hold your Singapore investments under your own CDP account

default watermark

In response, POEMS has stepped up their game, becoming a brokerage that can compete head-to-head with these newer players, offering features that many of them still donâ??t.

To top it off, **when it comes to investing my CPF, POEMS is hands-down the BEST option Iâ??ve found.**

No other brokerage (or robo-advisors) comes close in terms of fees.

More importantly, aside from its low trading fees, **I also do not have to worry about paying any recurring platform fees or dividend handling fees.**

When it comes to a long-term investment like CPF, keeping your fees low is crucial; thatâ??s where POEMS truly shines.

Some of you may find that the platform interface takes a bit of getting used to, which is why Iâ??ve included the step-by-step screenshots above to help guide you. The first time I executed my trade, it felt unfamiliar, but from the second trade onwards, it was much easier as I could navigate my way around now.

As the pioneer of online share trading in Singapore, POEMS also provides the benefit of local support centres all around Singapore as well as responsive contact helplines. No other broker offers such customer-centric support, where you can simply call in or walk in for assistance.

POEMS may be more popular among the older generation of investors, but have not been as aggressive in marketing themselves to the younger crowd. With this article, I hope that starts to change as you discover what makes POEMS the best for you.

Need help signing up for your POEMS account and making sure you get your sign-up reward bonuses?

Iâ??ve partnered with the POEMS team to offer **EXCLUSIVE SUPPORT to Budget Babe readers!** Quote â??BUDGETBABEâ?• when you Whatsapp the team here at (+65) 88267126 !

Disclosure: This article was written in partnership with POEMS to ensure accur

Nothing in this article is meant to be taken as financial advice, nor a buy/se

Disclaimer: This advertisement has not been reviewed by the Monetary Authority

Category

1. Investing

default watermark