

FOR MALAYSIAN INVESTORS

The Low-Stress **Wealth Builder**

*A Malaysian's Guide to Automating Global Wealth with
ETFs*

WRITTEN BY

Armand Iskandar

BURSA MALAYSIA · LSE · NYSE
SHARIAH-COMPLIANT BLUEPRINTS



FOR MALAYSIAN INVESTORS

The Low-Stress **Wealth Builder**



A Malaysian's Guide to Automating Global Wealth with
ETFs

WRITTEN BY

Armand Iskandar

The Low-Stress Wealth Builder

A Malaysian's Guide to Automating Global Wealth with ETFs

First edition · 2026

© 2026 Armand Iskandar. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form without the prior written permission of the author, except for brief quotations in reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

IMPORTANT — PLEASE READ BEFORE YOU INVEST

This book is educational material, not financial advice. It is published for general information only and does not take into account your personal financial situation, income, liabilities, obligations, or investment objectives.

The author is not a licensed financial adviser and does not hold a Capital Markets Services Licence or Capital Markets Services Representative's Licence issued by the Securities Commission Malaysia. Nothing here constitutes a recommendation, offer, or solicitation to buy or sell any security, fund, or financial product.

Every exchange-traded fund, ticker symbol, brokerage, platform, and allocation named in this book is included purely as a worked example to illustrate a concept. None of them is a recommendation, and none should be bought without your own research.

All figures, returns, fee comparisons, and projections are illustrative estimates used to demonstrate the mathematics of compounding and cost. They are not forecasts. **Past performance is not indicative of future results.** The value of investments can fall as well as rise, and you may get back less than you invested.

Investing in assets denominated in foreign currency exposes you to exchange-rate risk, which can increase or decrease your returns independently of the underlying investment. Foreign dividend withholding tax rates, fund domicile rules, brokerage fees, and platform availability change over time and differ by individual circumstance.

References to Shariah-compliant or Islamic funds describe the screening methodology applied by the relevant index provider and the fund's own Shariah advisory board. They are not a fatwa, religious ruling, or personal certification of permissibility. Consult a qualified Shariah adviser if compliance is material to your decision.

Verify all fund details, fees, and tax treatment in the official fund prospectus or Key Information Document, and consult a licensed financial adviser and a qualified tax professional before acting. You alone are responsible for your investment decisions, and the author accepts no liability for any loss arising from the use of this material.

Contents

—	Breaking Free from the Malaysian Investing Blueprint	5
01	ETF Basics <i>The Mixed Kuih Box</i>	9
02	The Two Paths <i>Local vs. Global Markets</i>	13
03	The Big Three Core Strategy <i>Choosing Your Menu</i>	16
04	The Halal Blueprints <i>Matching Shariah ETFs to Your Profile</i>	19
05	From Ringgit to Global Assets <i>The Step-by-Step Execution Guides</i>	24

Breaking Free from the Malaysian Investing Blueprint

If you grew up in Malaysia, your roadmap for building wealth was likely handed to you by your parents, your uncles, or your first boss. It usually sounds exactly like this:

- 01 Work hard and maximize your **EPF (KWSP)** contributions.
- 02 Put any extra cash into **ASB** (if you are Bumiputera) or **Amanah Saham Malaysia (ASM)**.
- 03 If an agent approaches you at a bank branch, buy a **Unit Trust** mutual fund to capture global market growth.
- 04 Eventually, buy a physical property to rent out.

For decades, this standard blueprint worked brilliantly. EPF has been an absolute rock, consistently delivering solid returns. ASB has historically been a safe, tax-free haven for capital protection, paying out a steady dividend.

But if you rely *only* on this traditional blueprint, your wealth faces a silent, structural glass ceiling.

The Limits of the Local Playbook

The reality of the modern economy means that keeping 100% of your assets locked inside Malaysia introduces two massive, hidden risks:

Currency Depreciation and **Hyper-Local Concentration**.

When you invest strictly in local fixed-price funds, your wealth is deeply tied to the performance of the ringgit and the domestic stock exchange (Bursa Malaysia). While our local economy has great structural strengths, it represents less than 1% of the global financial market. By keeping all your eggs in the Malaysian basket, you are completely missing out on the massive wealth generated by global mega-trends: the artificial intelligence boom, global healthcare innovations, and the growth of trillion-dollar tech titans like Microsoft, Apple, and Nvidia.

