



Rachel Erin is the talented designer who brought [Voluta](#) to the Winter 2011 issue of Twist. This entry is cross-posted from her [blog](#), where you can also find [tutorials](#) to help you with the novel increases and decreases used to create these calligraphic cables. This is Rachel's first design with Twist, but you can find more of her work on her website, [here](#), and follow her on twitter, [here](#).

I did it, I finally had a design published in Twist Collective! Voluta is a wrap or drape cardigan with a cabled edging that I invented. It has eight sizes, and all kinds of design details that I love. It is definitely the most complicated thing I've designed so far, and the most complete, coherent idea, so I wanted to blog about the little things that make it special.



The cable. It uses closed ring cabling increases and decreases to make the loops and swoops. The bobbles at the ends are very small - as small as I could make them. To me they are like the serifs on the ends of calligraphic capitals, or the little knobs that often end swirls in wrought iron. It took some serious charting and swatching to get the point to both match and grow properly into the main motif.



The cross-over front. Wrap styles are flattering on a wide range of body types, and the great thing about making your own sweater is that you can position the buttons exactly where you want them to make a sweater that really hugs the curves closely, or skims over them more like the pictures here. I love the way it curves up a little in the middle of the bottom, too, creating movement and verticality at the hip area. I also like the way it hugs a little at the bottom, showing off that curve without being too sexy.



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The Draped Look. Of course, I knew that the closely wrapped look isn't everyone's style, and the drapey, swingy cardigan is popular right now as well. To satisfy the desire for a freer look, I made sure that the cardigan would fit well at the shoulders so that it could hang open and swing without falling off. In fact, you could even use a shawl pin or decorative hook-and-eye at the top, around or above the armpit level, to fasten the sweater and let it swing free around your hips. The waist shaping that makes it hug curves when wrapped also gives it structure and keeps the volume from being overwhelming when open.



The shoulders. Below, you can see how the shoulder seam is offset. This is for two reasons - one, I think it is more comfortable and professional looking. Two, it helps make it easy to have the collar cables meet at the center back neck.



The symmetry. The cables are centered to meet in the same way at the neck and the center middle in the bottom. Mirroring the cables was one of the design challenges of this sweater, since the motif is fairly large. The raised neck is warm, and also part of what helps the fronts lay properly whether closed or open.



I think it looks beautiful here with the larger amount of recommended ease - it skims the model's shape in a way that is flattering yet cozy to wear; put together yet comfortable.

The sleeves. This picture above demonstrates why I chose the sleeve length I did. It may not seem intuitive to have a winter sweater with 3/4 sleeves. If the sleeves were full length, however, I felt that they would make the whole thing too bottom heavy, and the cuffs would compete with lower edging. Having them stop near the waist helps draw the eye upward. Of course, the individual knitter is free to lengthen them, but if your hips are bigger than your bust you may want to consider

leaving the cuff detail off, or picking up stitches and working downward in stockinette stitch to

Here is one more picture, just because I think it's sweet one of me and my daughter.

