Singapore Personal Finance Starter Kit 2026

The complete printable guide to CPF, savings, credit cards, investing, insurance, tax reliefs, and budgeting.

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📝 Quick Reference

Section	Key Action
1. CPF	Transfer OA to SA for 4% floor
2. Savings	Move emergency fund to 3%+ account
3. Credit Cards	Match card to your spending pattern
4. Investing	DCA into low-cost ETFs monthly
5. Insurance	Term life > ILP. Always.
6. Tax Reliefs	Max SRS $15.3K + CPF $8K
7. Budgeting	Automate savings on payday

🏷 1. CPF Optimisation

☐ Know your rates (Q3 2026)

OA: 2.5% • SA/MA/RA: **4% floor** (extended to Dec 2026)

First $60K: extra 1% = up to 5-6% effective

Age 55+: extra 1% on first $30K RA = up to 6%

☐ Action plan

Transfer OA > $20K to SA (if not needed for housing in 2 years)

Max SA before external investing — 4% risk-free is hard to beat

Voluntary contributions: up to $8K MA + $7K SA (tax relief eligible)

> ⚠ OA to SA transfers are irreversible. Only transfer what you won't need for housing.

🏦 2. High-Interest Savings

Account	Rate	Requirements
MariBank	3.2%	None — best for emergency fund
GXS	3.4%	Save Pockets, flexi-withdrawal
Trust Bank	2.5%	Up to $75K + FairPrice cashback
UOB One	3.0%	Salary + spend + 3 GIRO, $100K max
OCBC 360	2.65%	Salary + save + insure + invest

☐ Your plan

Keep 3-6 months expenses in MariBank or GXS
Use UOB One / OCBC 360 if you meet criteria
Stay under $100K per bank (SDIC cap)

💳 3. Credit Cards

Card	Best For	Rate
Citi Cash Back+	Everyday no-fuss	1.6% unlimited
UOB One	Consistent $2K/mo spend	Up to 5%
OCBC Frank	Young earners	6% selected, 1% rest
Maybank F&F	Groceries & dining	Up to 8%

⚠ **Golden rule:** Pay full statement every month. 28% interest kills any cashback.

📈 4. Smart Investing

Option	Return	Risk	Min
T-bills	3.0-3.5%	None	$1K
SSBs	~2.7% avg	None	$500
Robo-advisors	Market	Low-Med	$1
ETFs (CSPX/IWDA)	Market	Med	$100

☐ Your strategy

Emergency fund -> high-interest savings first
<3 years -> T-bills or SSBs
5+ years -> DCA into ETFs or robo monthly

🛡 5. Insurance Essentials

☐ Integrated Shield + rider (hospitalisation)
☐ Term life: 10-15x annual income
☐ Disability income: 75% cover
☐ Critical illness rider (if budget allows)

✗ AVOID: ILPs, whole life, savings plans

📈 6. Tax Reliefs

Relief	Max	How
SRS	$15,300	Invest in T-bills/ETFs
CPF top-up	$8,000	Own or family SA/MA
Course fees	$5,500	Approved courses

Strategy: SRS $15.3K + CPF $8K = $23.3K relief. At 7% bracket = **$1,630 saved**.

📝 7. Budgeting Framework

- ☐ 50/30/20: Needs / Wants / Savings+Investments
- ☐ Track every dollar for 1 month (Seedly or spreadsheet)
- ☐ Automate savings via GIRO on payday
- ☐ Set up sinking funds for annual expenses
- ☐ Emergency fund: 3-6 months FIRST

Your monthly budget

Income: $_________

Needs (50%): $_________

Wants (30%): $_________

Savings (20%): $_________

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