To capture that global growth, many Malaysians turn to **Unit Trusts** via local banks or platforms. But this introduces an even deadlier wealth killer: **Extravagant Fees**.

The average global equity Unit Trust in Malaysia charges an upfront sales fee of **3% to 5%**, plus an annual management fee of **1.5% to 2.0%**.

WARNING

The Fee Leakage

Imagine you invest RM10,000 into a traditional Unit Trust. Up to RM500 is immediately stripped away as a sales charge before your money even starts working. Over a 20-year horizon, these recurring 2% annual fees quietly eat up nearly *one-third* of your total potential compounding wealth. You take 100% of the market risk, but the fund managers take a massive chunk of your returns, win or lose.

Enter the Exchange-Traded Fund (ETF)

This book is about breaking through that glass ceiling using **Exchange-Traded Funds (ETFs)**.

An ETF gives you the exact same benefit as a Unit Trust—instant diversification into hundreds of the world’s best companies—but with three game-changing upgrades:

- ◆ **YOU ARE THE BOSS** You buy them yourself directly on global stock exchanges through your phone, completely bypassing pushy agents and high-commission middlemen.
- ◆ **THE FEES ARE NEAR-ZERO** While a local Unit Trust charges 1.5% to 2.0% annually, a top-tier global index ETF costs as little as **0.03% to 0.30%** per year. That is up to 50 times cheaper.
- ◆ **YOU OWN THE WORLD** With a single click, you can own a piece of the entire global economy, securely diversifying your net worth into assets denominated in foreign stable currencies.

The Comparison at a Glance

To see where ETFs fit into your financial ecosystem, look at how they compare directly to our traditional local options:

INVESTMENT TOOL	HISTORICAL RETURN	ANNUAL FEES	GLOBAL ACCESS	BEST USED FOR
Fixed Deposits	2.5% to 3.5%	0%	None	Emergency cash / Short-term storage
ASB / ASM	4.5% to 5.75%	Ultra-low	Low (Mostly Malaysian assets)	Capital protection & safe MYR base
EPF (KWSP)	5.0% to 6.3%	Low (Internal)	Moderate (Diversified by KWSP)	Locked retirement foundation
Local Unit Trusts	6.0% to 9.0% (Variable)	1.5% to 2.0% + upfront loads	High	Legacy method (High fee drag)
Global Index ETFs	8.0% to 10.0%+ (Historical long-term)	0.03% to 0.30% (Ultra-low)	Maximum (Entire Global Economy)	Long-term automated wealth building

This book is not telling you to withdraw all your money from EPF or empty your ASB account. Those are fantastic, defensive anchors for your financial life.

Instead, this book will teach you how to take your *next* RM500, RM1,000, or RM5,000 of investable savings and channel it into a hyper-efficient, low-cost global wealth machine. You will learn how to navigate international brokerages safely from Malaysia, legally optimize foreign tax traps, and build an automated portfolio that grows while you sleep.

ETF Basics

The Mixed Kuih Box

Imagine walking into your local *pasar malam* (night market) or a traditional bakery. You are looking at the desserts, and you want to try a bit of everything—some Kuih Seri Muka, a piece of Karipap, some Kuih Lapis, and a few Onde-Onde.

You have two choices:

- 01 THE HARD WAY** You walk to ten different stalls. You are forced to buy a whole, large tray of each type. You spend a massive amount of money, it takes forever to walk around, and you end up with way too much food that you can't possibly finish.
- 02 THE SMART WAY** You walk up to the main counter and pick up a pre-packed "**Mixed Kuih Box**." For a single, small flat price, you get an instant variety pack containing a perfect, bite-sized slice of everything.

An Exchange-Traded Fund (ETF) is exactly that Mixed Kuih Box.

When you buy individual stocks (like trying to buy one whole share of Apple, one of Tesla, one of Maybank, and one of Genting separately), it requires a lot of capital, constant monitoring, and high transaction fees.

But when you buy a single share of an ETF, you are buying a pre-packaged variety box. If that ETF tracks the top 500 companies in the US, your single share instantly gives you a microscopic, diversified

slice of all 500 companies. You don't have to guess which tech giant or bank will win this year—you simply own the entire tray.

The Great Debate: ETF vs. Unit Trust

If you have ever spoken to a financial planner at a local bank branch or a friend who works in financial sales, they have likely never mentioned the word "ETF." Instead, they probably pulled out a colorful brochure and tried to sell you a **Unit Trust**.

On the surface, Unit Trusts and ETFs look like identical twins. Both pool money from thousands of everyday Malaysian investors to buy a massive, diversified bundle of stocks or bonds.

But beneath the hood, they operate like two completely different machines. To protect your wealth, you must understand the three structural gaps between them.

1

The Wealth Killer: Upfront Sales Charges

MALAYSIAN UNIT TRUSTS

are heavily driven by an army of independent agents. To pay their commissions, almost every equity Unit Trust fund in Malaysia hits you with an **upfront Sales Charge of 3.0% to 5.5%**. If you invest RM10,000, up to RM550 is instantly stripped away on day one before your money even has a chance to grow.

GLOBAL INDEX ETFs

have **0% upfront sales charges**. You do not buy them through a middleman; you buy them yourself directly on the stock exchange. Every single ringgit you deposit goes entirely toward purchasing your assets.

Ongoing Fees: Active vs. Passive Management

UNIT TRUSTS

use "Active Management." You are paying a high premium for a human fund manager and a team of analysts who sit in an office trying to guess the future, constantly trading stocks to "beat the market." Because of this overhead, they charge a heavy **annual management fee of 1.5% to 2.0%**.

ETFs

use "Passive Management." There is no human manager trying to guess which stock will rise tomorrow. Instead, a computer algorithm automatically tracks an established market index (like the S&P 500). Because it is completely automated, the annual management fees are near-zero—ranging from **0.03% to 0.30%**. That is up to 50 times cheaper than a Unit Trust.

Trading Speed: How You Get Your Money

UNIT TRUSTS

are slow. They only calculate their price once a day at the end of the business evening. If you want to sell your units and cash out, the money can take anywhere from **3 to 7 working days** to finally settle into your Malaysian bank account.

ETFs

are fast. Because they are listed directly on stock exchanges (hence the name *Exchange-Traded*), they behave exactly like standard shares. Their prices fluctuate live, second-by-second during market hours. If you click sell, your transaction executes instantly, and the cash hits your trading wallet immediately.

The Cost of Fees: A 20-Year Reality Check

Many people think a 1.5% fee difference doesn't matter. But in finance, fees don't just add up—they compound negatively against you.

FEATURE	LOCAL UNIT TRUST	GLOBAL INDEX ETF
Sales Fee	3.0% to 5.5% loss	0%
Annual Fee	1.5% to 2.0%	0.03% to 0.30%
How to Buy	Through an Agent / Bank Platform	Yourself via a Broker App
Pricing	Once a day (End of day)	Real-time (Market hours)

THE MATH

The Compounding Math

Imagine two Malaysian investors both invest an initial lump sum of **RM50,000** for a 20-year retirement horizon. Both funds earn an identical 8.0% average annual market return under the hood.

INVESTOR A

standard local Unit Trust

1.5% annual fee

RM165,000

INVESTOR B

Low-Cost Global ETF

0.1% annual fee

RM220,000

By making the conscious shift to skip the middleman and pick an ETF, Investor B keeps an extra **RM55,000** in their own pocket.

The Two Paths

Local vs. Global Markets

Now that you know how an ETF acts like a pre-packaged "mixed kuih box," it's time to decide where you want to go shopping.

As a Malaysian investor, you stand at a crossroads with two completely distinct paths available to you:

- ◆ **PATH 1** Shop locally on **Bursa Malaysia** using Malaysian Ringgit (MYR).
- ◆ **PATH 2** Venture abroad to **International Exchanges** (like the New York Stock Exchange or London Stock Exchange) using foreign currency.

Neither path is strictly right or wrong—they simply serve different purposes. Let's look at the exact pros and cons of both so you can choose the strategy that aligns with your comfort level.

Path 1: The Local Route (Bursa Malaysia)

Bursa Malaysia hosts several ETFs directly on the local exchange. You can buy them using the exact same standard brokerage account you'd use to buy shares of Maybank or CIMB. Local choices include the **FBMKLCI-EA** (which tracks Malaysia's top 30 companies) or the **Eq8 Dow Jones US Titans 50 ETF** (which lets you track large US companies right from the local exchange).

THE PROS:

- ◆ **ZERO CURRENCY RISK** You invest in Ringgit (MYR). You don't have to worry about currency exchange rates or losing money when converting MYR to USD.
- ◆ **EXTREME SIMPLICITY** There are no international wire transfers or foreign broker setups required. You fund your account instantly using standard local bank FPX transfers.
- ◆ **FAMILIAR REGULATORY COMFORT** Everything is monitored directly by Securities Commission (SC) Malaysia and protected under local financial frameworks.

THE CONS:

- ◆ **THE LIQUIDITY PROBLEM (LOW TRADING VOLUME)** This is the biggest hurdle for local ETFs. Because fewer people trade ETFs on Bursa Malaysia, there is low "liquidity." This means if you want to buy or sell a large number of shares quickly, you might face wide gaps between what buyers are offering and what sellers want, which can cost you extra money.
- ◆ **LIMITED VARIETY** Bursa Malaysia only hosts a small handful of ETFs. Your choices are very limited compared to the massive menus available overseas.

Path 2: The Global Route (International Exchanges)

The alternative is to look outside our borders. By setting up an account that accesses international exchanges, you gain entry into the largest capital markets in the world.

THE PROS:

- ◆ **MASSIVE VARIETY AND SCALE** International exchanges offer thousands of ETFs. You can buy a single fund that holds the entire global stock market, or specific funds tracking explosive sectors like global artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, or clean energy.

- ◆ **HYPER-LIQUIDITY (TIGHT SPREADS)** Global ETFs (like those managed by Vanguard or BlackRock) trade millions of shares every single day. Because there are constantly buyers and sellers, you can execute trades instantly at fair market value with near-zero friction.
- ◆ **CURRENCY PROTECTION** By holding assets denominated in foreign currencies like US Dollars, you create a natural hedge that protects your global purchasing power if the Ringgit fluctuates downward.

THE CONS:

- ◆ **CURRENCY CONVERSION COSTS** Every time you move money abroad, you have to convert your MYR into USD or another foreign currency, which incurs minor conversion fees.
- ◆ **SLIGHTLY HIGHER LEARNING CURVE** You have to get comfortable using international platforms, understanding foreign market trading hours, and tracking global data.

FEATURE	LOCAL ROUTE (BURSA)	GLOBAL ROUTE (INTL)
Currency	Malaysian Ringgit (MYR)	USD / GBP
ETF Variety	Under 20 options	Thousands of options
Liquidity	Low (Can be slow)	Extreme (Instant)
Min. Capital	Low (Local stock lots)	Start with \$5 to \$10
Best For	Beginners wanting ease	Long-term growth

The Big Three Core Strategy

Choosing Your Menu

Now that you know you can shop locally or globally, you are going to encounter thousands of different ETFs. To keep from getting overwhelmed, elite investors categorize all ETFs into **The Big Three Core Strategy**.

Think of these categories as the essential building blocks of your financial house: **The Foundation, The Booster, and The Cash Flow**.

Category 1: Broad-Market ETFs (The Foundation)

Broad-Market ETFs are designed to be the anchor of your entire investment journey. They don't try to guess which specific stock will win. Instead, they buy the **entire stock market** of a country or the world.

If you buy a Broad-Market ETF that tracks the S&P 500, you are instantly buying a piece of America's 500 largest businesses. If you buy an All-World ETF, you are buying a tiny piece of thousands of companies across the globe.

- ◆ **THE VIBE** Low-stress, slow, and highly reliable wealth building.
- ◆ **THE MATH** Historically, broad stock markets like the US market have returned an average of roughly **8% to 10% per year** over long

multi-decade horizons.

- ◆ **THE ADVANTAGE** Immense safety. For Apple or Microsoft to go bankrupt, the world would have to change drastically. But even if one company fails, the index automatically drops them and swaps in a fresh, winning company. Your investment is protected by automatic evolution.

EXAMPLES FOR MALAYSIANS

GLOBAL EXCHANGE	VUAA or CSPX (S&P 500), ISDW (Global Islamic Broad Market).
BURSA MALAYSIA	FBMKLCI-EA (Tracks Malaysia's top 30 largest companies).

Category 2: Thematic & Sector ETFs (The Booster)

Once you have a strong, stable foundation, you might want to add a bit of speed to your portfolio. This is where **Sector and Thematic ETFs** come in.

Instead of tracking the whole market, these funds zoom in on a single industry or a specific disruptive trend. If you believe Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Healthcare, or Clean Energy will outpace the general economy over the next ten years, you buy a fund dedicated entirely to that theme.

- ◆ **THE VIBE** Exciting, high-growth, but with higher price volatility (bigger ups and downs).
- ◆ **THE RISK** If that specific industry goes through a rough patch or faces heavy government regulations, your fund will drop significantly faster than the general broad market.
- ◆ **THE GOLDEN RULE FOR BEGINNERS** Treat Sector ETFs like a spicy seasoning. They should never make up your entire meal. A good rule of thumb is to keep your foundation (Broad-Market) at 80% to 90% of your net worth, leaving only **10% to 20% max** for these high-growth boosters.

EXAMPLES FOR MALAYSIANS

GLOBAL EXCHANGE XLK (US Technology Sector), SMH (Semiconductors/Microchips).

Category 3: Dividend & Income ETFs (The Cash Flow)

Many Malaysian investors love traditional investments like Real Estate because they love the physical sensation of collecting regular rental income. **Dividend and Income ETFs** are built to replicate that cash flow without the headache of managing tenants or fixing broken pipes.

Instead of hunting for explosive growth companies that reinvest all their profits, Income ETFs target established, cash-rich "mature" companies (like utility giants, consumer stables, and telecom providers) that historically pay out large, consistent portions of their earnings back to shareholders.

This category also includes **REIT ETFs** (Real Estate Investment Trusts), which bundle hundreds of commercial properties, shopping malls, and hospitals together to distribute the collected rent directly to your brokerage wallet.

- ◆ **THE VIBE** Income-focused, predictable, and comforting.
- ◆ **THE TRADE-OFF** Companies that pay massive dividends usually don't have the spare cash to invent groundbreaking tech. Therefore, your capital growth (the share price increase) will be much slower compared to Broad-Market or Tech ETFs. You are trading high future growth for immediate cash flow today.

EXAMPLES FOR MALAYSIANS

GLOBAL EXCHANGE SPRE (Global Shariah Real Estate), SPSK (Global Sovereign Sukuk Bonds).

BURSA MALAYSIA Eq8 MSCI Malaysia Islamic Dividend (Local high-dividend stocks).

The Halal Blueprints

Matching Shariah ETFs to Your Profile

In Chapter 3, you learned how to categorize ETFs into three core building blocks: **The Foundation, The Booster, and The Cash Flow**.

Now, we are going to look under the hood of global Shariah-compliant ETFs. Muslim investors do not have to guess which individual global stocks are halal. Elite index providers automatically apply rigorous filters—disqualifying companies involved in interest-based finance (*Riba*), alcohol, gambling, pork, or excessive debt (debt must be less than 33% of market valuation).

By organizing these vetted Shariah ETFs into our **Big Three Core Strategy**, you can pick your "blocks" and easily construct a personalized financial blueprint.

Step 1: The Global Shariah ETF Menu

Before we look at the specific blueprints, review your master menu of choices. We have classified them using our three building blocks, noting their location and tax profile:

BLOCK A**The Foundations** *Broad-Market Halal ETFs***ISDW****iShares MSCI World Islamic UCITS ETF****IRELAND · 15% TAX**

Tracks blue-chip companies across all developed countries. Domiciled in Ireland (15% dividend tax). *The ultimate all-in-one foundation.*

ISUS**iShares MSCI USA Islamic UCITS ETF****IRELAND · 15% TAX**

Focuses heavily on massive US giants (Microsoft, Apple, Nvidia). Domiciled in Ireland (15% dividend tax).

SPUS**SP Funds S&P 500 Sharia ETF****USA · 30% TAX**

The "Halal S&P 500." Domiciled in the US (30% dividend tax).

0827EA**Eq8 Dow Jones US Titans 50 ETF**

The top 50 Shariah-compliant US companies, traded right on **Bursa Malaysia** in Ringgit.

BLOCK B**The Boosters** *High-Growth Sector Halal ETFs***ISDE****iShares MSCI Emerging Markets Islamic UCITS ETF****IRELAND · 15% TAX**

Covers fast-growing economies like Taiwan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and India. Domiciled in Ireland (15% dividend tax).

HLAL**Wahed FTSE USA Shariah ETF****USA · 30% TAX**

Captures large and mid-cap high-growth US tech and growth businesses. Domiciled in the US (30% dividend tax).

BLOCK C**The Cash Flow** *Dividend & Income Halal ETFs***SPSK****SP Funds Dow Jones Global Sukuk ETF****USA**

Focuses entirely on *Sukuk* (Islamic bonds, primarily stable sovereign debt from places like Saudi Arabia and Qatar). Excellent for capital protection. Domiciled in the US.

SPRE**SP Funds S&P Global REIT Sharia ETF****USA**

Diversified real estate investment trusts across the globe for halal property rental yields. Domiciled in the US.

0824EA**Eq8 MSCI Malaysia Islamic Dividend ETF**

Tracks high-yielding, sustainable Shariah stocks right on **Bursa Malaysia** in Ringgit.

TICKER	DOMICILE	ASSET CLASS	PRIMARY FOCUS	BROKER
ISDW	Ireland	Global Equity	Developed World All-in-One	IBKR
ISUS	Ireland	US Equity	United States Large Cap	IBKR
ISDE	Ireland	EM Equity	Emerging Markets Growth	IBKR
IGDA	Ireland	Global Equity	Broad Developed Markets	IBKR
SPUS	USA	US Equity	S&P 500 Halal Focus	Moomoo / IBKR
HLAL	USA	US Equity	US Large & Mid Cap	Moomoo / IBKR
UMMA	USA	Global Equity	World Mkts (Ex-US)	Moomoo / IBKR
SPRE	USA	Global REIT	Halal Real Estate Yield	Moomoo / IBKR
SPSK	USA	Fixed Income	Global Sukuk (Halal Bonds)	Moomoo / IBKR
0827EA	Malaysia	US Equity	Top 50 US Shariah Cos	Any Local MY Broker

Step 2: Choose Your Ready-to-Use Portfolio Blueprint

Now, combine your chosen blocks into a finalized portfolio mix based on your age, risk comfort, and the platforms you plan to use.

1 The Halal Aggressive Mix

"Wealth Builder"

ISDW 80%

ISDE 20%

80% ISDW (Developed World Equity) + 20% ISDE (Emerging Markets Growth)

BEST BROKER MATCH

Interactive Brokers (IBKR) to access these tax-efficient Irish funds on the London Stock Exchange.

2 The Halal Balanced Mix

"Steady Growth"

ISDW 60%

ISDE 15%

SPSK 15%

SPRE 10%

60% ISDW + 15% ISDE + 15% SPSK (Global Sukuk Bonds) + 10% SPRE (Global Real Estate)

BEST BROKER MATCH

Interactive Brokers (IBKR) or local platforms like FSMOne.

3 The Halal Conservative Mix

"Capital Protector"

ISDW 40%

SPSK 50%

SPRE 10%

40% ISDW + 50% SPSK (Global Sukuk Bonds) + 10% SPRE (Global Real Estate)

ALTERNATIVE

The Purely Local Alternative (Bursa Malaysia Only)

If you prefer managing your entire portfolio inside local apps like Moomoo MY or Webull MY entirely in Ringgit, you can use a **2-Fund Local Blueprint**:

0827EA 50%

0824EA 50%

From Ringgit to Global Assets

The Step-by-Step Execution Guides

Your step-by-step process depends on whether you chose the tax-optimized international route (IBKR) or the ultra-simple local app route (Moomoo or Webull).

Pathway A: Buying Global ETFs via Interactive Brokers (IBKR)

Use this guide if you are buying Ireland-domiciled UCITS ETFs (like VUAA, ISDW, or ISDE) to optimize your foreign dividend taxes.

1

Open & Configure Your Account

Takes ~15 mins

Sign up on the IBKR Mobile app. You will need your **MyKad (IC)** and a recent bank statement or utility bill for proof of address. Once your account is approved, log into the web portal, go to **Account Settings** → **IBKR Pricing Plan**, and change your configuration from **Fixed** to **Tiered**. This simple switch drops your minimum commission on the London Stock Exchange from USD 4.00 down to roughly USD 2.00 per trade.

2 Notify IBKR of an Incoming Deposit Do this first

Inside the app, tap **Deposit → Transfer Funds**. Select **Malaysian Ringgit (MYR)** as your currency. Choose the **Direct Bank Transfer (Local EFT)** option. Type in the exact amount of Ringgit you plan to transfer (e.g., RM1,000). The app will display IBKR's local Malaysian bank account details (a Citibank MY node) along with a **Unique Payment Reference Number**. Copy this down carefully.

3 Transfer MYR via Bank Portal Instant to 1 business day

Open your regular Malaysian banking app (Maybank2u, CIMB Clicks, etc.). Perform a standard local bank transfer to the Citibank MY account details provided by IBKR. **You must paste your Unique Reference Number into the 'Payment Description' or 'Recipient Reference' field** so their system knows the incoming Ringgit belongs to your specific brokerage account.

4 Convert MYR to USD Real-time market rates

Once your Ringgit arrives in your IBKR dashboard, tap the **Convert Currency** button directly on your home dashboard. Convert your MYR balance to USD. IBKR converts your money at true spot-market exchange rates with a tiny flat fee of around USD 2.00.

5 Execute the ETF Trade 3:30 PM to 12:00 AM MYT

Search for your target Irish UCITS ETF ticker—for example, **ISDW**. Make sure you select the version listed on the **London Stock Exchange (LSE)** traded in **USD**. Tap **BUY**, select **Market Order** (for instant execution), input your desired number of shares, and swipe to submit.

Pathway B: Buying ETFs via Moomoo MY or Webull MY

Use this guide if you have chosen maximum app simplicity and are comfortable buying US-domiciled ETFs (like SPUS or HLAL) or local Bursa Malaysia ETFs (like 0827EA) using sleek, locally regulated apps.

1

Open Your Account via eKYC

1-3 working days for approval

Download the **Moomoo MY** or **Webull Malaysia** app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store. Because they are regulated locally, you can complete your registration entirely online using their secure digital onboarding. You will need to take a clear photo of the front and back of your physical MyKad and snap a quick verification selfie for live facial recognition. Once submitted, the broker will process your details and automatically open a Nominee Central Depository System (CDS) account for you. This review typically takes anywhere from a few hours to 3 working days.

2

Deposit Ringgit via FPX

Instant processing

Inside either app, go to **Accounts → Deposit / Transfer → Instant Deposit (FPX)**. Select your preferred local Malaysian bank, enter the amount you want to deposit in Ringgit, and complete the secure FPX bank transfer login. The funds will reflect in your account almost instantly.

3

Exchange Cash to USD (If buying US ETFs)

Instant swap

If you are planning to buy US-listed funds like SPUS or HLAL, you need to swap your Ringgit to US Dollars instantly inside the app interface. Go to your wallet balance, tap **Currency Exchange**, and swap your MYR to USD. Both platforms show you the transparent exchange rate and any minor conversion fee upfront. *(Skip this step if you are buying local Bursa Malaysia ETFs in RM!)*

4

Place a Fractional Share Order

During Market Hours

Search for your target ETF ticker—such as **SPUS** or **0827EA**. Because these apps support fractional trading for foreign shares, you don't need to buy a whole share. Tap **Buy**, select your preferred order type, enter your budget (even if it's just USD 10 or RM50), and swipe to submit your order.

Mind the Time Zones

LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE The market opens from 3:30 PM to 12:00 AM Malaysian Time (or 4:30 PM to 1:00 AM during winter daylight savings).

US STOCK EXCHANGES The market opens from 9:30 PM to 4:00 AM Malaysian Time (or 10:30 PM to 5:00 AM during winter daylight savings).

BURSA MALAYSIA The local market operates from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM and 2:30 PM to 5:00 PM on weekdays.

Always try to execute your trades at least 30 minutes *after* a market opens for the day. This avoids the chaotic opening rush and ensures you get the most stable, predictable pricing.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE

Your five moves, in order

Everything in this book collapses into one sequence. Do them in order and the portfolio builds itself.

- 01 Understand the vehicle** — An ETF is the mixed kuih box — one purchase, hundreds of companies, near-zero fees.

- 02 Pick your route** — Bursa Malaysia in Ringgit for simplicity, or international exchanges for variety and liquidity.

- 03 Build with the Big Three** — A broad-market foundation, a small sector booster, and an income layer for cash flow.

- 04 Choose your blueprint** — Aggressive, balanced, or conservative — match the mix to your age and risk comfort.

- 05 Execute and automate** — Open the account, fund it in Ringgit, convert, buy, and repeat every month.

Keep going

I break down Malaysian money decisions — EPF, ASB, ETFs, and the maths behind them — in short videos every week. Come find me there.

@armand.iskandar